



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER 2020 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor P. Marsden (Leader) - Chair

Councillors:

S. Cook (Social Care), N. George (Waste and Public Protection), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), Councillor S. Morgan (Economy and Enterprise), J. Ridgewell (Environment and Infrastructure), E. Stenner (Performance and Customer Services) and R. Whiting (Learning and Achievement).

Together with:

C. Harry (Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services), D. Street (Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing) and M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director – Communities).

Also in Attendance:

A. Dallimore (Regeneration Services Manager), P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), S. Harris (Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer), S. Isaacs (Rents Manager), R. Kyte (Head of Regeneration and Planning), T. McMahon (Community Regeneration Manager), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), C. Evans (Committee Services Officer).

Observing:

Councillor J. Pritchard.

LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader sought the agreement of Cabinet and those in attendance, to adjourn this meeting at 10.55am, in order that Members and Officers could participate in Remembrance Day Services, and a 2-minute silence, to honour those fallen during World War 1 be observed.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L. Phipps (Housing and Property).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. SPECIAL CABINET – 20TH OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the special meeting held on 20th October 2020 were approved as a correct record.

4. CABINET – 28TH OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2020 were approved as a correct record.

5. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE

Cabinet were provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports from 11th November 2020 to 25th November 2020. Members were reminded that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and therefore subject to change.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be noted. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme be noted.

6. CAERPHILLY CARES

The report, which was considered by Social Services Scrutiny Committee on 20th October 2020, sought approval to develop the existing Buddy Scheme and Community Regeneration Legacy into the Caerphilly Cares Service, which aims to ensure people receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time, using a single point of contact through a triage system.

The report also sought to establish a universal gateway model that provides a central coordination and response team that understands the different needs of individuals at risk or suffering from disadvantage. Providing advice, support and signposting through strength-based assessments to internal and external support services, to enable them to become more resilient and live as independently as possible through a strength based, community centred model and incorporate it into the Caerphilly Cares provision as part of a phased approach to developing an integrated end to end journey through internal and external services for 'at risk' customers.

Members noted that the report sought to create the conditions for community assets to thrive and create a balance between service and community support by removing any barriers and for our services to work alongside communities in ways that are empowering, engaging and meaningful. To stimulate collaborative working within the Council and with partners and, above all, put communities at the heart of what we do.

It was noted that, according to Recovering from Emergencies; UK Government 2010, 'Pandemic recovery is a complex and long running process that will involve many agencies and participants. The way processes are undertaken is critical to their success. Recover is best achieved when the affected community is able to exercise a high degree of self-determination.

As cited in 'the front door' to adult social care, auditor general for Wales' report, often authorities do not know where gaps in provision lie which has resulted in an inconsistent distribution and provision of services. Even where effective services exist, poor co-ordination between services and organisations can also limit their effectiveness.

As a result of the pandemic, communities will suffer from economic, health and other social challenges. Well-being issues and inequalities existed in communities before the pandemic, which has only served to exacerbate these and the coming months could prove particularly difficult after furlough ends. However, conversely, the lockdown also resulted in strengthening of resilience both individually and at community level. Local activities are vital to supporting wellbeing, with new and existing local groups picking up the mantel. Support for these groups is crucial moving forward and should be seen, very much, as part of the offer of support.

The current crisis has provided the Council with an opportunity to harness, support and expand the community resilience demonstrated in many communities across the borough. It provides opportunities for meaningful dialogue with vulnerable people, to assess service and support needs and coproduce services designed to promote long term independence.

The report outlines the reasons for establishing the proposed Caerphilly Cares model as well as the learning from the buddy scheme to date. It explains the model proposed as well as the plans for the transition of the buddy scheme within this model and makes some recommendations for decision.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A Cabinet Member queried, in response to paragraph 3.4, the long-term funding options should the proposed funding not be secured. Officers explained that there are a few avenues of exploration for grant funding, which includes the use of the underspend in the Children and Communities Grant Funding and the possibility of utilising the Social Care Service reserves. Whilst this could be a short-term fix, suitable long-term funding will be required in order to continue the provision of the service and employ permanent staff. Therefore, it may be a requirement, should funding not be available, to highlight these pressures to Cabinet and Council at a later date and seek approval for growth funding allocation.

