



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 5TH MARCH 2019 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor M. Adams - Mayor
Councillor J. Simmonds - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

C. Andrews, A. Angel, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, L. Binding, A. Collis, D. Cushing, C. Cuss, W. David, M. Davies, D.T. Davies, C. Elsbury, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Gair, Ms J. Gale, N. George, C. Gordon, R.W. Gough, L. Harding, D. Harse, D. Havard, V. James, M. James, Mrs B. Jones, S. Kent, G. Kirby, Mrs A. Leonard, C.P. Mann, B. Miles, S. Morgan, Mrs G. Oliver, B. Owen, T. Parry, Mrs L. Phipps, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Ridgewell, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, G. Simmonds, S. Skivens, Mss E. Stenner, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, L G. Whittle, T. Williams, W. Williams and B. Zaplatynski

Together with:

C. Harry (Interim Chief Executive), M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director of Communities), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), L. Donovan (Head of People Services), D. Beecham (Electoral Services Manager) and A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer)

And:

D. Powell, S. Williams, M. Redmond and R. Evans (The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales) and K. Beirne (Director of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal).

WEB-CASTING FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Interim Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be made publically available in live and archive form via the Council's website. She advised that decisions would be made via the electronic voting system.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs E. Aldworth, C. Bezzina, S. Cook, K. Dawson, N. Dix, Ms E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, D.T. Hardacre, A. Higgs, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, Ms P. Leonard, Mrs P. Marsden, Mrs D. Price, J. Scriven and J. Taylor.

2. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the events and visits that he and the Deputy Mayor have undertaken since the last meeting and made specific reference to watching the production of The Boy who bit the Castle, at the top of the valley and a P.E. display at Blackwood Comprehensive School. He also attended Caerphilly the Inner Wheel as a guest speaker and was disappointed to inform Members that this organisation is disbanding and urged Members to support and encourage such organisations where possible.

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

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

- (i) Traffic management issues at Dol y Felin Street, Caerphilly - Councillor P. Bevan;
- (ii) Improved traffic calming measures on Bloomfield Road, Blackwood - Councillor A. Farina-Childs.

4. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

There were no awards presented at the meeting.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor A. Whitcombe declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 10 - Cardiff Capital Region - City Deal. The Monitoring Officer advised that this was a personal and not a prejudicial interest and as such Councillor Whitcombe was not required to leave the room when the report was presented. Details are recorded with the respective item.

6. MINUTES – 22ND JANUARY 2019

RESOLVED that subject to it being recorded that Councillor J. Bevan had been in attendance, the minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Council held on the 22nd January 2019 (Minute nos. 1 – 12).

7. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10 (2)

Consideration was given to the following Questions under Rule of Procedure 10(2). In accordance with the revisions to the constitution, the answers are also provided.

1) IT CONTRACTS WITH CCBC

To the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services from Councillor Kevin Etheridge.

To ask the Cabinet Member to list the number, heading and costs of IT contracts with CCBC and whether he believes in the interests of cost effectiveness and efficiency they are fit for purpose, and does he believe they are achieving best value for money for the organisation, and if he will define what mechanisms are currently in place to evaluate and review these contracts.

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR COLIN GORDON (CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES)

The Council currently has 200 IT contracts within the Corporate Contracts register, although the register is currently being updated. The intention is to put the contracts on the register through a rationalisation programme.

Officers from within Digital Services and Procurement are working together to highlight contracts that have the potential to be rationalized over the next three years. The programme will need to be completed over time in order to fulfil our current contractual obligations and to ensure it is correctly resourced.

All current contracts have regular reviews and have been subject to formal procurement, therefore, can demonstrate value for money in their current form. Going forward, value for money will form part of the rationalization programme which will ensure all systems are fit for purpose and meet future delivery requirements.

The current estimated value of our existing IT contracts over 5 years equals £14.6 million. This is not, however, a budget that belongs to the IT department in isolation, with the budgets for some systems being held by directorates.

The contract rationalisation exercise is just one aspect of a wide range of work going on across Customer and Digital Services.

Members will be aware that in August 2018 the Authority recruited Liz Lucas as our Head of Customer and Digital Services and that Liz has recently concluded the appointments to her senior team.

