



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMITTEE SUMMONS

C Hanagan
Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
The Pavilions
Cambrian Park
Clydach Vale CF40 2XX

Meeting Contact: Julia Nicholls - Democratic Services (01443 424098)

YOU ARE SUMMONED to a meeting of **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** to be held at the **Virtual Meeting** on **WEDNESDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 2021** at **5.00 PM**.

AGENDA

**Page
No's**

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interests from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest; and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of prejudicial interest they **must** notify the Chairman when they leave.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

3. MINUTES

To approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11th November 2020.

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OPEN GOVERNMENT:

4. STATEMENTS

In accordance with Open Government Council Meeting Procedure Rule

2, to receive any statements from the Leader of the Council and/or statements from Cabinet Portfolio Holders:

5. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To receive Members questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

(**N.B** a maximum of 20 minutes shall be allowed for questions on notice.)

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COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME - FOR MEMBERS INFORMATION

[Council Work Programme 2020/2021](#)

6. UPDATE IN RESPECT OF THE CORONAVIRUS IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF

To receive a position statement in respect of the Coronavirus in the County Borough.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

7. COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22 - PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT

To receive a report from the Director of Financial & Digital Services

21 - 32

8. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

To consider the report of the Director of Financial & Digital Services.

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9. URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

To receive the report of the Service Director Democratic Services & Communications.

43 - 46

10. NOTICE OF MOTION

A. To consider the under-mentioned Notice of Motion standing in the names of: Councillors P. Jarman, H. Fychan, S. Rees-Owen, M. Weaver, K. Morgan, D. Grehan, E. Griffiths, J. Williams, A. Cox, J. Davies, J. Cullwick, G. Davies, E. Webster, S. Evans, A. Chapman, E. Stephens and L. Jones,

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

1. Recognises the distressing fact that 30% of children in Wales live

in poverty and yet just 13% are entitled to free school meals This is mainly because the remaining 17% of children live in low paid households that takes them just over the present eligibility criteria.

2. Notes that England and Scotland have universal infant FSMs with all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils eligible, which is not the case in Wales.
3. Calls on the Welsh Government to cost, budget and provide as a matter of urgency, the extension of FSMs to all children who live in poverty in Wales but are excluded from entitlement under the present eligibility criteria.
4. Agrees that no child should go hungry and that this should be a step towards the aim of rolling out universal FSMs to all children in Wales as called for by various groups in Wales, including Child Poverty Action Group and the People's Assembly

11. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any items which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

To: All Members of the Council

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 11 November 2020 at 5.00 pm .

County Borough Councillors - Council Members in attendance:-

Councillor S Powderhill (Chair)

Councillor M Adams	Councillor S Belzak
Councillor R Bevan	Councillor H Boggis
Councillor J Bonetto	Councillor S Bradwick
Councillor J Brencher	Councillor A Calvert
Councillor G Caple	Councillor A Chapman
Councillor A Cox	Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor J Cullwick	Councillor G Davies
Councillor L De Vet	Councillor M Diamond
Councillor J Edwards	Councillor J Elliott
Councillor S Evans	Councillor S Evans
Councillor M Fidler Jones	Councillor M Forey
Councillor A Fox	Councillor H Fychan
Councillor E George	Councillor D Grehan
Councillor E Griffiths	Councillor M Griffiths
Councillor J Harries	Councillor G Holmes
Councillor L Hooper	Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor P Howe	Councillor G Hughes
Councillor P Jarman	Councillor G Jones
Councillor L Jones	Councillor W Jones
Councillor R Lewis	Councillor W Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon	Councillor A Morgan
Councillor S Morgans	Councillor M Norris
Councillor D Owen-Jones	Councillor W Owen
Councillor S Pickering	Councillor M Powell
Councillor S Powell	Councillor S. Rees-Owen
Councillor S Rees	Councillor A Roberts
Councillor J Rosser	Councillor G Stacey
Councillor E Stephens	Councillor G Thomas
Councillor W Treeby	Councillor R Turner
Councillor L Walker	Councillor M Webber
Councillor E Webster	Councillor D Williams
Councillor J Williams	Councillor T Williams
Councillor R Yeo	

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr G Isingrini, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr P Mee, Director, Public Health, Protection & Community Services
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services

43 Apologies

An apology of absence was received from County Borough Councillors J R Davies, A Davies-Jones, K Jones, L Jones, K Morgan, M Tegg, M Weaver, G D Williams and C Willis.