In acknowledging the query raised, the Cabinet Member for Performance and Customer Service suggested that two additional recommendations be considered by Cabinet.

A Cabinet Member expressed his gratitude to all staff involved in the schemes and in the preparation of the report. The Cabinet Member reiterated the benefits of the scheme, as a volunteer during the earlier period of the pandemic for the buddy scheme and highlighted the benefits to the community, service user and volunteers alike. The Cabinet Member outlined the excellent work undertaken as part of the scheme and the Community Cohesion element achieved as a result.

A Cabinet Member further echoed these sentiments and outlined that the scheme is one of the few positives to come out of the Pandemic and is encouraged that the needs of the Communities are being identified and met.

Following consideration and discussion and the inclusion of two additional recommendations, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of electronic voting, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers Report and with the inclusion of the additional recommendations at *iv)* and *v)*: -

- i) The establishment of the Caerphilly Cares Service be agreed;
- ii) The allocation of £130k of funding as outlined in the financial implications in the report at 10.1 be utilised to develop a Caerphilly Cares Central team;
- iii) The allocation of £155k of funding be agreed to enhance the Caerphilly Housing Tenancy Support team to provide financial advice to all residents.
- iv) *In terms of identification of funding it be agreed that the first option would be to use underspends from the current years Children and Communities Grant (CCG), subject to Welsh Government approval until 31st March 2021 and explore opportunities to utilise this grant to fund the service from 1st April 2021 to March 31st 2022. The second option would be to utilise Social Service reserves.*

- v) *However, if these funding streams aren't available in the long term, it be agreed that a growth bid in the 2021/22 budget proposals be presented to Council in February 2021.*

At 10.52am, Cabinet agreed to adjourn the meeting, for a short period, in order to participate in Remembrance Day Services.

The meeting of Cabinet reconvened at 11.15am.

7. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

The report sought Cabinet approval for funding to install an electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of the first phase of actions to introduce electric vehicles into the Authority's fleet.

It was noted that at its meeting of 19th September 2018, Cabinet approved the Electric Vehicle Strategy and Action Plan. Good progress has since been made, and the report sets out the next steps, including requesting capital funding to deliver the proposed actions.

The initial actions identified in the report focus on providing the electric vehicle charging infrastructure at the three main Council sites. This will allow the Council to be able to charge in excess of 100 electric vehicles, depending on service area demand. The initial costings based on Western Power Distribution (WPD) quotations and Building Consultancy estimates amount to just under £300,000.

It was noted that Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) Workplace Charging Scheme funding is potentially available for up to £10,000 which will be applied for. A balance of £49,500 for capital funding is available from previously approved Carbon Reduction Initiatives and a figure of £240,500 is requested from Capital Earmarked Reserves.

The Officer provided additional information in relation to the site and charging apparatus that it is proposed for instalment. Members noted that there are several options for the charging infrastructure, from 3kw, 7-22kw and 43-50kw, all of which vary in purchase price. Following a review of the Fleet requirements, it was ascertained that points charging 7-22kw would be sufficient for the coming 18-month period, for the replacement fleet vehicles, allowing a speedy charge to suit the use of the vehicle. However, it was noted that the replacement of refuse lorries and larger fleet vehicles have not yet been considered as there is yet to be suitable and economical solutions for a larger vehicle. Members were assured that this is however being considered.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

A Cabinet Member sought further information around the procurement process for the vehicles and charging facilities. Officers explained that the fleet will be replaced as required and the lease term comes to an end, at this point, the needs of the service area will be ascertained, and a suitable electric vehicle sourced, where possible. The charging options will also be determined at this point.

A Cabinet Member wished it noted that, prior to the onset of the Pandemic, Stagecoach were awarded funding to pilot some electric buses from Caerphilly town centre, whilst this is currently on hold, information and learning experiences could later be utilised from Stagecoach on the approach to maintaining and charging larger vehicles.