Over the coming months, a draft Customer and Digital Strategy for the Council will be completed and will be subject to wider consultation. The Strategy will set out how the Council intends to use technology to support the transformation of its services and customer interface. The service is also introducing a new customer portal and smart phone app that will allow users to undertake service requests 24/7 as well as supporting the introduction of agile working, bring your own Device for Members, a new telephony solution and a pilot of Microsoft Office 365. I look forward to updating Members of progress over the coming months.

2) THE DRAFT YSTRAD MYNACH MASTERPLAN

To the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure, Sustainability & Wellbeing of Future Generations Champion from Councillor Brenda Miles.

The draft Ystrad Mynach Masterplan is currently out to consultation. This is obviously good news for Ystrad Mynach and its close neighbours, including Nelson. But could the Cabinet Member update me on where we are with regards to supporting prosperity across the Borough and perhaps more generally across the region?

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR SEAN MORGAN, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Caerphilly County Borough and the wider Cardiff Capital Region are entering a period of transformative change and unprecedented investment. The signing of City Deal and the Cardiff Capital Region signals an unprecedented investment of £1.2 billion for the region.

Members will be aware that the Interim Chief Executive is tonight reporting on the progress work of the Joint Cabinet in terms of the delivery of City Deal Initiatives.

Officers have over recent months been focussing upon creating the building blocks upon which to deliver a local economic and regeneration strategy that aligns and maximises the opportunities from the Cardiff Capital Region - City Deal Activity in this area over recent months has included:

- The appointment of a new Head of Regeneration and Planning and the agreement of a new focussed Regeneration and Planning team.
- The development and approval of the Council's Regeneration Strategy "A Foundation for Success 2018-2023"
- The creation of a Regeneration Project Board – which has developed a Project Priority Toolkit and a Prioritised Caerphilly Capital Project List both of which will inform a prioritised programme of delivery and a pipeline of future projects.
- The creation of a £300k Regeneration Development Fund - supplemented by further development funding of £1.2m approved by Council in February 2019
- The creation of an investment strategy and vision for a Carbon free Caerphilly working with central and Welsh government that includes electric buses and a new hotel.
- Approval of a plot shop to unlock individual parcels of land for affordable housing, delivered through small/medium sized developers throughout the county borough.
- Cabinet approval to commence with a programme of new build affordable Council homes, which will be equipped with the latest energy and digital technologies to provide "homes for life".
- Metro improvements scheduled for the Rhymney Valley line during 2022, increasing frequencies and reduced travel times.
- A joint venture with WG, to develop land at Ty Du, Nelson, for a new mixed use development comprising innovative new homes, affordable housing and an employment scheme.
- Further investment into the Cwmcarn tourism destination.
- Significant progress in providing the infrastructure at Oakdale Business Park to accommodate the needs of new business.
- Progress on the expansion of The Lawns Industrial Estate, Rhymney for new start up premises and the Caerphilly Business Park Regional Entrepreneurial Hub in partnership with Welsh Ice.

Allied to this, The Valleys Taskforce has set out strategic priorities for the Region and have identified Caerphilly and Ystrad Mynach as strategic "hubs" with resultant priorities for Welsh Government focus.

The Council is producing a series of Masterplans, to set out the future development and regeneration opportunities for strategic locations within the County Borough. In order to exploit the VTF funding the first of these have been prepared for the Caerphilly Basin area (approved by Council in July 2018). The Masterplan for Ystrad Mynach is currently out for consultation and the Heads of the Valley Plan is in the process of being developed, with the Greater Blackwood and Newbridge to Risca Corridor Masterplans to follow. Whilst the initial focus has been upon physical regeneration, officers' attention is now turning towards the economic and social aspects of the regeneration triangle.

While these are certainly very difficult financial times, we're being very proactive in our approach – both independently and through partnerships such as the City Deal, and consequently, this is an exciting time for Caerphilly County Borough Council.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

8. PRESENTATION - CAERPHILLY ELECTORAL STATISTICS - BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Consideration was given to the presentation delivered by D. Powell, S. Williams, M. Redmond and R. Evans from the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales.

The review process was set out and it was explained that the Commission are independent of the Welsh Government and political parties and report directly to the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services. The Commission are governed by the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 and Commission Policies. The Review will propose the pattern of electoral wards for the entire council area and not just where there are levels of electoral inequality. The statutory criteria was summarised that includes achieving electoral equality, community identity and an effective and convenient local government. The Commission has developed a Council Size Policy with WLGA and Welsh Government for the whole of Wales. Members noted the definition and how the Commission has set constraints on Council Size and how the policy is applied.

