



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 6TH APRIL 2022 AT 10:30A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor P. Marsden (Leader) - Chair

Councillors:

S. Cook (Social Care and Housing), N. George (Waste, Public Protection and Street Scene), C. Gordon (Corporate Services), J. Pritchard (Infrastructure and Property), Mrs E. Stenner (Performance, Economy and Enterprise) and A. Whitcombe (Sustainability, Planning and Fleet).

Together with:

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

Also in Attendance:

R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), A. West (21st Century Schools, Admissions and Exclusions Manager), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services), L. Morgan (Licensing Manager), R. Salter (Relay Taxis), G. Edwards (Caerphilly County Borough Taxi Drivers Association), M. Harris (Committee Support Officer/Chauffer) and M. Afzal (Committee Services Officer).

And:

Cllr. K. Etheridge.

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Leader reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed but would not be live streamed, however 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 Cllr R. Whiting (Learning and Leisure), C. Harrhy (Chief Executive) 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 – 23RD MARCH 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 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 the 13th of April 2022. Members were reminded that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and therefore 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.

5. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS - BAND B PROPOSAL - STATUTORY OBJECTION REPORT FOR: LLANCAEACH JUNIOR SCHOOL/LLANFABON INFANTS SCHOOL.

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update on the 21st Century Schools Band B proposal in respect of the amalgamation of Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School to create a new 3–11-year Primary School on the existing Llanfabon Infants School site. Members were advised that no statutory objections were received during the Objection Period and that the Authority was looking to proceed to the planning application stage and full business case submission.

Members were pleased to note that no objections were received and welcomed the next stage of the developments.

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: -

- a) The information contained in the Objection Period Summary Report be noted.
- b) The recommendation to proceed to the Planning Application Stage be approved.
- c) The recommendation to proceed to Full Business Case submission to Welsh Government be approved.

6. SOCIAL CARE PROVIDER FEE INCREASES 2022/2023.

Consideration was given to the report which informed Cabinet of the financial pressures and difficulties being experienced by providers of commissioned care and support services across the borough and UK.

The report also proposed fee uplifts for the different categories of commissioned care and support sector providers to address the financial pressures within the sector and recommended that £3,755,886 be allocated from the social care growth funding held within the Corporate Finance budget to fund the impact of the proposed fee uplifts.

Cabinet was advised that providers were in financial difficulties prior to the pandemic and Welsh Government hardship funding had been pivotal in keeping providers viable. It was noted that Welsh Government funding ceased on the 31st of March and to maintain and support commissioned care providers, it was necessary for the authority as Commissioner to step in.

Members were advised that discussions between the authority and Welsh Government regarding an increased level of funding were ongoing and would be seeking to see carers paid on or above the Real Living Wage of £9.90 per hour. The Association of Directors of Social Services were recommending a wage rate of £12 per hour, although this was noted to be some way away. Cabinet was advised that the recommendations before them would mean a viable independent sector for the next 12 months.

Cabinet supported the proposals within the report, and it was felt that the recommendations would safeguard commissioned care, support sector providers, and give reassurance to the public.

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 financial pressures facing the social care sector be acknowledged and the proposed fee increases summarised in paragraph 5.4 be agreed.
2. £3,755,886 be allocated from the social care growth funding held within the Corporate Finance budget to fund the impact of the recommended fee uplifts set out in paragraph 5.4.

7. PROPOSAL TO INCREASE HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFFS.

Consideration was given to the report which informed Cabinet of requests received from the licensed trade for an increase in the Tariff of Fares for Hackney Carriages. The report highlighted the results of a consultation exercise with the trade on an amended tariff and sought Cabinet approval to advertise a proposed amended tariff of fares for a statutory 14-day public consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Public Protection and Street Scene felt it was important to address the misconceptions surrounding the proposed increase and stressed that the increase was driven by the Taxi Drivers Association and not Members of the local authority.

Cabinet heard representations from Mr. R. Salter of Relay Taxis and Mr. G. Edwards of Caerphilly County Borough Taxi Drivers Association.

Mr Edwards highlighted that the report had been considered by the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 25th March 2022 and advised that the Association was looking to partner with the Licensing Committee to propose smaller increases on a more regular basis as opposed to every four years. Mr Edwards welcomed the increase but felt that the proposal did not meet the ongoing increase to fuel prices.

In respect of the smaller but more frequent increases to the tariff of fares, Mr Edwards believed this would mitigate negative public feedback. Mr Edwards thanked Cabinet for considering the report and the Leader invited Mr Salter to share his views on the proposal.

Mr Salter felt that the proposed increase would place daytime drivers at a disadvantage in comparison to weekend drivers. Thus, it was felt that a 30-40p increase to the weekday tariff would be of greater assistance to the taxi trade. Furthermore, Mr Salter anticipated that the

increase would only exacerbate further the cost-of-living crisis for customers and might well negatively impact on the overall security and viability of the taxi trade.

The Leader thanked Mr Salter for his representations.

Officers outlined the two different proposals, and it was stressed that both proposals were subject to consultation. Furthermore, Cabinet was advised that the proposal had been considered by the Licensing Committee who had unanimously voted in favour of the Proposal B set out in Appendix G.

Cabinet was advised that the Taxi and General Licensing Committee had listened to the representations and that every effort had been made to settle on a balance. Members were assured that the viewpoints of both parties had been taken into consideration when making a recommendation to Cabinet.

Clarification on the tariff of fares during the bank holiday period was sought. The Officer referred Cabinet to page 63 of the reports pack which detailed the amount passengers would pay during the bank holiday period.

Members welcomed the report and were supportive of its recommendations. Overall, it was felt a more regular review of tariffs would enable the Authority to take the appropriate action and gain a better understanding of driver and public needs.

The Leader thanked Mr Salter and Mr Edwards for their contributions.

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 the tariff of fares for hackney carriage vehicles as detailed within **Appendix G be approved** for publication in the press for the 14 days statutory public consultation period in accordance with the view of the Taxi and General Committee as detailed in the Consultation section.

The meeting closed at 11:55A.M.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 15th June 2022.

CHAIR