The Chief Executive drew Cabinet's attention to paragraph 8.3 of the report, which outlined that the project is part of a wider collaboration across Gwent, and a theme of the Public Services Board. In addition, queries have been raised for making this infrastructure available

to staff and Cabinet were asked to note that this is the beginning of the journey and therefore should commence with the fleet. Further engagement and consultations will be undertaken with staff and Trade Unions in due course, and proposals will feature in future reports.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By way of electronic voting this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report:

- i) Capital funding allocation of £240,500 from Capital Earmarked Reserves be agreed to install electric vehicle charging units at the CCBC sites listed in the report and Appendix 1;
- ii) The allocation of the remaining balance of £49,500, in the previously approved Carbon Reduction Initiative budget, be allocated to the installation of the charging units;
- iii) A grant application be submitted to the Office of Low Emissions Vehicles (OLEV) for £10,000;
- iv) The installation of electric vehicle charge units be approved directly from existing buildings where there is sufficient capacity, to minimise grid connection costs.

8. REGENERATION BOARD – PROJECT PROPOSALS

The report sought Cabinet approval for the allocation of up to £509.7k Regeneration Project Board Development Funds toward several recently endorsed and evaluated projects, within the County Borough.

The report also sought the approval for a streamlined approval process for the Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Thematic Grants Programme and the re-purpose of previously agreed funds for Oakdale Business Park Plateau 2 and 4 Council owned land at Caerphilly Business Park.

It was noted that at the meeting on 30th May 2018, Cabinet agreed that a Regeneration Project Board would 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.

The Regeneration Assessment Panel have met on numerous occasions to consider the prioritised list of capital projects, which have been identified by the Board to move to the Assessment Stage. Following subsequent Cabinet Approvals, since February 2019 numerous projects have been endorsed with financial assistance provided (where necessary) from the Regeneration Project Board Development Funds.

During January 2019 Cabinet resolved to release £1.2m of reserves for the Regeneration Board prioritised projects, bringing the Total Development Fund budget allocation to £1.5m. To date, £882,500 has been allocated towards prioritised capital regeneration schemes, across the County Borough.

The report sought Cabinet approval for the allocation of a further **£509.7k** Development Funds towards a number of prioritised projects, namely:

- WG TRI Town Centre Covid-19 Response;
- WG TRI = Caerphilly Place Making Plan;
- Oakdale Business Park – Plateau 1;
- Caerphilly Workmen's Hall and Institute;

- Cwm Ifor Solar Farm.

It was noted that the above request would leave an active Development Fund of **£107,800**.

The report also sought Cabinet approval for a streamlined approval process associated with the Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Thematic Grants Programme and the use of previously agreed funds for Oakdale Business Park Plateau 2 & 4 towards Council owned land at Caerphilly Business Park.

Cabinet thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise, in noting the report, wished to add an additional recommendation, in acknowledging the information outlined at 5.52 of the report that delegated powers, for approvals up to £50k, be given to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise (and Chair of the Regeneration Project Board) appropriate Head of Service and Finance Officer. This process will enable efficiency of approval and award of the grants programme and delivery of enhancements on the ground.

A Cabinet Member wished to express his gratitude for the proposals around Caerphilly Workmens Hall, and highlighted that previous meetings have taken place in which the history, activities and facilities have been identified in order to secure potential funding. It is therefore positive news that funding has been identified for this community hub.

A Cabinet Member, in noting the projects outlined in the report and the benefits the additional funding would provide to the community, outlined the additional benefits such as the potential for job creation and economic resilience.

Discussions took place around a site visit, which was undertaken by Cabinet Members prior to the meeting, and it was noted that feedback has been provided by members of the local community on what they feel would benefit the community, which includes more business units.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By way of electronic voting this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report and with the inclusion of the additional recommendation at iv): -
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- i) The recommendations of the Regeneration Project Board towards the review of and development of the projects listed within the report be agreed;
- ii) £509,700 of the residual Regeneration Project Board Development Fund of £617,500 be allocated to these priority schemes, as approved by the Regeneration Project Board;
- iii) A streamlined approval process be agreed for the Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Thematic Grants Programme and the re-purpose of previously agreed funds for Oakdale Business Park Plateau 2 and 4 towards Council owned land at Caerphilly Business Park.
- iv) *Additionally, it was agreed that delegated powers, for approvals up to £50k of the TRI Thematic Grants Programme, be given to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise (and Chair of the Regeneration Project Board), appropriate Head of Service and Finance Officer. This process will enable efficiency of approval and award of the grants programme and delivery of enhancements on the ground.*

The meeting closed at 11.48am.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 25th November 2020.

CHAIR