



## **CABINET**

### **MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023 AT 1PM**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

#### **Councillors:**

C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education and Communities), J. Pritchard (Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change), S. Cook (Cabinet Member for Housing), E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care), P. Leonard (Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection), C. Morgan (Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces) and E. Stenner (Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance).

#### **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 (Corporate Director Economy and Environment).

#### **Also in Attendance:**

S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), S. Richards, (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), L. Donovan (Head of People Services), P. O'Neil (Senior Youth Service Manager), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), V. Doyle (Policy Officer), P. Warren (Strategic Lead for School Improvement), K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), A. West (21st Century Schools, Admissions and Exclusions Manager), P. Cooke (Transformation Manager), B. Winstanley (Head of Land and Property Services) A. Cullinane (Senior Policy Officer - Equalities and Welsh Language), E. Townsend (Health and Safety Manager), L. Kabza (Youth Participation and Curriculum Projects Coordinator), S. Pugh (Head of Communications), J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer).

#### **Also in Attendance:**

Mr B. Mahoney (Vice-Chair of The Youth Forum)

## **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 were received from Councillor N. George (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property, Highways).

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

## **3. MINUTES – 19<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2023**

RESOLVED that Subject to the inclusion of Councillor C. Andrews to the list of those in attendance the minutes of the meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023 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 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2023.

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.

## **5. VIOLENCE AT WORK POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report that sought Cabinet approval in relation to the Violence at Work Policy.

Cabinet Noted that the Trade Unions and Health and Safety Committee made 2 minor additions to the draft of the policy as part of the consultation process, and these have been incorporated into section 4.2. and 4.4.2 of the final draft of the policy as attached in Appendix 1.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained in the Officers report Cabinet approved the Violence at Work Policy.

## **6. YOUTH FORUM PRIORITY ISSUES**

Cabinet considered a report which sought Members views on how the Council can best address issues that are by raised by Children and Young People via the Youth Service's Youth Forum.

The Cabinet welcomed Mr Brogan Mahoney the Vice- Chair of The Youth Forum who gave an in-depth presentation which informed Cabinet on the process of identifying the priority issues, which included a consultation process, with 5 key areas (Learning, Prosperous, Greener, Healthier, and Safer) determined at the Annual Youth Forum Conference and a Priority Issue Ballot which took place in February 2023. The priority issue that was chosen as a result of the ballot was 'Learning,' which included life skills of living independently, budgeting, car maintenance and BSL. Cabinet were also informed how the Youth Forum will address the

priority issues, which included weekly project group meetings, an agreed timeline of work and a 'life skills' consultation throughout the county borough.

The Cabinet thanked the Vice Chair of the Youth Forum for the excellent presentation.

Cabinet were pleased to note that two Officers from the Multiply Project are working with the Youth Forum to put on a Life Skills Lab event. The objective of the event will be to capture young people's imagination for example learn cooking and budgeting skills that will assist with independent living. A taster British Sign Language course will be included in the event where there will be an opportunity to obtain a qualification.

Following a query raised by Cabinet regarding how mentoring is promoted within the Youth Forum, Officers advised Cabinet that all youth workers act as mentors for young people and the proposal is to have youth workers placed appropriately for young people to be able to easily access and acquire mentoring and support when required.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained in the Officers report;

1. The Youth Forum be supported in its work to address the overall priority issue.
2. How to support the Youth Forum in addressing their priority issue was considered.
3. Due regard be given to issues raised within the report by Children and Young People when making decisions which impact upon their lives.

## **7. WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**

Consideration was given to a report which informed Cabinet and sought their endorsement of the progress made during the financial year 2022-2023 against four specific areas of Welsh language work, as required under the regulatory framework for implementing the Welsh Language Standards.

Cabinet were informed that the report will be published online by the deadline date of 30 June 2023, as required by Welsh Language Standard 158.

Cabinet were pleased to note that another successful 'Ffiliffest' has taken place within Caerphilly, which not only welcomed Welsh speakers but also non-Welsh speakers. The Deputy Leader wished to put on record his support and thanks to Menter Iaith and all the organisations that contributed to the event's success.

Cabinet were very pleased to acknowledge that this was the fifth year in succession that the Authority has not received a Welsh Language Commissioner Investigation, which is purely due to the hard work and dedication of staff. A Cabinet Member wished to place on record their thanks to all involved in compiling the Annual Report.

The Officer informed Cabinet that the Council is very supportive of staff who wish to learn Welsh and that the courses offered are free and are deliverable online or in person, depending on the learner's preference. During the coming months there will be a lot of information being rolled out to staff informing them how they are able to enrol on the courses. The Officer also made Cabinet aware of a lunch time club called Clwb Clebran (chat club), which brings Welsh speaking members of staff and those that are learning the language

together to practice their Welsh language skills together in the workplace. They are encouraged to correspond with each other in Welsh, through emails or telephone conversations so that Welsh becomes part of the normal working day.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report the content of the annual report be noted and endorsed the publication of the information as a record of progress towards, and compliance with, the relevant Welsh Language Standards.

## **8. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING BAND B PROPOSAL - UPDATE ON PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT, PONTLLANFRAITH (CENTRE FOR VULNERABLE LEARNERS)**

Consideration was given to the report which provided Cabinet with an update in relation to the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B Programme in respect of the Pupil Referral Unit, Pontllanfraith – locally referred to as the 'Centre for Vulnerable Learners'.

Cabinet were informed that the project is seeking to create a Pupil Referral Unit for vulnerable pupils on the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive site to accommodate between 80 - 120 pupils and be equipped with high quality learning opportunities, indoor and outdoor sporting provision as well as enabling wider community use of the facilities outside of school hours. The project will support vulnerable learners from across Caerphilly at Key Stage 3/4, sitting at the centre of the Council's Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Strategy and the Cwmpawd hub and spoke model.

Cabinet were asked to approve that an additional £2,150,739.40 is set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve in respect of the increased financial contribution required to complete the proposal for a new Pupil Referral Unit, Pontllanfraith as part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Band B programme.

It was noted by Cabinet that the additional costs have increased more than originally anticipated due to building cost increases which are being experienced throughout Wales.

Cabinet were pleased to note that the indoor and outdoor sports facilities that are being incorporated at the Centre will be made available to the public during evenings and weekends.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED for reasons contained in the Officers report a further £2,150,739.40 be set aside from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve to fund the cost of the creation of a new Pupil Referral Unit, at Pontllanfraith be agreed.

## **9. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE OPERATION OF THE WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND AND THE SMALL GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUND**

Consideration was given to the report which recommended to Cabinet changes in relation to the operation of the Welsh Church Acts Fund (WCAF) and the Grants to the Voluntary Sector (GTVS) Fund, following a review by the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel. The report also recommended the delegation of decisions on future changes to the operation of the grants to the Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer.

Cabinet noted the recommendations were proposed by the GTVS Panel, in relation to the operation of the WCAF and the GTVS Fund.

In response to questions raised by Cabinet, Officers advised Cabinet Members that the grant application form has been reviewed in the last 18 months, with the aim being to simplify the form as far as possible to make it easier for applicants to complete. However, the content that is still included is there to be able to comply with financial regulations. The Officer further advised Cabinet Members that the form is relatively simple and for most part is simply tick boxes. Cabinet Members were also advised that grants are not paid in full once they have been approved, this is because the Council has a responsibility for monitoring public funds. Cabinet were made aware that there have been instances in the past where approvals have been given under the WCAF, but the amount had never been claimed. The 50% upfront payment proposal in the report is a compromise to assist organisations and to keep the risk of the Council to an acceptable level. The Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer noted that he would consider requests for 100% funding on an exceptional basis if a case were made.

Concerns were raised by Cabinet in relation to the lease rules and how these may impact some Community Centres. There are currently four Council owned Community Centres which are ineligible to apply to the WCAF due to the lack of time left on their lease. The Officer advised Cabinet that traditionally the length of the lease shows the longer-term commitment to both the building and what is delivered from the building. The WCAF mirrors the Welsh Government Community Facilities Grant which has a far more onerous lease requirement and also the Lottery Grants which would require 25 to 50 years lease remaining. The Officer advised Cabinet that they would be happy to work with any that are currently non-compliant. Work has been carried out with these types of premises in the past to extend their leases to 25 years which would release a number of different funding opportunities. Therefore, having a lease agreement in place is beneficial.

The Leader advised Cabinet Members that a letter had been received from Councillors Judith Pritchard and Marina Chacon Dawson requesting that both the application and criteria of the Welsh Church Acts Fund be published on the Council's website for clarity and ease of use. It was noted that as part of the Officers recommendations in the report that this was proposed.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained in the Officers report Cabinet approved that;

1. The Welsh Church Acts Fund will not provide funding for revenue costs.
2. The maximum level of future grants under the Welsh Church Acts Fund be £7,500 until the underspend is fully utilised.
3. The General Criteria amounts for the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Fund be uplifted by 20% from the 2023/24 financial year and then in line with CPI inflation in future years.
4. The list of proposed General Criteria for the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Fund covers all the categories required.
5. A new set of terms of reference will be agreed at the next available Voluntary Sector Liaison Sub-Committee to allow this to happen and put in place a post-meeting with Elected Members only, to consider applications that fall outside the General Criteria or relate to 'exceptional individuals' seeking financial support.

6. That the application form and criteria for the Welsh Church Acts Fund be published on the Council's website.
7. That the minimum amount of grant funding to be awarded to voluntary organisations is increased to £200.
8. That future decisions in relation to the management and operation of the Welsh Church Acts Fund and Grants to the Voluntary Sector Fund are delegated to the Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer.

## **10. UPDATE ON DECARBONISATION ACTION PLAN AND PROPOSED FUTURE APPROACH**

Consideration was given to the report which updated Cabinet on the work undertaken to deliver the actions set out in the Decarbonisation Action Plan.

Cabinet noted that the report had been approved by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.

The report sought Cabinet approval on the recommendations on the next steps towards achieving the Council's target to be net zero carbon by 2030.

The Deputy Leader wished to place on record his thanks to Officers for their co-operation in preparing the report.

Cabinet sought clarification on whether the work that is being carried out to reduce carbon within the Caerphilly Housing Team will be included in the overall Decarbonisation Action Plan. The Officer explained that WG have said that Housing will not be included in the baseline calculations, this is due to most LA's throughout Wales no longer holding their own housing stock. However, emissions from the authority managing and maintaining its housing stock, such as heating and lighting housing offices, the diesel used in vehicles to drive to houses to carry out maintenance, and the materials used would all count towards the authority's carbon footprint.

Cabinet noted that the WG have very clearly defined methodology when calculating carbon footprint. These include everything the Council emits therefore the calculations are very comprehensive and data is improving to make sure that the calculations become more accurate.

Furthermore, officers clarified that the CCBC supply chain is by far the largest contributor to its carbon footprint and that this area was the most challenging in terms of seeking to reduce the carbon impact.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained in the Officers report Cabinet approved that;

1. That the CCBC Decarbonisation Action Plan is reviewed and updated to focus on the 2030 organisational requirements, to align with the WG route map and timeframes, and that a separate action plan for the county borough as a whole in accordance with the 2050 targets, is developed and considered.
2. That each Directorate and Service area is given a copy of their carbon baseline, and that during 2023/24 financial year work is done to support them to fully understand and analyse those emissions and to identify priority areas for reduction.
3. That from 2024/25 carbon budgets, with identified reduction targets, are agreed with CMT

for each service area, and reported via Directorate Performance Assessments.

4. That a working group for each of the 4 pillars of Reduce, Produce, Offset and Buy is established to co-ordinate the work on each area.
7. That the following 5 corporate commitments are agreed:
  - Net zero carbon considerations should be included in all major decisions as part of the Integrated Impact Assessment process
  - All new corporate buildings and schools will be designed to net zero carbon standards where possible.
  - All new heating systems will transition to low carbon heat with appropriate insulation upgrades where possible with fossil fuels will be used only as a last resort
  - A low carbon travel hierarchy should be developed and implemented for business travel which accelerates the transition to low carbon transport.
  - We will aim to plant 300,000 new trees before 2030 where land availability allows.
7. That a programme of skills development, awareness raising and behaviour change is developed alongside detailed support for specific roles, including technical knowledge
8. That we continue our work to develop specific renewable energy projects that contribute to our overall programme.
9. That detailed land mapping and evaluation is undertaken to protect existing habitats and to identify land for tree planting. Further work should be undertaken to assess the feasibility of a potential Caerphilly Forest programme and the potential for growing our own trees.
10. That low-carbon procurement policies be embedded through procurement frameworks forming a key part of cost-benefit analysis and contract appraisal. Suppliers and services are challenged to identify and make significant supply chain emissions reductions.
11. That progress is monitored and evaluated on an annual basis with an Annual Decarbonisation Report prepared each November.

The meeting closed at 14.25 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

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CHAIR