



## RHONDDA CYNON TAF

### RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 8 May 2019 at 11.30 am at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

#### County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor M Norris	Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis	Councillor C Leyshon

#### Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive  
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services  
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services  
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services  
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development  
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services  
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services  
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services  
Mr D James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development  
Ms A Richards, Head of 21st Century Schools  
Ms M Warburton, HR Advisor, Equality & Diversity Team

#### Others in attendance

Councillor D Grehan  
Councillor J Harries  
Councillor L Jones

#### 149 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

#### 150 MINUTES

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019 as accurate reflections of the meetings.

#### 151 THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY DAY CENTRES - CONSULTATION REPORT

The Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services updated Members on the outcome of the six week focussed consultation exercise undertaken on the future of the remaining open access community day centres, following the

decision to consult at the Cabinet meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018.

Members were reminded of the rationale for the consultation in respect of Gilfach Goch Day Centre; Brynnar Jones Day Centre, Gelli; Teifi House Day centre, Maerdy and Nazareth Day Centre, Williamstown. These included concerns over the low usage (people are choosing not to attend); the increasing cost to the Council of providing the day centres; the potential significant capital investment required to retain the centres, and the wider pressures on the Council's budget from the growing needs of residents requiring assessed care and support. Members were referred to table 1 within the report which provided Usage & Net cost per meal within the day centres.

The Director advised members of the 6week consultation process undertaken and commented that feedback indicated that the majority of service users would understandably prefer that the centres remain open and that the provision of hot meals and activities remain available. He added that Service users identify the potential for greater social isolation and the loss of hot meals as being significant impacts from the potential closure of the day centres.

The Director continued however by explaining that on the evidence of the small number of service users it could be reasonably be argued that the existing model no longer caters for the majority of older people in our communities. The low usage and ongoing cost to the Council is not sustainable in the long term. The Director proceeded to explain of the opportunities available through the Community Hub programme to develop services for all of the community of all generations.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services and Welsh Language referenced the other strategies that needed to be taken into account when considering the report, referencing the Community Hub programme, the Older People Strategy for Cwm Taf and the Extra Care strategy, adding that these were all components to assist in the modernisation of services to the older generation within RCT. The Cabinet Member referenced the low usage of the current day centre provision within the report, although referenced the dedicated hard work of the staff currently within the day centres which was reflected in the services users comments during the consultation and their value for the service. The Cabinet Member referenced table 1 within the report, expressing his concern over the low usage and the level of expenditure. The Cabinet Member commented on the possibility of utilising the Community Hub programme to further develop services within the Community if the decision was taken to close the day centres.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services spoke of the opportunities available through the Community Hub programme, providing intergenerational opportunities for social activities within the community. The Cabinet Member referenced recent positive examples of Community Hubs across the County Borough

With the permission of the Chairman, County Borough Councillors J Harries and L Jones spoke on this item.

The Leader commented upon the consultation responses and the reference made by the local Member in respect of the 'Learning Curves' programme, advising that that the Council provide the users of this programme with transport provision. The Leader also reflected on the need to maintain the social care

provision, but agreed that such provision and social interaction would be available through a Community Hub provision.

The Deputy Leader commented on the need to modernise the service available for both the current older generation and for future generations, adding that the provision currently available was not fit for purpose. The Deputy Leader commented on changes that had taken place within her own ward and the alternate provision made available which all service users enjoy, commenting on the continuation of social interaction.

The Director also provided clarity on the Trade Union meeting held with staff which had been referenced during the meeting, advising that this was simply a standard meeting to advise staff of the forthcoming report to Cabinet and stressed that staff were not told that the decision had already been made. The Director confirmed the process that would be taken forward with staff if the decision was to be taken forward. The Director also provided information in relation to the RCT together process and the potential opportunities to work with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector to take forward service opportunities.

The Leader confirmed with the Director that if the decision was to be taken forward that current service users would be engaged with to which the Director confirmed would be the process.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language thanked both Members and officers for their discussions in respect of the report and concluded that the current model of provision did not represent what the current or future generation wanted in a service. The Cabinet Member spoke of the opportunities available through a Community Hub provision which would benefit all generations of communities and the need to modernise the service going forward.