The process of how the Commission will manage electoral ward building blocks was explained and the benefits of both Single Member and Multi-Member wards were discussed. Members were advised of the evidence the Commission will/will not consider as part of the review. Emphasis was placed on the requirement of effective representations as this will be judged on the quality of evidence presented to the Commission. It was explained that the Council can help by providing a scheme or making suggestions that are provided early enough in the process, that consider the whole of the County equally, take note of Community ties and follow the rules, Legislation and Commission Policies.

In concluding, the timetable of the review process was set out with an initial 12 Week Consultation Period commencing on 7th March 2019 to 29th May 2019 and the final stage of will be the new wards coming into force for the May 2022 Local Government election.

Members discussed the review process and sought assurances that the figures provided throughout the process would be checked as this will have a dynamic impact on individual wards. Concerns were expressed regarding the fact that many residents are not on the electoral register. It is a requirement of the Act that the Commission may take these into account along with figures provided by the Office of National Statistics and all the figures collated will be published at the beginning of the consultation period. Clarification was provided in that different Acts apply to Scotland and Wales. In terms of the review, it was explained that the Minister for Local Government has given the Commission the remit to conduct the review prior to the 2022 election, which is a statutory responsibility. A Member queried if reducing the voting age to 16 will be considered as part of the review. There will be 3 strands of electoral parity for 2022 and the 16 to 18 year olds will come into the second tranche for 2024. Members were advised that in respect of single Member wards, the Commission will not artificially create new wards and boundaries and the existing community wards will be used where possible. This is also an issue that can be considered by the working group. In response to a Member's query, it was explained that Members should make representations regarding their own wards at the initial consultation period at which time the draft proposals will be considered.

A Member sought clarification regarding the consideration of merging wards and it was explained that this may be something for the Commission to consider if there is a need to improve electoral variances. In terms of Town and Community Councillors, it was noted that these arrangements will not be considered within this review unless there is a boundary change and the consequential affect to the Community Councils within a Community Review. The Commission will not be proposing any new 4 Member wards, they may retain the 2 existing wards if they are supported unless other arrangements are proposed by the Council.

The Mayor thanked the Boundary Commission's representatives for the detailed presentation and for responding to questions during the course of the debate. Members' noted the contents of the presentation.

9. ELECTORAL REVIEW OF CAERPHILLY

The Interim Chief Executive briefly introduced the report as this directly relates to the previous item and she emphasised the clear message of the importance of the Council working with the Commission in moving forward with this review. The purpose of the report is to establish a working group to draft proposals to be submitted to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales as part of the Electoral Review of the County Borough. Once established, the working group shall report its proposals to the meeting of Council on 4th June 2019 for council's endorsement. The proposals must be sent to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, by 5th June, for its consideration. The report informs members of the timetable for the review. The Leader of the Council emphasised the need for the meetings of the working group to be arranged at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the outline timetable for the review be noted and that a Member / Officer working group consisting of the following be established:-
 - Cllr David Poole, Leader of Council plus 3 further Members of the Labour Group
 - Cllr Colin Mann, Leader of Plaid Cymru plus 1 further Member of the Plaid Group
 - Cllr Kevin Etheridge, Independent Group
 - Mr Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer
 - Mr David Beecham, Electoral Services Manager
- (ii) the working group to report its proposals to the meeting of council on 4th June 2019 for Council's endorsement. The proposal will then be sent to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, by 5th June 2019, for its consideration.

10. CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION - CITY DEAL

Councillor A. Whitcombe declared a personal interest in relation to this item as he has managed a project that is linked to the City Deal. The Monitoring Officer advised that this was a personal not prejudicial interest and as such Councillor Whitcombe was not required to leave the room when the report was presented and could take part in the debate and vote.

