



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD IN THE CHAMBER PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH MARCH 2023 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor E.M. Aldworth - Mayor
Councillor M.A. Adams - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

C. Andrews, A. Angel, C. Bishop, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, R. Chapman, P. Cook, S. Cook, C. Cuss, N. Dix, G. Ead, C. Elsbury, G. Enright, M. Evans, K. Etheridge, A. Farina-Childs, C. Forehead, E. Forehead, J. E. Fussell, A. Gair, N. George, C. Gordon, D. Harse, T. Heron, A. Hussey, D. Ingram-Jones, M. James, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, J. Jones, S. Kent, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, C.P. Mann, A. McConnell, B. Miles, C. Morgan, S. Morgan, B. Owen, T. Parry, L. Phipps, M. Powell, D.W.R. Preece, H. Pritchard, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, J. Reed, J. Roberts, J. Sadler, R. Saralis, E. Stenner, J. Taylor, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, L.G. Whittle, S. Williams, W. Williams, J. Winslade, K. Woodland, C. Wright

Together with:

C. HARRY (Chief Executive), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services and Housing), M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), H. Delonnette (Policy Officer), S. Pugh (Head of Communications), E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer), R. Barrett (Minute Taker)

ANNOUNCEMENT – DEFERMENT OF AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

Council were advised that in response to various communications received, and with the agreement of the Mayor, Agenda Item No. 8 (Proposed Voluntary Termination of the Caerphilly CBC Schools PFI Contract) had been deferred to allow Members time to consider the full business case, prior to discussion at a special meeting of Council to be held on 19th April 2023.

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chief Executive reminded those present the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to View](#). She advised that decisions would be made by Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.T Davies MBE, J. Simmonds, J.

Rao, D. Cushing, D. Price, J. Scriven and S. Skivens.

2. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the engagements and events she had attended since the last meeting of Council and advised Members that she recently had the pleasure of attending an Army Engagement Evening at Lewis School Pengam, which was a very interesting evening exploring potential career prospects within the army for young people. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor attended a St David's Day Civic Service along with the Mayor of Cardiff Council. The Mayor was also very pleased to attend the opening of Sight Cymru's first charity shop in Blackwood, who have been operating across the region since 1865 and provide an invaluable service to help people with sight loss.

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

Councillor Walter Williams presented a petition on behalf of local residents and Argoed Community Council, which asked the Council to provide a safe pedestrian crossing and barrier at the junction of Abernant Road and Pant y Cefn Road, remove the mini roundabout, and return it to a junction controlled by a stop sign and double white lines.

The Mayor accepted the petition which would be actioned in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

4. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Waste Crew

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces advised Council that three members of the Food and Green Waste Collection Team (Craig Jarvis, Simon Kentfield and David Lemin) regularly visit Abertridwr Community Church for hot drinks and have become friendly with the volunteers working at the centre.

After learning that one volunteer is a big fan of the Welsh International Football player, Gemma Evans, they contacted her to ask for a signed photograph for the volunteer. The crew were really pleased when Gemma sent them a signed Welsh Shirt, which they had framed. Craig, Simon and David wrapped the framed shirt and presented it to the volunteer at her home on Christmas morning. This certainly was an example of Council staff going above and beyond their duties and is something that they, and the volunteers at the centre, will always remember.

It was noted that unfortunately Simon Kentfield was unable to attend this evening's meeting, but Craig Jarvis and David Lemin were invited forward by the Mayor in order for Members to recognise their kind and thoughtful gesture.

Malgwyn Davies OBE, High Sheriff of Gwent

The Mayor introduced the award which recognised the achievements of Mr Malgwyn Davies OBE, the High Sheriff of Gwent, and Caerphilly Council's first ever Chief Executive following local government reorganisation back in 1996.

Over the past 12 months, Mr Davies OBE has been undertaking the role of High Sheriff of Gwent, which dates back over a thousand years and entails a range of duties such as raising the profile of voluntary and youth organisations and supporting emergency services and

other community organisations across Gwent. The Mayor paid tribute to the work of Mr Davies OBE, who has been extremely proactive in this role and has worked hard to support the whole community during his 12-month appointment, which is now coming to an end.

Several Members also paid tribute to the work of Mr Davies OBE and commended him on the diligent and professional manner in which he had carried out his duties during his time as Chief Executive.

Mr Davies OBE was invited forward in order for Council formally thank him for his dedication to the role and accept a small gift on behalf of the Council and residents across the county borough.

Mr Davies OBE thanked Council for the unexpected award and for honouring him at the meeting. He expressed his pride at being the first former local government employee to hold the position of High Sheriff of Gwent and for being able to represent the county borough at this prestigious level, a role which he has thoroughly enjoyed, and thanked Caerphilly Council for all the support and assistance that had been given to him during his year in office.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

During the course of the meeting, Councillor L. Phipps and J. Winslade declared personal interests in relation to Agenda Item No. 12 – Bedwas Rugby Football Club in that family members play for the club in a non-professional capacity. As this was a personal interest only there was no requirement for them to leave the meeting and they could take full part in the debate and vote. Details are also minuted with the respective item.

6. COUNCIL HELD ON 17TH JANUARY 2023

RESOLVED that the minutes of Council held on 17th January 2023 (minute nos. 1-13) be approved as a correct record.

7. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(4)

Question from Councillor A. Hussey to the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities, Councillor C. Andrews

Would the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities give an update about the work of the Caerphilly Cares Team?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Education and Communities to Councillor A. Hussey

Caerphilly Cares has given out over 450 Warm Packs to residents and received over 5000 calls and 2000 emails from residents asking for help. There are now over 53 Welcoming Spaces delivered by 39 organizations across the county borough, and following an evaluation, there will be an opportunity for these spaces to continue into the spring, with less emphasis on providing warmth and more on reducing social isolation and loneliness. We have also provided 46 community organisations and groups to obtain funding worth over £250,000. Over 300 individuals have been supported on a one-to-one basis and 78 have been helped to access local community provision, and the first two recipients of the Hardship Fund are about to receive payments. The Hardship Fund is for those residents who are unable to receive financial support from any other organisations. There have been over 1000 residents supported to apply for the Welsh Government winter fuel payment and there

have also been over 800 food parcels arranged, 800 successful applications for discretionary housing payments, energy advice has been given to over 250 tenants and we have provided 350 referrals to the Citizens Advice Bureau for debt and money advice. The second Cost of Living newsletter has been printed and is in the process of being delivered to homes throughout the county borough. It will also be available in libraries and job centres and Caerphilly Cares will have a supply when they attend the events planned throughout the spring and summer months.

£3.2m of additional income has been generated for residents during the 21/22 financial year and there has been a roll out of support to assist Catering, Education, Council Tax and the Benefits Teams taking calls and referrals. The Community Connectors have been compiling case studies, and some of the ones to note include a resident who had a back payment of PIP of £10,000 and had an increased income of £225 per week. Another resident had their weekly income increased by £159 and also discovered they were entitled to free dental and eye care and a free TV licence. A third resident was assisted with a benefits check and had their income increased by over £700 a month. These are only some of the ways that the team is working to aid our residents across all departments of the Council and with other organisations, and I would like to thank all our employees and volunteers for their efforts in helping with this.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

8. PROPOSED VOLUNTARY TERMINATION OF THE CAERPHILLY CBC SCHOOLS PFI CONTRACT

As noted at the start of the meeting, this item was deferred to a special meeting of Council to be held on 19th April 2023.

9. PUBLICATION OF THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval for the publication of the Authority's Pay Policy Statement 2023/24. Council noted that the Pay Policy Statement as attached at Appendix 1 is a statement of fact and contains the fully details of the remuneration position for the Council for 2023/24. It is a legislative requirement that this information is published on an annual basis by the 31st March each year. The Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's Website and will be available for access by members of the public.

There were no questions received on the contents of the report and it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 52 for, 0 against and 7 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the attached Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 (Version 12) be agreed for publication on the Council's website;
- (ii) the amendments to Grades 1-3 on the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services Pay Structure at Appendix A of the Pay Policy 2023/24 be agreed.

10. GWENT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD – WELL-BEING PLAN 2023-2028

Consideration was given to the report, which sought Council approval of the draft Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) Well-being Plan 2023 - 2028 in order to progress to final publication before the 5th May 2023.

Members were advised that this is the first Gwent Well-being Plan for approval as a statutory member of the Gwent Public Services Board. Public Service Boards have a duty under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to produce a Well-being Plan that aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of its area, contribute to the seven national well-being goals, and use the five ways of working as a framework. In September of 2021, the five existing PSBs in the Gwent region merged to form the Gwent PSB.

Building on the strong partnership arrangements that already existed together, the first Gwent Well-being Assessment was published with supporting local community area assessments identifying the key issues affecting local communities. Using these key themes, a draft Well-being Plan was developed and consulted on widely with local communities, stakeholders and regulators, and the information gathered during the consultation was used to further refine the Gwent Well-being Plan. This Plan sets the regional direction for collaborative working, identifies where the PSB can add most value and provides a common approach across the region to ensure that all residents benefit. A Local Delivery Group has been set up in each local area to focus on the local issues and how to address these, enabling work and effort to be concentrated where they will make the most difference. Work will continue over the next few months to develop detailed delivery plans at a local and regional level, including actions for the short, medium and long term, together with performance measures to assess the difference being made.

Assurances were given that Caerphilly Council will continue to have a local response to the Gwent Public Services Board plan through the Caerphilly Local Delivery Group, ensuring that public sector agencies are represented, together with the voluntary sector and town and community councils. The Local Delivery Plan will contribute to the regional priorities and will set out what Caerphilly will do in collaboration with the other LDGs across Gwent to make things better for local communities.

Council discussed the report, and in response to a query on local resident representation within the Local Delivery Group, Officers explained that it has been recognised that the group needs to widen its representation to ensure that they are identifying the local issues as part of the new Well-being Plan. It was noted that the Group currently includes a Town and Community Council sector representative, and the Group are also looking to include a housing provider representative, as housing has been identified as a priority in the Local Delivery Plan.

Clarification was sought on the progress of the participatory budgeting programme across Caerphilly County Borough, and it was explained that this is money which has been allocated to the community through Regional Partnership Board arrangements via the Local Delivery Group. The Council are about to enter into an arrangement with GAVO to deliver the programme on their behalf, and over the next few months, work on this programme will begin to take place with local communities.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 59 for, 0 against and 1 abstention) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that it be noted that the Gwent Public Services Board has produced its final draft Well-being Plan and that the Plan be approved so that it can progress to final publication before the 5th May 2023.

11. PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

Members considered the Public Interest Test and concluded that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information. By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation and in noting there were 52 for, 2 against and 4 abstentions this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Having accepted the Public Interest Test the live stream and recording of the meeting was stopped and Council moved into exempt session.

12. BEDWAS RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

During the course of debate, Councillor L. Phipps and J. Winslade declared personal interests in relation to this item, in that family members play for the club in a non-professional capacity. As this was a personal interest only there was no requirement for them to leave the meeting and they could take full part in the debate and vote.

An amendment was moved and seconded and by way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 17 for, 36 against and 4 abstentions) the amendment was declared lost.

Having fully considered the Officer's report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein plus an additional recommendation (3.1.4) be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 43 for, 2 against and 11 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that Recommendations 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3 as set out in the report and additional Recommendation 3.1.4 be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.28 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2023 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR