



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2024 AT 1PM

PRESENT:

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

Councillors:

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

Together with:

D. Street (Deputy Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services), M.S. Williams (Corporate Director of Economy and Environment) and G. Jenkins (Interim Director of Social Services).

Also in Attendance:

R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), M. Williams (Management Surveyor), H. Delonnette (Senior Policy Officer), S. Ellis (Lead for Inclusion and ALN), L. Downey (Acting HR Service Manager), K. Peters (Service Manager – Service Improvement and Partnerships), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services), A. Lewis (Transformation Project Officer), P. Cooke (Transformation Manager), B. Winstanley (Head of Land and Property Services), C. Adams (Highway Engineering Group Manager) M. Goodger (Principal Engineer), M. Lloyd (Head of Infrastructure), and J. Thomas (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 were received from C. Harry (Chief Executive) and Steve Harris (Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

3. MINUTES – WEDNESDAY 17TH JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th January 2024 be approved as a correct record.

4. MINUTES – CABINET AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS INSTITUTE – WEDNESDAY 17TH JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th January 2024 be approved as a correct record.

5. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE

Cabinet was provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports until 3rd April 2024.

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.

6. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL (FORMERLY KNOWN AS HOME TUITION)

Consideration was given to the report which provide Cabinet with information regarding the current model of 'home tuition' and sought Cabinet's support for proposals for changes to existing delivery.

Responding to a query, assurance was given that made that tutors allocated to the schools would not be expected to fill in for teachers. Cabinet was also assured that there is a need to support all schools and schools that have not been allocated a tutor will be supported through a financial agreement, which allow them to develop the same approach.

It was noted that the report identifies that tutors are not in favour of working in a school setting and feel that it will not benefit the pupil. The Officer advised there was still work to be done with the tutors and the Unions.

Following concerns raised assurance was given that for those children who, for medical and emotional wellbeing reasons, are unable to attend school, there would still be a provision to receive home tuition.

Cabinet was advised positive feedback has been received from teachers and tutors of two schools that undertook a trail, which involved the schools identify the pupils that require support, rather than the Local Authority.

Following a query raised, Cabinet was advised that several consultations had been undertaken by the head teachers across the schools and they have all recognised that this is an opportunity for them to enhance the offer of learning and enhance their approaches to inclusion and wellbeing. The schools have also been reassured that where appropriate approaches can be changed. For example, pupils in year 11 will continue with their current way of learning to minimise disruption. Cabinet was also advised that the school's overall attendance would not be affected as there are different attendance codes used.

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

RESOLVED for reasons contained within the Officers report the contents of the report be noted and the proposal to implement a revised model of supporting pupils who receive tuition directed by the school in order that they can be supported via the school be endorsed.

7. COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONTRIBUTIONS GUIDANCE- FOR PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENTS WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY IMPACT

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval for the Community Benefit Contributions Guidance for projects and developments with the potential for significant community impact. Which highlight the role of Caerphilly County Borough Council in working with private sector partners, in partnership with local communities, to secure meaningful and sustainable benefits.

Cabinet noted there are numerous opportunities for renewable energy developments across Caerphilly County Borough.

The Officer referred to the need to add an additional recommendation at 3.2 of the Officers report and assured Cabinet that this recommendation had formed part of the initial consultation on the report. Having taken this into consideration Cabinet moved and seconded the additional recommendation to read: That Cabinet consider and approve the guidance. The aim of the guidance is to establish the Council's stance on standards for developers when delivering Community Benefit Contributions (CBCs) to local communities within the County Borough.

Following a query raised, Cabinet was pleased to note that Caerphilly is one of the first Local Authorities to look at schemes such as this and has already started to share information with other Welsh Local Authorities in the hope that this will become a Pan Wales approach.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the subject to the additional recommendation at 3.2 that the recommendations in the report be approved and by way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED for reasons contained within the Officers report:

1. The comments made at the Scrutiny Committee be noted.
2. The Community Contributions Benefit Guidance that aims to establish the Councils stance on standards for developers when delivering Community Benefit Contributions (CBCs) to local communities within the County Borough be considered and approved.

8. NANT CYLLA WATERCOURSE EROSION CONTROL WORKS.

Consideration was given to the report which provided cabinet with an update in relation to erosion of the Nant Cylla watercourse, Ystrad Mynach and to request authorisation for a spend of £270k for detailed design of a stabilisation scheme and a £100k contingency fund for temporary stabilisation works should these be required whilst the full scheme is being developed and procured.

Clarification was sought on what the implications would be if Cabinet didn't agree to the work outlined within the report. Cabinet was advised that the proposed works will ease the pressure on the water course, and if this work is not undertaken there is a risk of failure and the

watercourse creating a significant washout and course blockages, which could cause contamination to the river Rhymney.

Further clarification was sought on whether there would be Welsh Government assistance with the funding of the works. The Officer confirmed that there is no WG fund that would be available for this type of work. The usual position of such works would be the legal responsibility of the landowner to maintain their watercourse. However, there is a potential that there could be some funding made available by the NRW.

Attention was drawn to recommendation 3.3 of the report where Cabinet sought further clarification and explanation for this recommendation. The Officer explained that there are three parts of the watercourse that are affected which are highlighted within the report. Parts of the area affected are owned by CCBC. However, there are parts of the bank that were previously owned by CCBC property owners have gained possession. However, if the Council only undertook the works on Council owner land there would be a potential for a piece work solution. Therefore, it is recommended that the Council cover the costs of the repairs. However, the property owners would not be entitled to any compensation for any outbuilding that may be affected or subsequently removed during the works.

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 within the Officers report:

1. The capital funding of circa £270k be made available to the Economy and Environment Directorate for detailed design of the scheme. This is to be funded from uncommitted capital earmarked reserves be agreed.
2. A contingency fund of £100k be made available to the Economy and Environment Directorate for further temporary stabilisation works should these be required prior to implementation of the full scheme. Again, this is to be funded from uncommitted capital earmarked reserves be agreed.
3. No compensation will be offered to property owners / landowners in relation to the removal of structures built close to the top of the banks and / or spanning the watercourse, but that CCBC will commission detailed design and construction works at no cost to the property owners / landowners be agreed.

9. CAERPHILLY STATION FOOTBRIDGE REVIEW.

Consideration was given to the report which asked Cabinet to consider the options available regarding the future provision and alternative proposals of a pedestrian rail crossing at Caerphilly Railway Station.

Cabinet noted that the footbridge was officially closed under a temporary footbridge order on 20th July 2023, which was initially for a period of 6 months. The bridge remains closed in the interest of public safety. Cabinet was advised that a detailed inspection report is being prepared.

Cabinet sought clarification on whether Transport for Wales (TfW) are planning to electrify the existing railway line and if there were plans to carry out this work what would happen to the bridge during the electrification process. The Officer clarified there are proposals by TfW to electrify the line. However, at this time the Authority is not in receipt of those proposals and there is a deadline of July 2024 to make a decision on the future of the bridge.

Further clarification was sought on the distance to Caerphilly town if the bridge was removed and what would the difference be if the replacement bridge was made DA compliant. The Officer

advised that the distance would be 255meters if the bridge was removed and if the bridge were to be replaced with DA compliant bridge with ramps either side the distance would be 578meters.

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 within the Officers report.

1. The contents, options and capital requirements of the report were considered and option 4 be approved as the way forward. Removal of the bridge is the preferred option, as replacement/repair is not a cost-effective solution when alternative routes and proposals are available.
2. The £200,000 funding for the removal is made available from uncommitted capital earmarked reserves be approved.

10. DECARBONISATION ANNUAL REPORT NOVEMBER 2023.

Consideration was given to the report which provided Cabinet with an update on the work undertaken across the Authority to deliver the aims of the Decarbonisation Strategy.

On the 14th June 2023, Cabinet approved 10 recommendations relating to the implementation of the Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan. The recommendations included reviewing the Action Plan and preparing an annual progress report.

Cabinet noted that the Action Plan has been reviewed and the number of actions reduced from 122 to 76. Cabinet was provided with an update on the progress of the 76 actions.

Cabinet further noted that Working Groups have been established to drive forward each of the four areas.

Following a query raised, Cabinet was provided with an update on how Housing are making improvements to make accommodation more energy efficient. One of the improvements is replacing windows with UPVC triple glazing.

Cabinet was pleased to note that Caerphilly County Borough are now a bronzed level carbon literate organisation.

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

RESOLVED for reasons contained within the Officers report the progress made to date on the actions set out in the Decarbonisation Annual Report be noted.

11. DEMOLITION OF THE FORMER PONTLLANFRAITH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL.

Consideration was given to the report which sought Cabinet approval to partially reinstate some of the original budget to finalise the demolition and site clearance of the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive school.

Following a query raised, the Officer assured Cabinet the ongoing work at the CVL would not be affected and there would be no impact on the delivery by the extra work at the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School.

Cabinet noted that the funding for the extra work would be used from the uncommitted Capital Reserves.

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 the allocation of a further £310,000 to the demolition and site clearance of the former Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School be approved.

12. PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

Members considered the Public Interest Test and concluded that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interests in disclosing the information and it was: -

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.

13. PRIVATE WIRE ARRANGMENT BETWEEN BRYN GROUP AND CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

RESOLVED that for reasons contained within the Officers report the recommendations at 3.1 a) to d) be approved.

The meeting closed at 14.14 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 3rd April 2024.