Following detailed discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To consider the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the remaining four open access community day centres as identified in paragraph 4.1 of the report;
2. To approve the closure of the remaining open access community day centres, with the exception of Gilfach Goch Community Day Centre which will remain open; and
3. To authorise the Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services to explore alternative provision for existing service users through existing third sector organisations in the communities concerned or where appropriate, through the developing Community Hubs.

**N.B** following conclusion of the item County Borough Councillor D Grehan, J Harries and L Jones left the meeting.

## **152 STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2019-2022**

The Equality & Strategy adviser provided Members with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) which had been developed to demonstrate how the Council can meet its aims and commitment to equality and how it will meet its legal obligations contained within the Equality Act 2010.

The officer advised that a comprehensive engagement process took place to involve as many people as possible on the draft Equality Objectives and to give an opportunity for suggestions for additional or alternative objectives. Members were advised that feedback on the engagement process was very positive and as a result the Equality Objectives included in the SEP included:

- To better understand the needs of our communities and understand the barriers they face to thrive.
- To reduce inequalities that exist within our communities.
- To promote safe communities.
- To reduce the gender pay gap.
- To create an inclusive workforce.

Members were advised of the action plan which had been developed which will be embedded within the Council's Performance Management arrangements.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the SEP and the consultation that had been undertaken referencing some of the comments that had been raised during the consultation including concerns over Public Conveniences, Free School Meals and Hate Crimes. The Deputy Leader agreed on the objectives outlined within the plan, adding that this was a continuous piece of work for the team to continue to develop.

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve and publish the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP).

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#### **21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMME: COMMUNITY HUBS CAPITAL GRANT SCHEME**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Officer provided Members with details on the Council's applications for funding under the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools and Education Programme - Community Hubs Capital Grant Scheme.

Members were advised of the Welsh Government Community Hubs Capital Grant Scheme, and the five projects submitted for consideration by the Council, namely Ffynnon Taf Community Hub, Canolfan Teulu Seren Fach, King George V Athletics Track, Clydach Vale, Treorchy 3G, Ystradfechan Park and Porth Plaza Community Hub. The Officer advised that all five projects had been successful for funding and proceeded to provide further detail in respect of the projects going forward.

The Officer confirmed that the funding allocation of £1,060,000 was 100% grant funded with no requirement for any match funding or financial contribution from the Council.

The Officer concluded that the allocation of funding for the development of community hubs is a positive development and will ensure that residents of all ages in Rhondda Cynon Taf will have access to high-quality premises and facilities where a range of services can be facilitated to meet their needs.

The Cabinet Member, Education & Lifelong learning welcomed the report and the work taken forward by a range of officers from different services to secure the funding. The Cabinet Member took the opportunity to express one concern in respect of the move of the Communities @ Work team to the third floor of Porth Plaza and raised concerns in in

respect of the sensitive nature of the receipt of food bank vouchers and asked that the situation be monitored to ensure that there were no adverse effects due to this move.

The Cabinet member for Stronger Coms also spoke positively of the funding and the developments with the community hubs and again reiterated his thanks to all involved in securing the funding.

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the information contained within the report.
2. To the receipt of £1.06 million of capital funding from Welsh Government.
3. To include the funded projects outlined in sections 5 and 6 of the report within the capital programme.

#### **154 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMME CAPITAL MAINTENANCE GRANT**

The Director, Education & Inclusion Services provided Members with details of the additional capital maintenance grant funding awarded by Welsh Government for 2019/20.

Members were provided with the background to the funding, advising that Welsh Government had made available £40 million to support local authorities across Wales in addressing capital maintenance pressures. The funding had been awarded to alleviate financial pressure on local authorities and support Welsh Government 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, as one of its key priorities is addressing poor condition schools.

The Director continued by advising that the Council had been successful in receiving a funding allocation of £3.185M, which was 100% grant funded with no requirement for any match funding or financial contribution from the Council. The grant funding has been awarded for 2019/2020 and the building works can be delivered by the end of March 2020. Members were referred to 5.1 of the report which provided detail of the proposed projects to be funded by the additional planned capital maintenance programme.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong Learning welcomed the additional funding adding the funding would also assist schools reduce their maintenance budgets and welcomed the work to be undertaken through the proposed projects listed within the report.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the receipt of £3.185 million of capital funding from Welsh Government.
2. To approve the projects outlined in the report as priority for 2019/20 and approve scheme commencement.