Consideration was given to the presentation delivered by Ms. K. Beirne (Director of the City Deal). The presentation provided an update as to the City Deal's pace and progress to date and highlighted the opportunities available to the global economy. She set out the challenges faced and also the key strengths. The key points of progress were discussed and the investment guidelines were explained. An example was provided where significant funding had been invested into a Compound Semiconductor Project in Newport by the City Deal and the City Deal's Wider Investment Fund. Ms Beirne set out the many benefits this project has created in terms of the future economy and job creation. She referred to the Metro Plus and the new programme aimed at future-proofing infrastructure and addressing regional imbalances around the Metro. In concluding, she summarised the benefits of 'What's in it for Caerphilly'. The Mayor thanked the Director for attending the Council Meeting and delivering the detailed presentation.

The Interim Chief Executive summarised the report and informed Members that the City Deal includes a £1.2 billion investment, including the development of the South Wales Metro; support for innovation and digital infrastructure; developing skills and helping people back into work; promoting enterprise and business growth; and wider activity in regeneration and housing. It has ambition to deliver 25,000 new jobs in the region and lever in up to £4billion of private sector investment and a 5% increase in GVA. Since its inception back in 2017, the foundations of City Deal have fundamentally evolved. Particularly, over the last few months, an assessment of the “state of readiness” of the programme for its next phase of deployment has been undertaken. This has included a focus upon core critical success factors such as improving influence with investors and funders; increasing strategic alignments in order to leverage new investment; the need for good data to support decisions; and a new Economic and Industrial Growth Plan to set direction. Chief amongst the challenges is the sense of urgency surrounding the impact of departure from the European Union, loss of structural funds and the need to compete with other regions and institutions to secure resources – through the UK Government Industrial strategy – the new hub of regional economic and innovation investment. In this context, City Deal takes on a new significance – beyond a funding programme. There is a need to build in greater resilience; the ability to compete; be “challenge focussed” and increase economic sustainability. This report sets out the interventions that the City Deal has put in place to ensure it is well placed to maximise the opportunities that are available in order to improve the prosperity of the region on a sustainable basis.

The Leader in support of the report and recommendation added that he believes the City Deal has become ambitious and the City Deal will be one of the best things that has happened to Caerphilly.

Members discussed the presentation and contents of the report. A Member stated that he felt that confidence had been instilled by the presentation and that Caerphilly needs opportunities for ‘on the shelf projects’. Some Members have felt disengaged with the process as they have not been made aware of proposals or consulted upon prior to recommendations made. In response, Officers advised that the Board is in its early stages and engagement and communication with Members will be undertaken in moving forward. Clarification was provided in response to a number of questions raised by Members that included the back office function of City Deal. It was confirmed that staff have not yet been recruited as a proposed structure needs to be presented to Central Cabinet that will consist of a mixture of private and public sector experiences that will offer a diverse skill set. Nine members of the Cardiff Capital Region will be attending the ‘MIPIM Conference next week which is the world’s premier real estate event’ and Caerphilly will be represented by the Leader and Interim Chief Executive. Events and workshops will be attended with the intention of pitching competitive strengths from each of the areas that are being represented.

Having fully considered the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained within the Officer’s report be approved and by way of the electronic voting system, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the programme of the City Deal as defined by the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Cabinet, be endorsed.

11. PUBLICATION OF THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20 AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW NJC PAY AND GRADING STRUCTURE

The Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer advised Members that it was acceptable for Officers to remain in the Chamber as their individual terms and conditions were not being decided upon.

The annual Pay Policy must be considered and agreed by Council.

Consideration was given to the report that sought full Council approval for the publication of the Authority's Pay Policy 2019 / 20 and also approval to implement and publish the revised CCBC National Joint Council (NJC) pay and grading structure.

Members were advised that the Localism Act 2011 requires Local Authorities to develop and make public their Pay Policy. This includes all aspects of Chief Officer Remuneration (including on ceasing to hold office), and also in relation to the "lowest paid" in the Council, explaining their Policy on the relationship between remuneration for Chief Officers and other groups. The provisions in the Localism Act 2011 which relate to Pay Policy statements only apply to employees directly appointed and managed by the Council. Employees who are appointed and managed by school head teachers/Governing Bodies are, therefore, not required to be included within the scope of Pay Policy statements. This reflects the unique employment legislation position whereby all schools employees are employed by the local authority, but decisions about the appointment and management of such employees are mostly discharged by head teachers/governing bodies, as appropriate.

