



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN, ON WEDNESDAY, 29TH OCTOBER 2014 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor K.V. Reynolds - Leader

Councillors:

Mrs C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), G. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing), Mrs B. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), Mrs R. Passmore (Education and Lifelong Learning), D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering), R. Woodyatt (Social Services)

Together with:

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), S. Aspinall (Acting Deputy Chief Executive), N. Scammell (Acting Director Corporate Services and S.151 Officer), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services)

Also in Attendance:

B. Hopkins (Assistant Director- Education), T. Shaw (Head of Engineering Services),
C. Evans (Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor K. James (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D.T. Hardacre declared an interest in the items relating to Draft Savings Proposals for 2015/16, New Governance Arrangements for South East Wales EAS and Abertysswg/ Pontlottyn Primary Formal Consultation Process. Councillor G. Jones declared an interest in the item relating to Abertysswg/ Pontlottyn Primary Formal Consultation Process. Details are minuted with the respective items.

3. CABINET – 15TH OCTOBER 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2014 (minute nos. 1-5; page nos. 1-2) be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. RIGHTS OF WAY CABINET COMMITTEE HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record.

5. RIGHTS OF WAY CABINET COMMITTEE HELD ON 8TH OCTOBER 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th October 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

6. DRAFT SAVINGS PROPOSALS FOR 2015/2016

Councillor D.T. Hardacre declared an interest in this item as a close family member is in receipt of Day Care Services.

The Acting Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer presented the report, which provided Cabinet with an updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which reflected the Provisional 2015/16 Local Government Financial Settlement, along with details of the draft savings proposals for the 2015/16 financial year and details of the revised savings requirements for the period 2015/16 to 2017/18 based on the WG Provisional 2015/16 Local Government Financial Settlement.

The recent announcement by Welsh Government had confirmed a 3.4% reduction in the financial settlement for Caerphilly County Borough Council next year, which equates to a saving requirement totalling £12.8million in 2015/16. Cabinet considered the report and appendices, which highlighted assumptions for a further 3.4% funding reduction for each of the following two years. Savings proposals for each Directorate were considered, which aim to mitigate the impact of the settlement. The updated position demonstrated a total savings requirement of £39 million over the three-year period.

In considering the financial challenges anticipated over the coming years, significant efforts are being made to mitigate the impact and protect services and jobs wherever possible.

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 set out in the Officer's report:-

1. The proposed package of 2015/16 savings totalling £12.208m, as detailed in Appendices 2 to 6 of the report, be endorsed.
2. These savings proposals be subject to a further period of consultation prior to final 2015/16 budget proposals being presented to Cabinet in January 2015 and to Council in February 2015.
3. The proposal to increase Council Tax by 3.9% for the 2015/16 financial year to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved (Council Tax Band D being set at £992.02), be endorsed.

7. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The report sought the formal approval of Cabinet for the production of a South Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan (LTP), produced jointly by Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils.

The Welsh Government (WG) requires all local authorities (LA's) in Wales to produce LTP's by the end of January 2015. The LTP's will replace the 4 Regional Transport Plans (RTP's) that are currently in place. Work is ongoing between the 5 'South East Wales Valleys' local authorities (i.e. Caerphilly CBC, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC) to produce a joint LTP.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons set out in the Officer's report, the production of a South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan that will be produced jointly by Caerphilly CBC, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC, be approved.

8. NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOUTH EAST WALES EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE

Councillor D.T. Hardacre declared an interest in this item as the Chair of the Education Achievement Service Board.

The Deputy Chief Executive presented the report, which highlighted the changes necessary to the agreed Governance arrangements for our Regional School Improvement Service – Education Achievement Service (EAS) in order to align the arrangements to the National Model for School Improvement, and sought approval to implement the new arrangements.

The Minister for Education and Skills introduced a National Model of regional working in March 2014. The South East Wales Education Achievement Service (EAS) closely aligns with the National Model but, in order to comply with the National Model, it is recognised that the 'Governance' arrangements required further consideration.

The proposed new governance arrangements included: -

1. The continuance of an EAS Board;
2. The addition of a South Wales Executive Board;
3. The continuance of the Joint Executive Group (JEG);
4. The addition of an Audit Committee.

Cabinet noted that the new governance arrangements will be presented to each of the five local authorities of the South East Wales Consortium in the next month in order to seek approval to implement the changes.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons set out in the Officer's report, the new governance arrangements for the Education Achievement Service, as outlined in paragraph 4.7 of the report, be approved.

9. ABERTYSSWG/ PONTLOTTYN PRIMARY: FORMAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

Councillor D.T. Hardacre declared an interest in this item as a Governor of Fochriw Primary School and Councillor G. Jones declared an interest, as his partner is a Governor of Fochriw Primary School.

The report provided Cabinet with an update in respect of the 21st Century Schools Rhymney 3-18 proposal. The report proposed the commencement of the statutory processes with a formal consultation and highlighted the timescales proposed for the project.

At a meeting of full Council in November 2011, a bid of £12 million to the Welsh Government (WG) was approved in respect of a Rhymney 3-18 development. The bid was subsequently approved by WG on 5th December 2011 and proposed the rationalisation of up to 3 existing primary schools into one new primary school.

Cabinet noted that informal consultations were conducted over the last couple of years and during the summer term 2014, it was proposed to establish local stakeholder groups in the communities of Fochriw, Abertysswg and Pontlottyn, although in the latter case there were no expressions of interest. Surveys were conducted and the views of feedback were considered and documented within the report.

In view of the outcomes of the information processes, it was proposed to develop the new primary school for Abertysswg and Pontlottyn and exclude Fochriw. Welsh Government officials have indicated that the recommended proposal is viable and should accord with grant conditions. In addition, there will be a need to separately consider federation options for Fochriw Primary School for the future.

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 set out in the Officer's report: -

1. The proposal to proceed to establish a primary school for Abertysswg and Pontlottyn, but not Fochriw, on the Rhymney Comprehensive site, be approved.
2. Members consider the precise funding implications, following the formal consultation processes.
3. Members agreed that federation arrangements be considered for Fochriw Primary School for the future.

The meeting closed at 2.35 pm.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on
12th November 2014.

CHAIR