44 Introductions

Introductions were made by the Group Leaders present:-

County Borough Councillor M Webber (In the Group Leader's absence -Deputy Leader of the Labour Group)

County Borough Councillor P Jarman (Plaid Cymru Group)

County Borough Councillor M Powell (RCT Independent Group)

County Borough Councillor L Hooper (In the Group Leader's absence- Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group)

County Borough Councillor S Belzak (Independent Member)

45 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, a number of declarations were made later on in the meeting pertaining to the agenda as follows:-

In respect of Agenda Item 6 - Update in respect of the Coronavirus in Rhondda Cynon Taf

- County Borough Councillor R Lewis – “My partner works for the Public Health Wales Vaccination Team”
- County Borough Councillor R Lewis – “ I am a registered volunteer for the Merthyr Trussel Food Bank”
- County Borough Councillor S Powderhill – “My business may be eligible for a business grant”
- County Borough Councillor M Fidler Jones – “I was the lead on Tenovus Cancer Care's work highlighting the impact of lockdown on cancer diagnosis”
- County Borough Councillor G R Davies – “I have received a Covid-19 grant for my business
- County Borough Councillor G R Davies – “ I am a member of the Tennis Club which has also been in receipt of a Covid-19 grant”
- County Borough Councillor G R Davies – “I volunteer for the Rhondda Foodbank and I made an application for the café in the Chapel”
- County Borough Councillor A Chapman – “I have received a Covid-19 grant for my business, ‘The Wonder Stuff’ in Treorchy”
- County Borough Councillor W Owen – “I have received a Covid-19 grant for my Licensed Premises”
- County Borough Councillor G Jones – “ I am Chair of the Library”
- County Borough Councillor E George – “I am a registered volunteer for the Merthyr Trussel Food Bank”

46 Suspension to Standing Orders

The Deputy Leader made a statement in respect of moving the suspension of Council Procedure Rule 15.1 and advised that in order to facilitate the smooth running of the Council meeting through Zoom, Group Leaders have agreed in advance that where a vote is taken on any item, the individual Group Leader will exercise the vote on behalf of all their Members present for the item in question.

In order to implement the revised voting procedures the Deputy Leader moved the suspension of Council Procedure Rule 15.1, which states that a matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Members voting and present in the room at the time the question was put.

Following consideration of the matter it was **RESOLVED** to suspend Council Procedure Rule 15.1

47 Minutes

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 23rd September 2020 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

48 Members' Questions

Question from County Borough Councillor G Hughes to Cllr Powell, Chair of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee:

“What considerations is the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee giving to the likely financial consequences of a potential no-deal Brexit later this year?”

Response from Councillor M Powell:

Councillor Powell advised that given the uncertainty of Brexit it is difficult to forecast the potential financial implications with any accuracy and the effects may not be felt immediately for example the cost of supplies may increase if we experience world trade organisation tariffs. The impact on this council is also difficult to assess as some suppliers may not pass the full cost of any tariffs to the council and consumers. There may be positive or negative fluctuations in the value of sterling which may be difficult to predict. There is a possibility that one cost may offset the other or there could be a double impact effect with tariffs being introduced and the value of sterling falling. As a result this could lead to a double digit increase in the cost of imported goods from the EU and could probably have an impact on low paid workers or families who pay the greatest proportion of their income on food and supplies.

The council keeps a close eye on all Brexit related matters and is a member of the WLGA's Brexit Working Group. The wider implications the council is communicating with as many businesses as possible to share clear guidance from WG and updated the council website.

Councillor Powell advised that he would share the detail of his statement and relevant hyperlinks. A social media campaign will also be launched this week and will focus on raising awareness for businesses and also the EU Settle Status Scheme. A report will also be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 17th November 2020 and will provide an update on the work that is being undertaken across the Council to prepare for Brexit”

Supplementary question from Councillor G Hughes:

“It is evident that in your role as Chair of the F&P Scrutiny Committee you see a considerable negative impact to RCT from a no deal Brexit. I share your concerns over the detrimental and damaging impacts a no deal Brexit could have on our economy. I wonder how you can reconcile your views as Chair of the F&P Scrutiny Committee with your role as Leader of the RCT Independent Group that includes a signed up member of the Brexit Party and another who is openly pro Brexit”

Response from Councillor Powell:

Councillor Powell stated that individuals are individuals and he would not dictate the views his members hold and there is a broad range of views within the Group. The Group has a good understanding of the effects that decisions will have upon residents in the Borough which is disseminated from the F&P Scrutiny Committee to members of the RCT Independent Group.

