



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 25TH MARCH 2015 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor K.V. Reynolds - Chair

Councillors:

Mrs C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), G. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), Mrs B.A. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), 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 of Corporate Services and S.151 Officer), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services).

Also in Attendance:

B. Hopkins (Assistant Director 21st Century Schools), P. Elliott (Head of Regeneration and Planning), P. Hudson (Events and Marketing Manager), C. Campbell (Transport Engineering Manager), S. Pugh (Communications Manager), S.M. Kauczok (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Mrs B. Jones, D.V. Poole, T.J. Williams and R. Woodyatt declared an interest in agenda item 4 – Education Capital 2015/16, in that they sit on the governing bodies of schools included in the proposed capital schemes 2015/16.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

3. ABERTYSSWG/PONTLOTTYN PRIMARY – OUTCOME OF THE FORMAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

Mr B. Haile, Chair of Abertysswg Primary School had been granted permission by the Leader to address Cabinet in respect of this item. Local ward members, Councillors Mrs G. Oliver and J. Bevan also addressed Cabinet in respect of this item.

Mr Hopkins, Assistant Director 21st Century Schools, presented the report which updated Members on the formal consultation process and sought Cabinet's views on whether to proceed to Statutory Notice. A formal consultation process, accompanied by a consultation document, took place between 17th November and 31st December 2014. During this period a series of meetings was convened, the details of which are set out in the report. A summary of the main issues arising from the consultation process is outlined in the report together with the accompanying notes of the meetings. The main issues which arose during the formal consultation process are summarised in paragraph 3.17. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 5 of the report.

Following the officer's summary, the Chair invited Mr B. Haile, Chair of Abertysswg Primary School governing body, to the table. Mr Haile thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address Cabinet. During the course of his speech, Mr Haile outlined his concerns in particular in relation to the extra travelling distance to the proposed new school, which will not be on a bus route, together with the condition of the safe route to the school. Mr Haile concluded by requesting that the matter be deferred for a site visit.

Councillor J. Bevan (Moriah Ward) and Councillor Mrs G. Oliver (Pontlottyn Ward) expressed their support for the proposed new schools.

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 contained in the officer's report, Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation process, including the updated financial information from Welsh Government and agreed to proceed to Statutory Notice.

4. EDUCATION CAPITAL 2015/2016

Councillors Mrs B. Jones, D.V. Poole, T.J. Williams and R. Woodyatt declared an interest in this item in that they sit on the governing bodies of schools identified in the programme.

The report updated Members on proposals for the 2015/16 Education Capital Programme which had been presented to the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee on 24th February 2015. The views of the Scrutiny Committee were reported to Cabinet.

It is proposed to allocate a sum of £2m towards electrical rewiring works in schools over the three year period 2014/15 – 2016/17. The detailed proposals for 2015/16 are outlined in the report and appendix. In terms of Flying Start capital, Welsh Government has approved three bids for Caerphilly for 2015/16 amounting to £856k, the details of which are set out in paragraph 4.10.

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 contained in the officer's report, the proposals to utilise the Education capital budget for 2015/16 as outlined in the report, be endorsed.

5. VELOTHON WALES 2015

Councillor G. Johnston, Newbridge Ward, had been granted permission to address Cabinet in respect of this item.

The Interim Chief Executive presented the report which updated Members on the Welsh Government's initiative to attract a mass participation cycling event across South Wales on 14th June 2015. On Monday, 23rd March a drop in session was held at Penallta House for Members to discuss the event with the organisers.

The Major Events Unit (MEU) of Welsh Government (WG) is supporting the Event Organisers, Lagardere Unlimited UK, to establish a new cycling event called “Velothon Wales” as part of a planned global roll out of the UCI Velothon Majors Series. The event will involve establishing three routes for up to 15,000 cyclists to take place as a sportive (mass participation) event followed by a UCI classed race for up to 200 elite cyclists.

In order to cater for the event, roads along the proposed routes will need to be fully closed for up to 8 or more hours to allow the installation of essential Traffic Management arrangements and to permit the safe passage of the participating cyclists. This will rely heavily on the support of the local authorities directly affected.

As a result of the proposed road closure programme there is the potential for significant disruption and inconvenience to the public on the day. The Event Organisers have proposed mitigation to reduce this but concerns remain about the number of stakeholders that may be directly affected. The Event Organisers have engaged consultants to implement a Stakeholder Communications and Engagement Plan with those directly affected by the proposed route and are due to present their Event Safety Plans to a Gwent Safety Advisory Group for scrutiny on 20th April 2015.

In that some businesses may be effectively prevented from trading for the day or longer as a result of the proposed road closures, officers have made it clear to the Event Organisers that the Council is not prepared to accept any liability for any claims arising out of the event and will be seeking to obtain a suitable indemnity. The Council has written to the First Minister seeking direction as to whether Welsh Government wishes local authorities to progress the Road Closures in spite of the concerns around disruption and safety. The response from the Minister Mrs Edwina Hart (attached as an appendix to the report) has reaffirmed the strong support of WG for the event.

Councillor G. Johnston, who had been granted permission to address Cabinet in respect of this matter, outlined his strong concerns in respect of the disruption that would be caused by the proposed road closures in his ward and sought advice on the measures that would be in place for anyone needing to travel to an Accident and Emergency Centre during this period. Officers advised that the Emergency Services will continue to operate as normal during the road closures and further advice would be sought from them in terms of the issue raised by Councillor Johnston.

Following detailed consideration and discussion, during which further concerns were raised in relation to the impact of the proposed road closures, 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 contained in the officer’s report, following receipt of the proposed routes and associated Traffic Management Plans, Cabinet agreed to consult on the proposals in co-ordination with the Event Organiser’s engagement plans.

The meeting closed at 3.11 pm.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 15th April 2015.

CHAIR