



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 29TH JUNE 2022 AT 1PM

PRESENT:

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

Councillors:

J. Pritchard (Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration & Climate Change), N. George (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property), Mrs E. Stenner (Cabinet Member Finance & Performance), S. Cook (Cabinet Member for Housing), J. Simmonds (Cabinet Member for Highways & Transportation), E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care), P. Leonard (Cabinet Member for Planning & Public Protection) and C. Morgan (Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure & Green Spaces).

Together with:

C. Harrhy (Chief Executive), D. Street (Corporate Director - Social Services and Housing), M. S. Williams (Corporate Director – Economy and Environment) and R. Edmunds (Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services).

Also in Attendance:

R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), R. Kyte (Head of Regeneration and Planning), A. Dallimore (Regeneration Services Manager), J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer), J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer) and M. Afzal (Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Leader reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education & Communities) and S. Harris (Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. CABINET – 15TH JUNE 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE

Cabinet was provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports until 27th July 2022.

The Committee were asked to approve the removal of Renting Homes (Wales) Act report, scheduled for the Cabinet meeting on 13th July 2022. Members were advised that the item did not require an executive decision and therefore it be removed from the Cabinet Forward Programme.

Members were reminded that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and thus 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.

It was noted that agenda items 8 and 9 (Public Interest Test and Oakdale Business Park) had been deferred until the next appropriate meeting of Cabinet.

5. UK GOVERNMENT LEVELLING UP FUND

Consideration was given to the report which updated Cabinet on the UK Government's Levelling Up programme. It was confirmed that the recently published programme would focus on the same three investment themes as the first round, including local transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas, town centre and high street regeneration and support for maintaining and expanding the UK's world-leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets.

Cabinet was advised that a report outlining the UK Government programmes was presented to Committee on 19 May 2021 and a list of eligible CCBC projects were outlined in that report.

The Cabinet Member commended the administration for their efforts in bringing the proposals forward. The Committee were advised that a considerable amount of work had been undertaken in respect of the report. The Cabinet Member was pleased to note that local MPs – Wayne David and Chris Evans had written to the Authority to offer their support and the key projects were outlined.

It was hoped that the Cwmcarn Forest/Canal Project would build on the fantastic asset already in place at the site. The Cabinet Member detailed the administration's vision for the constituency. It was hoped that the development of new attractions such as Zip World would facilitate a broad range of activities and result in a landmark tourist destination.

In terms of the Caerphilly Interchange and the Wellbeing Centre, it was advised that a new Centre was required as the existing Leisure Centre had been built over 50 years ago, it was therefore advised that a new Centre would be of immense benefit to the local community.

The development of a new public transport interchange at the site of the existing train station in Caerphilly was highlighted. It was advised that the proposed development would provide a catalyst for further economic regeneration activity in Caerphilly.

Clarification on the Cwmcarn Forest/Canal Project was sought with one Member querying about the beneficiaries of the project. It was hoped that the variety of outdoor activities would attract a range of different ages to access the outdoors. The Cabinet Member's comments were echoed by the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment who confirmed that a large section of society would benefit from the project including the hospitality sector. It was anticipated that the proposal would facilitate long-stay tourism in the County Borough.

Further clarification on the project was sought with one Member querying how the proposal tied in with the Council's Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, endorsed in 2018. The Officer confirmed that the project would form an integral part of the strategy due to its all-encompassing nature.

A Member requested a summary of what residents could expect from the Cwmcarn Forest/Canal Project. It was advised that the project aspired to build on the existing facility. However, it was hoped that the new facilities would increase visitor numbers.

Due to the high levels of deprivation in close proximity to Lansbury Park, the Committee sought further information on the location of the new site and how the proposal would positively impact the wellbeing of residents. It was hoped that the state-of-the-art facility would improve the wellbeing of constituents due to the suite of support services and ease of access, especially for residents in the Upper Rhymney Valley.

A Member queried how the Caerphilly Interchange proposal would increase the number of public transport users with current figures showing a decline in the number of passengers due to the pandemic. It was confirmed that the administration was looking to encourage users through the landmark building proposed for the site. It was hoped that the hub of activity, an initiative for the existing station would also increase user numbers. The Officer acknowledged that the process would be time consuming, however, Members were assured that the significant investment in infrastructure would convince service users to make full use of the proposed transport interchange.

The Caerphilly Interchange Project was welcomed by Cabinet. Members were particularly pleased to note the accessibility component of the new transport interchange which would cater for disabled users and those with prams.

Reference was made to the £5 million worth of investment in Caerphilly Castle by Cadw which sought to attract an additional 100,000 visitors a year. It was hoped that the investment would promote significant tourism in the County Borough and would boost the town's status as a landmark tourist destination.

Clarification on the Resilient Roads funding was sought. Members were assured that Officers were assessing the different options in respect of the road and confirmed that discussions with the Resilient Roads Panel were underway. The Officer indicated that the discussions had been positive and that it was anticipated that a decision in relation to funding for the highway would be received in late Summer/early Autumn which would hopefully facilitate the works required to bring the road back into full use.

The Officer outlined a list of sites the authority was looking to develop as part of the social regeneration programme and Members were referred to paragraph 5.33 of the report for further detail. Members were updated on the work underway on the Northern Valley. It was

confirmed that the authority was working in collaboration with Welsh Government as well as regional authorities and that good progress was being made. The Committee were referred to the CCBC website for further information.