Councillor Powell referenced the impact of the Council tax following the outcome of Brexit, which amounts to 20% of the Council’s budget, with £49m being raised in the Taff Ely area, £27m in the Rhondda and approximately £26.5m in the Cynon. Councillor Powell queried how the council would be able to ask those residents to pay their council tax with the increases in the costs of living.

Question from County Borough Councillor J Brencher to the Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language County Borough Councillor G Hopkins:

“Could the council give an update on the progress of the extra care facility in Pontypridd?”

Response from Councillor G Hopkins:

Councillor Hopkins advised that work on the new, state of the art Cwrt Yr Orsaf 60 Apartment facility began during summer 2019 and the council continues to work closely with Link Cymru, the Housing Association and their contractor Jehu whilst adhering to Welsh Government’s and Construction Leadership guidance regarding social distancing measures. The construction has remained ongoing and the works have progressed well. Works to the concrete steel and lightweight steel framed superstructure works have been completed and the internal works are progressing well. Work is now concentrated internally and it is with some caution that the anticipated completion date will be August 2021 which will be re-evaluated regularly.”

Supplementary question from Councillor J Brencher:

“What will be the wider benefits to the community and residents of Pontypridd and the Graig?”

Response of Councillor G Hopkins:

“Councillor G Hopkins hoped that the Extra Care facilities will be seen as part of the community not stand alone facilities. He referred to the Extra Care models in Maesyffynnon and the more established site in Ty Heulog to see the wider community benefits that they both provide. The Maesyffynnon site offers a hair salon, café, therapy room, lounge, activity room, car park and garden area which

is maintained in partnership with the nearby Blaengwawr Primary School, which promotes interaction between the younger and older generations. Cwrt Yr Orsaf (Station Court) will include a number of similar facilities such as a hair salon, dining areas, communal kitchen and lounge areas and as always the focus will be on independence and supporting residents to be part of the community, not separate from it.”

Question from County Borough Councillor M Powell to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

"Would the leader make a statement on the Council's progress to repair or otherwise the White Bridge in Pontypridd please?"

Response from Councillor A Morgan:

“The Leader advised that 3 bridges in Pontypridd were damaged in Storm Dennis and he provided an update on progress of each bridge. The Ynysyngharad Park Bridge has been appointed to Centergrade and works have started and the bridge has been lifted off into the park and should be back in place at the end of January, beginning of February 2021. Castle Inn Bridge is badly damaged and may have to be demolished. It has been inspected by heritage engineers but it is highly likely that it will be removed. The White Bridge has been inspected and worked on by qualified engineers to assess whether it can be lifted and is safe enough to work on as 85% of the bridge support has been washed away in the storms. It is being monitored on a weekly basis. Prior to the storm, all the bridges were inspected on an annual basis and a principal bridge inspection every 6 years and in line with the guidance.”

Supplementary question from Councillor M Powell:

“Are there other reports which show what work has previously been done on the White Bridge in respect of the foundations and scouring which didn't happen just on one day? Many residents would like to see the bridge reopen as a pedestrian and cycle track only but at the same time there are issues on Berw Road, which are impacting the health & wellbeing of the residents in the area. Has the Leader considered the earlier plans from 2001 to put in place a cross valley link from Glyncoch to the A4070 or change the traffic system to make it a left turn only to reduce the volume of traffic (Councillor Powell thanked the Leader for arranging to have the speed cameras inserted)?”

Response from Councillor A Morgan:

“The Leader stated that there are no plans to explore the link road option due to the lack of funding available in the Capital Programme and the time available to undertake land purchasing and construction. The Council's preferred option would be to repair the bridge so that it can be reopened but failing that the council would look to insert a new structure, discussions are ongoing with WG around funding and profiling for repairs and replacement of bridges. The final heritage engineer's report will be forthcoming over the next 4-6 weeks after which Cabinet will be in a position to decide whether to progress with repairs or replacement and appoint civil contractors to commence the work. In conclusion the Leader confirmed that the 85% scouring occurred during Storm Dennis and there is no indication that damage happened before the Storm but the Leader agreed to provide further information to Councillor Powell”

Question from County Borough Councillor R K Turner to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

“Can the Council Leader please outline progress on the development of the Llanharan by pass?”

