



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2015 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor K.V. Reynolds - Chair

Councillors:

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

Together with:

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), C. HARRY (Corporate Director - Communities), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer).

Also in Attendance:

P. Elliot (Head of Regeneration and Planning), K. Williams (Private Sector Housing Manager), M. Jennings (Housing Strategy Officer), R. Kyte (Team Leader Strategic & Development Planning), M. Johnson (Senior Engineer), G. Parry (Operations Group Manager), S. Pugh (Corporate Communications Manager), C. Evans (Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. CABINET – 28TH OCTOBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2015 (minute nos. 1 - 6) be approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

4. SOCIAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE EVALUATION – PRESENTATION BY CSSIW

Margaret Rooney – South East Regional Manager and Sarah Glyn-Jones – Area Regional Manager (Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent) provided Cabinet with a presentation, which summarised the findings following the Annual CSSIW Performance Evaluation.

It was noted that the Council has continued to take a structured and planned approach to develop and transform services in readiness for the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (SSWB ACT). This is also reflected in the objectives of the Director of Social Services, which provides a comprehensive picture of the current status of social services in Caerphilly. Solid foundations built in the previous year have enabled the council to make progress in both adult and children's services. Clear planning has set the direction for prioritising, review and development of new services reflecting local need and national legislative change. The Corporate Management Structure and governance arrangements provide support to enable social services to continue development. The council works constructively with regulators and has made good progress in relation to areas for improvement in CSSIW's performance report 2014-15.

Following the Inspection, CSSIW highlighted Areas for Improvement within their Performance Report, which included prioritising the joint commissioning for older people, moving to a regional adoption service, successful recruitment of foster carers, ongoing restructuring and review in line with need and national legislation within Children's Services and continuing to develop the Scrutiny Process and Governance.

Members thanked the Officers for the very positive report and the Corporate Director of Social Services added that he was very pleased with the positive Inspection report. It was noted that, whilst the Directorate is facing challenging times with the Welsh Governments drive for Integrated Services, budget pressures and the introduction of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act, the Directorate will continue to focus on the areas for improvement.

Having consideration for the detailed report and data within, a Member sought further information on the variance in Adult Carer statistics. The Director confirmed that the data had highlighted an area of concern, which, upon investigation, was as a result of Social Worker recording issues. In some cases, Social Workers were recording that carers, who were also assessed as requiring a service, were recorded as Service Users and not carers, hence the drop in the number of carers.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Officers recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the CSSIW Report, the content of the report be acknowledged and accepted.

5. FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The report, which was presented to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 27th October 2015, provided an update on the progress of the preparation of the Council's Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP).

Members were advised that under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, the Council has been designated as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and has responsibility to produce a FRMP. The draft FRMP, which has been published on the Council's website, must be submitted to Natural Resources Wales (NRW), who may approve it (with or without modification) or reject it.

The FRMP provides an overview of the flood risk within the county borough and details flood risk management objectives, together with a series of mitigation measures to ensure that the flood risk to the local area is addressed and reduced. The FRMP, which has been the subject of public consultation in draft form, must be published by December 2015 in accordance with the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, and will be subject to review after a 6-year period.

Cabinet thanked the Officers for the report and expressed their gratitude to staff for the extensive work undertaken to produce the FRMP, which would provide relief to a number of residents across the Borough, living in high risk areas.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Officers recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report:

- (i) the draft Flood Risk Management Plan be accepted as the mechanism for the reduction of flood risk within Caerphilly County Borough Council;
- (ii) Natural Resources Wales be updated on Caerphilly's approach to the Flood Risk Management Plan.

6. RESULTS OF THE 2015 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

The report provided Cabinet Members with the findings of the 2015 Household Survey and highlighted key results in relation to satisfaction with Council Services.

The household survey, which was conducted from the 1st June 2015 to 17th July 2015, received a total of 1258 responses and were overall very positive. The results highlighted that, in general, residents are satisfied with the services provided by the Council.

As in previous years, services generating high levels of satisfaction include refuse and recycling, libraries, aspects of the leisure service, bus services, street lighting and Newline.

Cabinet noted that, overall 78% of respondents were satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council. In 2013, 82% of respondents highlighted their overall satisfaction with Council Services; however, there has been an increase from 14% in 2013 to 18% in 2015 of very satisfied respondents.

It was noted that 63% of respondents agreed that the Police and Caerphilly County Borough Council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in this area. 71% felt that levels of crime and 65% felt that the level anti-social behaviour has improved or stayed the same in the last two years.

However, it was noted that, whilst still at a very high level, satisfaction with civic amenity/household waste recycling sites has declined from 92% in 2013 to 86% in 2015. Dog fouling has consistently been considered the biggest problem affecting the appearance of streets in neighbourhoods since 2011, and levels of satisfaction with country parks are high at 88% but have significantly declined since 2013 when 96% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied. This was largely attributed to the recent introduction of car parking fees in country parks.

Members thanked the Officer for the positive report and it was felt that the report should be presented to Council. Clarification was sought on the data referring to respondent's ability to understand, speak, read and write in Welsh and Officers agreed to check and circulate any corrected data.

Following consideration and discussion, and subject to the report being presented to Council, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report:

- (i) the findings of the 2015 Household Survey be noted;
- (ii) key findings be shared with Service Managers for dissemination with their teams (more detailed analysis is available on request) and via the Council's website and Newsline;
- (iii) the Household Survey results be fed into the Corporate Improvement Plan of the Council by helping to:
 - Identify perceived areas of strength and weakness in the provision of Council services;
 - Highlight areas of change in the level of service provision over the last two years;
 - Provide data for further comparison in future years;
 - Help determine future priorities;
- (iv) the findings of the Household Survey be referred to Council.

7. ADOPTION OF THE COMMON ALLOCATION POLICY

The report, which was presented to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 10th November 2015, provided members with an overview of the process undertaken to develop a common allocation policy, and sought Cabinet's approval that the existing allocations policy maintained by the Council be replaced with the new policy.

The policy, which has been subjected to extensive consultation, has been developed in partnership with local housing associations and will be introduced alongside the common housing register, and will also apply to housing association partners. Thus providing a standardised and consistent way of allocating properties to all those on the common housing register who are seeking social housing within the borough.

Cabinet thanked the Officers for the report and the extensive work required to produce the policy.

A Member sought further information on the date of implementation of the Policy and, in noting that the Points System would no longer be in use, queried whether those already on the Housing Register would be reassessed. Officers highlighted that an IT system, which is currently under development, has been procured, which will play an integral part in the implementation and management of the Policy. The system, which is an online database, would provide an online and automated assessment process, which would enable Housing Allocation Officers more time to offer support and assistance to service users. In addition, Members were assured that each person on the current Housing Register will be reassessed under the new Policy and placed in order of the date in which they first registered.

Discussions took place around the criteria for Housing Applications. Officers highlighted that assessments would be conducted to determine affordability and an applicant's ability to maintain a tenancy.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers report and as highlighted at the meeting:

- (i) the Common Allocation Policy be formally adopted and upon its implementation the Council's existing Allocations Policy be rescinded;
- (ii) once the first review of the policy has been completed, as detailed in paragraph 4.25 of the Officers report, the results be reported to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee then onto Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

8. PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CIL REGULATION 123 LIST OF INFRASTRUCTURE

The report, which was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 27th October 2015, presented the findings of the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the proposed changes to the Regulation 123 List, in accordance with the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Members were advised that Regulation 123 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) sets out the requirement for the CIL Charging Authority to publish a list of the infrastructure that can be funded through CIL. It is proposed to make some changes to this list which will enable school provision to be sought on-site in line with the aspirations of the adopted LDP. The proposed changes to the Regulation 123 List (as appended to the report) will have a minimal impact on the viability evidence that was considered by the CIL Examiner in that it will only impact on two specific sites (namely Waterloo Works and Bedwas Colliery).

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussions ensued. Cabinet discussed planning applications within specific areas and the relationship of CIL and Section 106 Agreement. It was noted that the proposed change would only effect two sites at present, Waterloo Works and Bedwas Colliery. The change would enable negotiations to secure on-site school provision on these specific sites. It was noted that all the CIL work would be reviewed further as part of the work on the Replacement LDP.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED to Council that for the reasons contained in the Officers report:

- (i) the findings of the public consultation exercise undertaken in August/September 2015 in respect of the proposed changes to the Regulation 123 List be considered and noted;
- (ii) the Replacement Regulation 123 List be approved for publication in accordance with the implementation of Community Infrastructure Levy.

The meeting closed at 2.29pm

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 25th November 2015.

CHAIR