#### **155 CHILDCARE OFFER CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING BID**

The Director, Education & Inclusion Services advised Members of the receipt of capital grants to support the implementation of the Welsh Government Childcare

Offer in RCT.

Members were informed of the invite by Welsh Government to submit a grant bid and business case for capital projects that would support implementation of the childcare element of the Childcare Offer in RCT.

Members were advised that during submission, officer agreed that the emphasis of the funding bid would be to support wraparound childcare provisions that are already on school sites, or to develop new settings in schools where there is a demand for wraparound care funded by the Childcare Offer. These projects support the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme by providing a holistic approach to co-location of services on school sites. Eleven projects were put forward for consideration.

Members were referred to 4.8 of the report which outlined the eleven projects put forward, with a further funding bid was also requested for a dedicated Project Officer post. In February 2019, the Council were advised that they had been successful in receiving funding for four of the eleven capital projects, as well as funding for the small capital grant scheme and the Project Officer, namely

- Tonyrefail Community School
- Gwauncelyn Primary School
- Cwmlai Primary School
- Dolau Primary School
- Small capital grant scheme
- Project Officer post

The Cabinet Member for Education & Lifelong learning welcomed the grant funding of £2,598,014 and spoke of the emphasis on the wrap around provision to facilitate and support the seamless transition between the FPN education element of the Childcare Offer and the additional funded childcare. The Member spoke positively of the projects that been chosen to be taken forward and the importance of the Project officer which was necessary to facilitate the projects going forward.

The Leader reiterated his thanks to the officers involved for the submission of the project proposals and welcomed the funding coming forward.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the information contained within the report.
2. To note the receipt of £2.598,014 million of capital funding from Welsh Government.
3. To include the grant funded capital projects in the capital programme.
4. To approve the grant funded dedicated Project Officer for the duration of the programme ending 31st March 2021.

The Service Director, Prosperity presented his report to members which set out a framework for a targeted, focussed and co-ordinated package of support for businesses in our town centres that would allow businesses to grow and thrive, increasing employment and prosperity leading to town centres becoming vibrant places at the heart of our communities.

The Service Director advised that the package of support considered the long term future of the Council's town centres and residents, visitors and businesses that depend on them. Creating sustainable long term prosperity across town centres was critical to the prevention of decline in communities and facilitating investment which would create jobs and prosperity with strong local businesses.

He continued by advising that the support measures would be made available to town centre businesses so that they can take advantage of trading and market opportunities at the right time and come forward with sustainable investment proposals. The package would be focussed in a coordinated way across key town centres.

Members were referred to section 6 of the report which provided further detail into the proposed framework including Town Centre Strategies and Masterplans; Non Domestic Rates (NDR) – A New Business Rate Reduction Scheme; • Enterprise Support Programme, • Town Centre Maintenance Grant, • Pontypridd Property Investment Programme; • Town Centre WiFi; • Building Resilience, Prosperity and Wellbeing Project, ; • Town Centre Prominent Building Enhancement Programme and • Support For Businesses to Meet Their Statutory Obligations.

The Cabinet Member Enterprise spoke of the importance of supporting business within the communities of RCT adding that the raft of measures proposed provided a coherent and cohesive package of support. He commented on the innovative measures being put forward and spoke of the success being seen already in some Town Centres referencing the additional footfall witness in Tonypany since the de- pedestrianisation .

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the targeted package of Support for Businesses set out within the report be delivered and monitored for the benefit of town centre businesses;
2. That the detailed proposals for a local discretionary town centre Business Rate Reduction scheme, as set out in the report, be developed and brought forward for Cabinet's consideration; and
3. That elements of the package should be further developed and reports prepared as appropriate for the development of town centre strategies and masterplans and a prominent building enhancement programme.

**This meeting closed at 12.30 pm**

**Cllr A Morgan  
Chairman.**