Response of Councillor A Morgan:

“Councillor Morgan stated that on the 24th September 2020 £1.1m was allocated in the Capital Programme taking the overall allocation to £2,775.000 which is a mixture of council funding and funding from the WG local transport fund and is one of the strategic projects to be progressed. The council is taking forward one section, the middle section is to be progressed by the Housing Developer on site. A planning application will be submitted by next spring and a pre planning consultation process will be carried out in advance. The bypass will be open to the public by 2025”.

Supplementary question from Councillor R Turner:

“Can the Leader provide confirmation regarding the middle leg of the bypass, which is to be built by the developers to coincide with the 801st house, is critical to the overall bypass project. Can you tell me what is being done to ensure to ensure this does not delay the bypass?”

Response from Councillor A Morgan:

“Councillor A Morgan advised that bringing forward the scheme as one continuous scheme would provide certainty on the timing and on the procurement process. The Council is currently looking at the legal arrangements with the Housing Developer which will give us certainty on a trigger point for the funding which will allow us to accelerate the scheme. By early spring we will have more definitive date and a planning application can be submitted.”

49 The Council Work Programme 2020/21

The Service Director Democratic Services provided an update in respect of the Council Work Programme 2020/21. He advised that it is proposed to hold the Leader’s Annual Debate early in the New Year to afford the next meeting on the 25th November to consider a number of other important matters. Details of the Winter Planning session have been circulated in advance of the meeting. In conclusion, the Service Director confirmed that the Health Board would attend the December Council meeting on the 16th.

50 Update in Respect of the Coronavirus in Rhondda Cynon Taf

The Leader advised that an update on Covid has been provided at every Council meeting for the past two and a half months. On the 25th November a further update will be provided. He confirmed that discussions are ongoing with WG regarding the possibility of mass testing to determine if it is a viable way forward. The local authority is in discussions with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board regarding a vaccination programme are also ongoing with military planners. The Leader confirmed that the local authority would provide whatever resources are necessary to set up vaccination centres and services would be changed or closed to enable a vaccination programme if it was decided to be the most viable way forward. This would be an absolute priority for the local authority to support the Military and Health Board.

The Leader emphasised the public health message which still needs to be followed following the two week firebreak period, wearing face masks, washing hands and social distancing and urged Members to use their influence through social media to remind residents to keep contact with others to a minimum, reduce their journeys and stay local. There has been a significant impact on the numbers of positive cases following the firebreak but potentially the numbers will rise again.

The Leader advised that regrettably he had to announce the passing of another member of staff due to covid-19 and on behalf of all members he extended his condolences to the family.

The Leader confirmed that the business support grants are continuing to be paid through the Council's finance section who have been issuing the grants as quickly as possible. £3m has been paid out to date although recently, there has been some confusion over which grants can be applied for. He urged local businesses to follow the guidance on the council website for the relevant information regarding the differences between the grants and which are relevant to them. Additional support has also been provided to the Food Banks over the firebreak period, to the value of £15,000 and the council has commissioned £10,000 to mental health support.

The Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services by means of a number of slides showed the lower super output areas which demonstrated the 'hot spots' of Coronavirus cases and also showed the location of the mobile testing units, located as close to the areas of greatest positivity rates to improve access and encourage testing if residents become unwell. The sites are regularly reviewed and relocated as appropriate.

Another slide demonstrated the daily new confirmed cases over the last 2 weeks in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area and broken down by the local authority areas. The slide showed a downward trend at the moment following the Firebreak period and in the past week, the number of new cases has started to flatten out and indicates a decline.

The next slide showed the positivity rates over the same period which represents the proportion of people who have a test which results in a positive result. The higher the positivity rate the more likely that there are more cases in the community. It has remained high in RCT and across the region but in the last few days there has been a reduction in the positivity rate and over the last 7 days it shows that the rolling positivity rate is 23.3%

The following slide showed the positivity rates by age group across the region and demonstrates that the highest number of test results in RCT are in the 40-49 age group but are evenly distributed across all the age groups. The Bridgend age profile is slightly different and shows there are higher numbers of positivity within the younger age groups.

