



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 29TH MAY 2019 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Poole - Chair

Councillors:

C. Cuss (Social Care and Wellbeing), N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), and L. Phipps (Homes and Places) and E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services), D. Street (Corporate Director - Social Services) and M. S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities).

Also in Attendance:

M. Headington (Green Spaces and Transport Services Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader - Urban Renewal & Conservation) and C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr B.A. Jones (Finance, Performance and Governance), Cllr P. Marsden (Education and Achievement), Cllr S. Morgan (Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability) and C. Harry (Interim Chief Executive).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. CABINET – 15TH MAY 2019

RESOLVED that subject to Declarations of Interest being recorded for Councillors C. Cuss, N. George, C. Gordon, B. Jones, S. Morgan and D. Poole as Trustees of Blackwood Miners' Institute for Minute numbers 2, 4 and 5, it being noted that the final sentence in minute number 2 read "As these were personal and not prejudicial interests, Members were not required to leave the room, and could take part in the debate", page 3, minute number 4, paragraph 4 read "with particular reference to Disposal of Land for Residential Development...". Page 3, minute number 5 (Property Review Report 2019) refer to "Vice Chair of Upper Rhymney Primary School and Governor of Idris Davies School 3-18", the minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2019 were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

4. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER PRINCIPLES (PLAYING FIELDS)

The report which was presented to Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 14th May 2019 sought the adoption of a set of guiding principles in relation to the transfer of playing fields to sporting organisations.

It was noted that the Council is receiving an increasing number of applications from sports clubs to lease facilities (sports fields and/or pavilions). To date, the general ethos is that the Council would support clubs ambitions (on an ad-hoc basis); however in the absence of any guiding principles and for the reasons set out in the body of the report, this is becoming increasingly difficult. The Council is committed, where possible, to provide assistance to clubs to become more sustainable and enable their development and progression to higher leagues. This not only brings benefits for the club, its players, sport in general and the county borough, but the adoption of the principles enables the Local Authority to protect assets.

The report outlined some guiding principles which will assist in decision making and provide clarity for sporting organisations when considering applications for transfer of playing fields and or pavilions.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and, in noting the comments from the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, discussion ensued.

A Member sought further information around the crowd control barriers at 3.1.1 of the report, which suggests that Panels are to exclude dogs from pitches. Officers explained that there is a further report to be presented through the Committee process which refers to Dogs on Playing Fields; however the barriers are designed for crowd control as specified within League requirements.

In discussing the Principles, Cabinet agreed that the Principles would provide consistency in the decision making process, as well as provide protection for Officers and Members in the decision making process, so that decisions are better understood by the general public.

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 following principles be adopted:

- i) That the Council grant permission where it is appropriate to do so, for clubs to install crowd control barriers (with or without infill panels to exclude dogs);
- ii) Where there is an overly restrictive covenant placed on the playing field or building, the Council will be precluded from entering into lease or licence agreements with clubs;
- iii) That the Council will only accept applications from clubs, where they are at least eighteen months away from commencing within a new league structure for example, Welsh League in Football and either the WRU Championship or Premiership in rugby. Any application must be accompanied by a robust business case and a non-refundable fee of £500 to cover initial legal costs and officer's time. Additionally, where relevant, the club will be liable for advertising costs as set out within The Playing Fields (Community Involvement in Disposal Regulations) (Wales) 2015, which can be in excess of £4,000. To this end, pre-application discussions with officers are encouraged;

- iv) That the Council grant preferred user status where it is appropriate to do so, to such clubs who are registered as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC's);
- v) That officers review the booking process and continue to explore development opportunities at 3G pitches to facilitate those clubs in the higher leagues in meeting their league requirements;
- vi) That playing fields and other facilities held on charitable trust have different governance arrangements and will need to be the subject of a separate decision making process;
- vii) That where management agreements are granted, responsibility for statutory testing and maintenance (within buildings) and grounds maintenance will be retained by the Council and recharged to the club as part of the agreement;
- viii) That the Authority will continue to honour existing leases, where the clubs are fully compliant with the terms of the lease;
- ix) That all applications will be subject to a discussion, to highlight any potential issues, between relevant officers, the relevant Cabinet members and local Members. In this context, officers will engage the relevant local members and Cabinet Member at the earliest stage in the application process and will determine the most appropriate method for consultation with residents in conjunction with the relevant local member(s). The views of local member(s) will be taken into account in the decision making process set out in the Council's Constitution. Where the ultimate decision is to refuse any application for asset transfer then the decision will be communicated as the decision of the Council and will not be attributed to the views of any individual members;
- x) That any exception to this set of principles is brought before Cabinet for a decision.

5. REGENERATION BOARD – PROJECT PROPOSALS

The report recommended the second tranche of priority schemes for Regeneration Project Board Development Funding to Cabinet.

It was noted that at its meeting on 30th May 2018, Cabinet agreed that a Regeneration Project Board be set up with a cross party political representation of Councillors plus key officers. This group is supported by a Regeneration Assessment Panel consisting of officers from a range of service areas.

Since its initial meeting on the 3rd October 2018, the Regeneration Assessment Panel has met to consider the first suite of seven projects which have been identified by the Board to move to Assessment Stage. The first tranche of these projects (four in total) were approved at Cabinet on 13th February 2019.

The report sought agreement for the second tranche (remaining three projects) identified by the Regeneration Project Board and assessed by the Assessment Panel to be endorsed.

Cabinet were asked to note that since the previous report there has been an increase in the budget allocation, increasing from £300k to a total of £1.5m. In addition, since writing the report, the Ystrad Mynach Park & Ride bid for Local Transport Funding has been unsuccessful. Officers have arranged a meeting with Welsh Government (WG) to ascertain the reasons for the funding refusal but as a result, Cabinet were asked to note that this could result in the project coming back to the Regeneration Project Board for additional funding in order to deliver the project.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

It was requested that Officers update the Assumptions section of the report to highlight that costings are based on 2019 prices and estimates.

Discussions took place around the Scheme at Cwmcarn Forest Drive and Members wished it noted that Cwmcarn Forest Drive is located in Cwmcarn, and not Risca. Officers agreed to amend the report accordingly.

Cabinet discussed the Scheme at Ystrad Mynach in relation to car parking and sought further information on the consultation process and objections. Officers explained that consultation was undertaken with Local Ward Members as part of this reporting process, however, there has also been extensive consultation undertaken as part of the Ystrad Mynach Master Plan, for which the scheme is an integral part. There have been objections raised in relation to the Park and Ride access and use of School Playing Fields; however, this has been addressed as part of the consultation and Master Plan.

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:

- i) the progress of the Tranche 2 Projects be endorsed;
- ii) it be agreed that £75,000 of the Regeneration Board remaining Project Development Fund of £1.21m be allocated to the Tranche 2 Priority schemes identified by the Regeneration Project Board.

The meeting closed at 10:47 am.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on the 12th June 2019.

CHAIR