Reference was made to the bespoke interventions, an initiative the authority was looking to progress for the Upper Rhymney Valley and the Heads of the Valleys. It was noted that important work was underway in respect of this area.

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: -

- 1) The detail of Round 2 of the UK Levelling Up programmes and the opportunities for the Funds to contribute significantly to the Council's own Place Shaping, Transformation and Regeneration agendas be considered.
- 2) The projects set out in paragraph 5.13-5.30 and included in Table 3 (Financial Implications Section) in respect of the Levelling Up Fund that have been identified as those that will be advanced enough for submission be approved.
- 3) The Cwmcarn Forest Masterplan be endorsed to enable it to drive future investment activity at the venue.
- 4) The Caerphilly CBC match-funding requirement proposal of up to £14.8m for the Levelling Up bids be approved and funded from the Council's Wellbeing and Place Shaping Framework Earmarked Reserve and the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund.
- 5) A further £0.2m be approved and allocated from the CIL fund to cover the cost of the bid preparations to enable submission to UK government by 6/7/2022.

6. SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

Consideration was given to the report which updated Cabinet on the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) as part of the UK Government's Levelling Up programme. Cabinet was advised that (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. Reference was made to the £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025.

A Member sought clarification on how businesses would benefit from the investment. The Officer outlined the different components of the grant including the capital element and the revenue funding. It was advised that the capital element of up to £10,000 would cover the cost of equipment improvement, and the revenue grant of up to £2,000 would enable businesses to invest in web development and marketing training upon completion of an application where businesses would be required to match 50% of the funding.

A query was raised by a Member who sought clarification regarding the investment in upskilling. The Officer advised that the authority was looking to develop proposals in partnership with universities and colleges which would enable businesses to upskill employees. The Member was referred to the component which sought to improve adult numeracy. It was confirmed that £500,000 had been reserved for numeracy skills and the authority was striving to maximise the funding to improve digital skills in addition to this. Members were assured that the further funding could be accessed from the UKSPF to support alternative training initiatives.

Reference was made to the Cardiff Capital Region which had been allocated over £258 million in the last 2 years. Members were assured that work was underway with 10 local authorities to obtain the necessary funds. The importance of at risk expenditure was emphasised as well as the importance of spending with partner organisations in a timely manner.

Clarification on the communities and place investment priority was sought, with one Member querying what the investment would mean for local town centres. It was confirmed that £150,000 had been proposed to establish town centre response teams to deal with town centre audit issues across five main towns. The Officer advised that £30,000 of the funding would assist with the purchase of equipment and materials as the teams could be involved in the painting of railings, cleaning, and the removal of weeds. It was hoped that the initiative would encourage more people to visit town centres and businesses to invest in the towns and surrounding communities.

The Officer was asked to elaborate on the cost-of-living crisis, particularly in respect of the support in place for residents. It was stipulated that a significant amount of work was already underway in the County Borough. Members were advised that the authority was looking to develop a standalone webpage on the Council's website with the aim of combining support services. It was anticipated that the standalone webpage would make support services more accessible and give residents a better understanding of what the Authority had to offer.

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: -

- 1) The detail of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the opportunities for the Funds to contribute significantly to the Council's own Place Shaping, Transformation and Regeneration agendas be considered.
- 2) Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council assume the role of the 'Lead Local Authority' for the UKSPF for the Cardiff Capital Region.
- 3) Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council submit the CCR Investment Plan for consideration by UK Government prior to the closing date for submission of 1st August 2022.
- 4) Delegated powers be given to the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration & Climate Change, to agree the legal agreements associated with the UKSPF with the Lead Local Authority namely Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council on behalf of Caerphilly County Borough Council.
- 5) The 2022/23 budget be utilised at risk to deliver the interventions outlined in Appendix 1 in order to ensure that the fund for 2022/23 is fully expended.
- 6) The contracts of staff who are at threat of redundancy as a consequence of the cessation of the European Social Fund in 2022/23 be extended up to March 2023. This will be at financial risk to the Council in the first instance and the contracts can be further extended once confirmation of SPF funding is received.
- 7) Any elements of 2022/23 at risk expenditure that are not subsequently approved for funding through the SPF be funded through the Council's Wellbeing and Place Shaping Framework Earmarked Reserve.

- 8) The appointment of a small project team using the administration/management fee, initially comprising of a lead project officer (Grade 10), finance officer (Grade 9) and 1 x support officer (Grade 9) to manage and administer the delivery of the SPF programme for Caerphilly CBC be agreed.
- 9) Further reports be presented to Cabinet detailing the funding proposals for future stages of the fund.

7. REGENERATION PROJECT BOARD - PROJECT PROPOSALS

Consideration was given to the report which recommend the allocation of £60,000 of the Non-Community Council Community Infrastructure Levy funding for the Penmaen Ward to the Engineering Projects Group to implement a car park extension at Oakdale Sports Pavilion. Cabinet was advised that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced on 1 July 2014 within Caerphilly County Borough. It was hoped that the CIL would play a significant in the delivery of the Council's engineering projects.

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: -

- 1) The allocation of £60,000 of the Non-Community Council Community Infrastructure Levy funding for the Penmaen Ward to the Engineering Projects Group to implement a car park extension at Oakdale Sports Pavilion be approved.

8. PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

This item stood deferred until the next appropriate meeting of Cabinet.

9. OAKDALE BUSINESS PARK.

This item stood deferred until the next appropriate meeting of Cabinet.

The meeting closed at 2PM.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 13th July 2022.

CHAIR