The following slide demonstrated the weekly trend in Covid-19 related deaths in Cwm Taf Morgannwg throughout the Pandemic and published by O&S and is broken down by setting. This covers the period from March to the end of October, and the impact of the first wave of infection is evident and from July to the beginning of September there was a low number of covid related deaths but the impact is apparent from mid-September onwards. It is a lower number of

deaths compared to the first wave experienced but the greatest proportion of deaths in recent weeks has been in hospitals.

The final slide showed the 7 day rolling accumulative case rate of infections per 100,000 population. The period covered is the 15th September to the 8th November and shows the steady increase in case numbers followed by a sharp increase to the end of November and then followed by a gradual reduction in the case rate over the past few days. Recently the National Firebreak restrictions over the past 2 weeks which may show the impact of those measures. It is encouraging that this trend of decreasing case rates is being reproduced across Wales. The case rate today in RCT is 400 per 100,000 which is lower than it was a week ago.

In conclusion, the Director provided an overview of the activity of the Contract Tracing Team in RCT who are providing the service for the whole Cwm Taf Morgannwg region. Since June 2020 9,114 index cases came into the service which represents 23% of the Welsh total. 97% individuals have been successfully followed up by the team and 78% were followed up within 48 hours which compares favourably with the Welsh average of 75%. Over the same time period there were over 28,000 contacts associated with those 9,000 cases and 90% have been contacted successfully, 78% followed up within 48 hours which compares favourably with the Welsh average of 73%. The performance overall has been exceptional.

The opportunity was afforded to the Group Leaders to ask questions of the Director Public health, Protection and Community Services.

Councillor P Jarman – Group Leader Plaid Cymru

Councillor P Jarman paid credit to the Track and Trace Team. Councillor Jarman also expressed her disgust at the Covid deniers towards the family of three who recently lost their lives to Covid-19.

With regards to the cases Councillor Jarman stated that yesterday there were 55 new positive cases, today there have been 155 new positive cases so there are peaks and troughs with the numbers of new cases and difficult for the public to share the Director's optimism with regards to the rise in positive cases. The Councillor queried whether, if it transpires, the mass testing will be a local arrangement or a UK wide provision? In April the Abercynon testing station which was described as a mass testing centre only undertook 40 tests.

The Councillor asked whether the Director could provide clarification on the laws regarding the wearing of masks as the local arrangements have been replaced by national arrangements.

The Director confirmed that there is still a requirement to wear face coverings in certain public places and encouragement to wear them in some circumstances such as bus drivers although not a legal requirement and in work placements and high risk environments where PPE is essential. The Director confirmed that he would circulate the guidance on face coverings following the meeting.

The Leader advised that with regards to the figures as mentioned by Councillor Jarman, the important figure is the 7 day rolling average figure and the daily positivity rates. Today, the 7 day positivity rates show that RCT has a 30% positivity rate which has now dropped to 24% which is a 6% drop in positivity

rate. Following the Firebreak period it is anticipated that there will be a downward trend before the rates start to increase.

Councillor M Powell – Group Leader RCT Independent Group

From the graphs we have seen there are no dark areas indicating the high numbers of Covid-19 cases at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital which did not implement its 15 point plan. The Health Board are apportioning the deaths of residents catching or who have died of Coronavirus in hospital to their areas of residency.

Is the Council able to assist South Wales Police in apprehending those individuals who were involved in the Bonfire Night violence in Rhydfelin which resulted in the injury of a Police Officer?

Councillor Powell welcomed the mass testing to bring the virus under control.

Councillor L Hooper – Deputy Leader Conservative Group

Councillor Hooper thanked the Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services for a comprehensive report and welcomed the opportunity to ask questions of the Health Board during their attendance at Council in December.

Councillor S Belzak – Independent Group

Councillor Belzak stated that the data on deaths across Cwm Taf Morgannwg area indicates that this disease is seasonal. There was a peak in deaths in April, declining to almost to zero in June, July and August and gradually increasing again. He added that we are in the season of respiratory illness and flu numbers have dropped by 98%. Councillor Belzak noted that the virus has become a seasonal illness and having extreme measures on the economy is not an appropriate response.

According to the UK wide data on the number of deaths at home, of which there is a significant number which can't be attributed to covid-19. Councillor Belzak stated that people are not now being treated for serious illnesses such as stroke or heart attack, which needs to be addressed.