Members were reminded that the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services pay and grading structure was achieved through a collective agreement with the Trade Unions, and implemented with effect from the 1st of April 2009. The NJC pay award for 2018 – 20 provided that Local Authorities had to implement a new pay and grading structure with effect from 1st April 2019 i.e. the second year of the agreed pay award. Members were referred to appendix 2 and page 10 of appendix 1 that sets out the proposed revised NJC pay and grading structure a result of a collective agreement with the Trade Unions. To minimise disruption and confusion for employees, the Council has based its proposed NJC pay and grading structure around the 1st April 2019 NJC pay spine without any local variation. The main points of the new pay structure are set out in paragraph 5.14 in the report.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Governance thanked the Officers for the hard work that was undertaken in completing the Pay Policy.

Having fully considered the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained within the Officer's report be approved.

An amendment was then moved and seconded, in that certain pay bands as set out in appendix D of the report (those Bands ranging from the Chief Executive down to Band B) be frozen with immediate effect. In accordance with Rule of Procedure 15.5 (1) a request was made for a recorded vote, which was taken manually by the Monitoring Officer.

For the Motion:

Councillors P.J. Bevan, L. Binding, D. Cushing, M. Davies, C. Elsbury, K. Etheridge, A. Farina-Childs, R.W. Gough, M. James, S. Kent, C.P. Mann, B. Owen, T. Parry, Mrs M.E. Sargent, G. Simmonds, S. Skivens, L G. Whittle (17)

Against the Motion:

Councillors M. Adams, C. Andrews, J. Bevan, A. Collis, C. Cuss, W. David, M. Evans, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Gair, Ms J. Gale, N. George, L. Harding, D. Harse, D. Havard, V. James, Mrs B. Jones, G. Kirby, Mrs A. Leonard, B. Miles, S. Morgan, Mrs G. Oliver, Mrs L. Phipps, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Simmonds, Miss E. Stenner, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, W. Williams and B. Zaplatynski (32).

The amendment was therefore declared lost.

The substantive motion was then taken by way of the electronic voting system and in noting that there were 15 against and 1 abstention, this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report;

- i) the Pay Policy Statement 2019 / 20 (Version 8) be agreed and published on the Council's website.
- ii) the payment of the Foundation Living Wage hourly rate of £9.00 be agreed with effect from 1st November 2018.
- iii) the revised NJC Pay and Grading structure be agreed and effective from 1st April 2019.
- iv) the assimilate and then increment principle to effect the transfer of staff to the revised Pay and Grading Structure be agreed with effect from 1st April 2019.

12. WAIVER OF THE 6-MONTH COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE RULE

Consideration was given to the report that sought Full Council approval to allow an extension to the six months Attendance Rule for Councillor Dianne Price in accordance with the Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members were advised that due to extensive illness and ongoing medical treatment Councillor Dianne Price has been unable to attend a Council meeting since the 20th September 2018. A request has been received by the Monitoring Officer for Council to consider approving an extension to the usual six month attendance rule to enable Councillor Price to remain in office until she is able to resume normal duties when she returns to good health. Members from each of the political groups wholly supported the recommendation within the report and extended their best wishes to Councillor Price.

Having fully considered the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained within the Officer's report be approved. By way of the electronic voting system this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the current absence from all council and committee meetings of Councillor Dianne Price due to her ill-health be authorised and approved for a further period of six months ending on 20th September 2019, or until she resumes attendance if that is sooner, in accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

13. NOTICE OF MOTION - PARENTAL LEAVE COUNCILLORS

Consideration was given to the notice of motion that was presented by Councillor A. Leonard and supported by Councillors P. Marsden, E. Stenner and L. Phipps. The notice of motion had been presented to the Democratic Services Committee on 6th February 2019 and meets the criteria set out in the Council's Constitution and in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

The Democratic Services Committee noted that the Notice of Motion asks that the Council calls on Welsh Government to reconsider current maternity, paternity and adoption leave entitlements for Councillors, as legislated within the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 (Part 2) and that the Council forward the draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors (which was appended to the report) to Welsh Government for their consideration. The purpose of the Notice of Motion is to give Councillors a more equitable entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting and to ensure that Councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate. The Democratic Services Committee supported the notice of motion.

Members voiced their support in respect of the notice of motion and agreed that the original be amended to reflect the proposals are on parity with the Parental Leave Policy that is available to Council Officers.

Having fully considered the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation contained within the Officer's report be approved. By way of the electronic voting system this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the notice of motion be supported.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2019 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR