



## **CABINET**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 27TH JUNE 2018 AT 11.00 A.M.**

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#### **PRESENT**

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

#### **Councillors:**

C. Cuss (Social Care and Wellbeing), N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C. Gordon (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), B.A. Jones (Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Governance), P. Marsden (Education and Achievement), L. Phipps (Homes and Places) and E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

#### **Together with:**

C. Harry (Interim Chief Executive), M. S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities), D. Street (Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing), S. Harris (Deputy Section 151 Officer) and J. Reynolds (Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager) and E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer),

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D.V. Poole (Leader of the Council).

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **3. CABINET MINUTES - 13TH JUNE 2018**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13th June 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **4. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The report sought Cabinet's endorsement of the Forward Work Programme for the period June 2018 to January 2019.

Cabinet were advised that the Forward Work Programme sets out the key reports expected in the coming months and the legal requirement for such programmes to be published. The

programme is a living document and as such urgent and unanticipated reports could be added to the programme which now included a more detailed narrative on the key issues.

Cabinet discussed the forward work programme and clarification was sought in relation to the reports detailed for the 25th July 2018 as this had been subject to change. It was confirmed that the Asset Management report had been retitled and would be presented as the Draft Caerphilly Homes Asset Management Strategy and moved to a date to be confirmed in September. The Sheltered Accommodation and Affordable Homes New Build Proposals reports would also be moved to a date to be confirmed in September.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that subject to the aforementioned changes the recommendations in the report be approved.

RESOLVED that subject to the rescheduling of the Sheltered Housing Schemes, Affordable Homes New Build Proposals and Draft Caerphilly Homes Asset Management Strategy reports the Cabinet Forward Work Programme be approved and published.

## **MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED**

### **5. DRAFT SPORT & ACTIVE RECREATION STRATEGY 2019-29**

The report sought Cabinet approval to commence a ten week consultation exercise with a range of stakeholders on the draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-29.

The draft strategy sets out the future purpose and direction for the provision of sport and active recreation in Caerphilly County Borough; it establishes the key principles and vision which will inform future decisions and actions over the next ten years. The benefits of leading a physically active lifestyle for the residents of the Borough are well documented and given the current financial climate within which local authorities operate, clear strategic direction is essential.

Cabinet were advised that the strategy had been presented to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee for their consideration and comment and it was noted that Councillor Kevin Etheridge (Leader of the Independent Party) had also attended that meeting to present his views.

The Officer confirmed that comments from the Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Etheridge had focused on the consultation process which was due to commence on the 16th July 2018. The latter had proposed that the consultation process should include Education stakeholders and Schools, a joint scrutiny committee meeting with the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee and the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and that consideration be given to calling a public referendum on the strategy. Cllr John Bevan also sought assurance that there would be enough opportunities for those unable to access social media or internet based options to be aware of and comment on the strategy.

In response to the aforementioned proposals it was confirmed that correspondence would be sent to all schools, a Members Seminar would be held on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018, which would give all Members the opportunity to review and comment on the Strategy. With regard to the call for a Public Referendum this would be a matter for Cabinet.

With regard to the residents without internet/social media access it was confirmed that an intensive consultation programme has been planned and there would be ample opportunities for those without social media access to comment, including Drop-In Sessions and copies of the strategy and questionnaire being made available at all public buildings.

In conclusion Cabinet were advised that the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny

Committee endorsed the recommendation to Cabinet that they approve the proposal to commence the public consultation on the draft Strategy.

Cabinet considered the matter of a Public Referendum and concluded that it would be difficult to contain the wide reaching and all encompassing proposals contained within the strategy into a single question and therefore doubted that a referendum could be utilised for this purpose.

Cabinet were pleased to note that the strategy did not just concentrate on leisure centre provision but also looked at the wider picture in terms of activities that related to preventative health measures and sought clarification in relation to discussions with social care and health services. Further to this Cabinet queried if the needs of the most deprived areas in the borough, particularly those in the north had been considered.

The Officer confirmed that the wide ranging document looked at preventative health provision through such avenues as country parks, cycle paths etc. and the ten week consultation period, which was a more extensive consultation period than previously undertaken, would incorporate a range of stakeholder and advised that they would seek to engage every relevant stakeholder in the consultation process. Part of the strategy process was the completion of an in-depth Equalities Impact Assessment, this living document, which incorporated protective characteristics such as socio economic status was a key element. Equity of provision would be looked at as would opportunity to support and enable provision from other organisations.

Clarification was then sought in relation to Drop-In Sessions and Cabinet were advised that venues were to be arranged but they would be integral to the consultation process. Further clarification was requested with regard to hard to reach communities and how they would be engaged. It was noted that as well as the Drop-In Sessions, hard copies of the questionnaire and strategy would be available in all public buildings and other organisations would be utilised in order to get to harder to reach areas.

Cabinet welcomed the strategy as one of the most important to be put before Members and acknowledged that historical methods of service provision could not continue under current and future financial pressures. The role of Councillors in getting the message out to the public regarding the importance of completing questionnaires was emphasised if good response rates were to be achieved.

Cabinet were advised that the Communication Unit would be exploring every channel at their disposal in order to highlight the strategy including face to face engagement and direct correspondence in order to gather that vital qualitative data, usage data and geographical data which will allow Members to make an informed decision. It was noted that Caerphilly had the highest number of followers on social media in Wales (30,000) and this platform would be fully utilised. Assurances were given that every effort would be made to try and engage with every member of the community.

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 Officer's Report, the proposal to undertake a public consultation on the draft Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-29, be supported.

## **MATTERS ON WHICH RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL WERE REQUIRED**

### **6. PROVISIONAL OUTTURN FOR 2017/18**

The report updated Cabinet with details with details of the provisional outturn for the 2017/18 financial year.

Cabinet were referred to Appendix A which summarised the provisional revenue outturn position which is a net underspend of £10.304m. This included an underspend of £4.07m on the Housing Revenue Account and an overspend of £293k for Schools.

During the year Officers have continued to be mindful of the continuing programme of austerity and expenditure has been curtailed in a number of areas to support the Medium-Term Financial Plan. This prudent approach has resulted in a number of savings being achieved in advance and underspends therefore being higher than would normally be the case. Details of the more significant variations against budget are provided in the report for each Directorate.

Cabinet were then referred to Appendix B which showed the movements on the General Fund balance from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 along with current agreed commitments for 2018/19. The forecast General Fund balance as reported to Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 was £10m. The updated position is a projected balance of £11.8m and the table in paragraph 4.4 of the report provides details of this increase of £1.8m.

The Section 151 Officer normally recommends a minimum General Fund balance of £10m which is circa 3% of the net revenue budget. Cabinet recalled that anticipated savings of £34m would be required for the four-year period 2019/20 to 2022/23. This is clearly extremely challenging and it is inevitable that some very difficult decisions will need to be made. With this in mind Cabinet are asked to support a recommendation to Council to transfer £1.8m from the General Fund into an Earmarked Reserve to provide funding for one-off costs associated with delivering savings to support the MTFP.

In terms of capital expenditure total spend on the WHQS Capital Programme for 2017/18 was £42.2m. The General Fund Capital Programme for 2017/18 resulted in total funding available of £55.5m including all in-year grant allocations and Section 106 monies. An amount of £27.4m remained unspent at financial year-end, the majority of which represents slippage that has been carried forward into the 2018/19 financial year.

Cabinet thanked the Officer and his team for the preparation of the provision outturn report and clarification was sought in relation to overspend noted in the Education Directorate in relation to EOTAS provision. It was confirmed that a detailed report would be coming forward to Cabinet in due course on this matter. Cabinet welcomed the aforementioned report and acknowledged the need to support the boroughs most vulnerable learners.

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 Officer's Report: -

- (i) the provisional 2017/18 outturn position be noted;
- (ii) the transfer of £1.8m from the General Fund into an Earmarked Reserve to provide funding for one-off costs associated with delivering savings to support the Medium Term Financial plan be approved.

The meeting closed at 11.30am.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 11th July 2018.

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CHAIR