Councillor W Owen asked whether the council has enough resources within its Licensing Department to address the growing issues of non-compliance within the Public Houses following the change to the regulations that up to 4 households can meet?

The Leader responded to a number of queries and confirmed that with regards to the Cwm Taf Health Board Royal Glamorgan Hospital outbreaks, additional bays have been implemented and segregating those with covid-19. He added that the number of hospital deaths is not recorded on the maps that were shown earlier but the total number of deaths in hospital equates to less than 3% of the overall total. The total number of cases in hospital is approximately 200 but to give that some context RCT recorded 300 cases in one day. The number of cases in the hospitals is not the driver and equates to 7%. All cases relating to schools only accounts to 15%. The Leader emphasised that community transmission remains the most likely way of contracting the virus.

The Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services confirmed that the deaths in hospitals are accounted back to the place of residence but the deaths recorded in hospitals are published by the Health Board and are associated to Covid-19 not necessarily directly due to Covid-19. Any of the individuals would have had a positive test result within a 28 day period prior to the death occurring.

In terms of enforcement, funding has been provided by WG to implement additional enforcement staff to work alongside the council's own enforcement staff who have been working very closely with South Wales Police throughout this period. The Police have also committed additional resources for enforcement activities. The additional resources are deployed to ensure the Licensing Trade is adhering to the requirements and where necessary the council has closed a number of premises and others are facing a review of their licences where they have not adhered to the rules.

A number of other queries were raised in respect of the vaccine such as the Council's role in supporting Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board with the roll out of the vaccine and whether any discussions have taken place in respect of those unable to have it such as MS patients.

The Deputy Leader reminded Council that the anti-social behaviour incident in her ward, as mentioned earlier in the meeting, has a confidentiality clause attached to it so would be respecting that.

The Leader and the Director of Public Health, Protection and Community Services responded to the queries relating to the roll out of the vaccine and confirmed that discussions with all the relevant agencies have been underway for some time. Consideration is being given to the use of council buildings, appropriate venues, transport links, staff and resources which will be required to support the roll out. The Leader advised that regular meetings are ongoing across Cwm Taf and further details would be circulated in due course to all Members.

51 Changes to Membership

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communications presented his report to advise Members of the change to the RCT Independent Group representation on the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee. He requested that Members note that County Borough Councillor L Walker is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor W Jones on the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee with immediate effect.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to note the change to the RCT Independent Group representation on the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee as previously set out.

This meeting closed at 6.30 pm

**Cllr S Powderhill
Chairman.**

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

20th JANUARY 2021

MEMBERS QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION.

Author: Julia Nicholls, Council Business Unit (01443 424098)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present the order of questions in respect of the Members Questions on Notice, following the amendment to the process agreed at the [Council AGM 2019](#).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Receive the Questions and any supplementary questions proposed, as in accordance with the running order advised upon in 4.3 of the report, which should not exceed a 20 minute time period.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As agreed at the Council AGM on the 15th May, 2019, Members agreed to amend Council Procedure Rule 9.2 in respect of Members Questions on Notice.

4. MEMBERS QUESTION ON NOTICE

- 4.1 The closing date for receipt of Members Questions on Notice to the Council Business Unit for the 20th January 2021 Council meeting was 5pm on the 7th January 2021.
- 4.2 Sixteen questions were received and put forward to the Council Ballot held on the 11th January 2021, to determine the running order of the questions at the Council Meeting.
- 4.3 The results of the ballot are outlined below:-

Number	Question
1	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor J. Brencher to the Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services, County Borough Councillor J. Rosser:</p> <p>“What support is being provided to schools in RCT to enable and facilitate remote learning?”</p>
2	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor M Griffiths to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:</p> <p>“Can the Leader update on what representations are being made by this Local Authority and the WLGA to the UK Government regarding the forthcoming Budget in March?”</p>
3	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor J. Edwards to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:</p> <p>“Will the Leader please provide an update at the recent landslip at Wattstown Tip?”</p>
4	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor S M Powell to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:</p> <p>“In what ways does the Council engage with residents to reinforce the key public health messages around Covid-19?”</p>
5	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor T. Williams to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:</p> <p>“Following the extension of the mass testing pilot to the lower Cynon Valley, will the Leader please make a statement on the outcomes and next steps?”</p>
6	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor S Bradwick to the Deputy Leader, County Borough Councillor M Webber:</p> <p>“Could the Deputy Leader make a statement on the progress of the Local Government Bill?”</p>
7	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor W. Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being and Cultural Services, County Borough Councillor R. Lewis:</p> <p>“What role is the Council playing in supporting mental health services for residents across Rhondda Cynon Taf?”</p>
8	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor R Yeo to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:</p>

	<p>“Will the Leader/Cabinet Member please make a statement on visiting arrangements at care homes across the County?”</p>
9	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor P Jarman to the Cabinet Member for Adult Community Services & Welsh Language, County Borough Councillor G Hopkins:</p> <p>“Does the Council have Intergenerational Policies?”</p>
10	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor L De Vet to the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being and Cultural Services, County Borough Councillor R Lewis:</p> <p>“Would the Cabinet Member please update Members on the work of the Climate Change Steering Committee?”</p>
11	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor G. Caple to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:</p> <p>“With a number of Weather Warnings issued across the Christmas and New Year period, will the Leader outline what steps the Council now take to prepare in advance of bad weather?”</p>
12	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor G Hughes to the Deputy Leader, County Borough Councillor M Webber:</p> <p>“Could the Deputy leader provide an update on progress of the Welsh Government’s introduction on lowering the voting age to 16 and what steps this council is taking to engage with those who are or will be newly enfranchised?”</p>
13	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor D. Owen-Jones to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:</p> <p>“How is the Council supporting partner agencies in preparing for mass vaccination against COVID-19?”</p>
14	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor J Elliott to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:</p> <p>“Can the Council Leader please provide an update on the various flood schemes planned and ongoing across RCT, including for the Cwmbach ward?”</p>

15	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor J Bonetto to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:</p> <p>“Can the Leader give an update on the plans for the new Train Station in Treforest Estate?”</p>
16	<p>Question from County Borough Councillor L M Adams to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A Morgan:</p> <p>“Will the Council Leader make a statement on the work of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal?”</p>

- 4.4 At the Council meeting a maximum of 20 minutes shall be allowed for Questions on Notice. Any questions that are not dealt with in this time limit shall fall. Any questions on notice not answered will need to be resubmitted to the Proper Officer for the next full Council meeting in accordance with these rules.

5. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 The amendment to the Council Procedure Rule in respect of Members Questions was considered and agreed at the Council AGM 2019, following consultation with the Corporate Governance & Constitution Committee

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The amendment to the Council procedure rule taken forward at the Council AGM, allows the opportunity for more Members to ask a question at Council

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

- 9.1 The opportunity for Members to propose questions at Council meetings allows Members to receive information which potentially detail the Council priorities. It also embraces the Future Generations Act as all work and decisions taken by Council seek to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the County Borough.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Detailing the procedure for Members Questions on Notice assists in transparency for both Members and for public engagement.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Overview & Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

20 JANUARY 2021

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &
COMMUNICATION.**

Item: MEMBERS QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Background Papers

[Council AGM 2019.](#)

Officer to contact: Julia Nicholls, Council Business Unit



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020-2021

COUNCIL

20 JANUARY 2021

THE COUNCIL'S 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET – THE PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES

AUTHOR: Barrie Davies, Director of Finance and Digital Services (01443 424026)

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information in respect of the 2021/22 Provisional Local Government Settlement, and initial comments on its likely implications for the delivery of Council services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the Provisional 2021/22 Local Government Settlement, announced by the Minister for Housing and Local Government on the 22nd December 2020;
- 2.2 Note that the Final 2021/22 Local Government Settlement is expected during early March 2021; and
- 2.3 Note the approach to budget consultation for 2021/22 as already determined.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To update Members on the implications of the Provisional Settlement for 2021/22 following receipt of information on the 22nd December 2020.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The timing of the Local Government Settlement for 2021/22 has been extremely uncertain throughout the autumn period as a consequence of the timing of the UK Government Spending Review and the period it would cover, originally planned for 3 years but revised to one year.

4.2 On the 22nd December 2020, the Minister for Housing and Local Government (Julie James MS) announced the Provisional 2021/22 Local Government Settlement. The Minister's statement and key data table is attached at Appendix 1.

4.3 The "headlines" of the Provisional 2021/22 Settlement are as follows:-

- a. The overall increase in Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) funding for 2021/22 (of unhypothecated funding) at an all Wales level, after adjusting for transfers is 3.8% (+£172M).
- b. The settlement for Rhondda Cynon Taf, amounts to an increase of **3.8%** which equates to the average all Wales increase. Settlement figures across Wales range from 2.0% to 5.6%.
- c. No 'floor' protection has been included for 2021/22.
- d. The Settlement figures for 2021/22 include transfers into the settlement in respect of the Teachers Pay Grant (£3.981M) and the Coastal Risk Management Programme (not applicable to this Council). The value of the Teachers Pay Grant for this Council is £0.328M. Whilst the part year (2020/21) implications of the Teachers Pay Grant transfer into the settlement, the additional full year implications are to be funded from within the settlement increase.
- e. There is no indication of settlement levels beyond 2021/22.
- f. Provisional figures and indicative estimates are included for specific grants, at an all Wales level. Of particular note, would be the continuation and increase (from £40M to £50M) in the Social Care Workforce Grant. This funds our core base budget.
- g. The Council's General Capital Funding allocation has increased by £0.087M to £13.764M.

5.0 PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE SERVICE IMPLICATIONS OF THE 2021/22 PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT

5.1 The provisional settlement indicates that our 2021/22 RSG and NDR funding will total £404.375M.

5.2 In anticipation of the 2021/22 local government settlement, the Council's service managers have constructed base budget requirements for next financial year. Those initial calculations provided for:-

- Estimated employee costs, pension costs and National Insurance Contribution levels;
- Non-pay (i.e. goods and services) inflation, including energy and fuel;
- Corporate financing requirements and levies; and
- Full year effects of any additional burdens imposed on the Council.

5.3 The Provisional Settlement is within the range modelled in the most recent Medium Term Financial Plan and recognises some of the intense funding pressures which are being experienced across local government in general but also within Rhondda Cynon Taf. **It also importantly recognises the critical role which local government continues to play in responding to the pandemic and protecting our communities and residents.**

5.4 Members have continued to receive updates on the projections of the Council's revenue budget position for the period to 2023/24, as part of our Medium Term Service Planning arrangements. The latest of these assessments was considered by Council on the 21st October 2020 which, based on a range of modelled settlement levels, projected a funding gap of £9.9M (at +4% settlement), £13.8M (at +3% settlement) and £17.7M (at +2% settlement).

5.5 As referenced at section 4, the provisional settlement provides this Council with an uplift of 3.8%. There is also an increase in the Social Care Workforce Grant, which funds our core base budget.

5.6 Cabinet on the 17th November 2020 determined the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 at £77,197.81. The impact on the modelled budget gap of our updated tax base can also now be reflected.

5.7 The combined effects of the above updates is shown in table 1.

Table 1 : Revised Budget Gap at Provisional Settlement

	£'000
MTFP Budget Gap at 3%	13,809
Additional Resources at Provisional Settlement (including impact of updated Tax Base)	- 4,049
Additional Social Care Workforce Grant	- 675
Revised Budget Gap	9,085

- 5.8 Our base budget requirements for 2021/22 have continued to be reviewed since the preparation of the MTFP and a number of updates can now be made.
- 5.9 The UK Government Spending Review in November 2020 included a proposed pause of national public sector pay, an effective pay freeze for public sector staff with the exception of a pay increase of £250 per year for salary points below £24,000. Consequently, Welsh Government did not receive any further funding in this respect from UK Government. It is anticipated that the appropriate pay negotiating bodies and arrangements will comply with this, including with regard to teachers pay which is a devolved matter for Wales.
- 5.10 Our waste management costs have increased as a consequence of the impact the pandemic has had on residents and businesses. The overall quantum of waste has moved toward more kerbside residential collection, away from trade waste with a changed composition and an increase in the volume of residual waste.
- 5.11 Other base update requirements have also been made in respect of:
- Drainage Team
 - Children’s Services - Additional Cost Pressures
 - Adult Social Care Costs
 - Additional Learning Needs
 - Other (including fleet / vehicle costs and community resilience)
- 5.12 These updates are summarised in table 2.

Table 2: Base Budget Updates

	£'000
Public Sector Pay	- 7,861
Additional Waste Management and Disposal Costs	1,000
Drainage Team	500
Children's Services - Additional Cost Pressures	1,302
Adult Social Care Costs	1,048
Additional Learning Needs	500
Other	360
Total Base Updates	- 3,151

- 5.13 In the MTFP, a number of risk items were identified and estimated in financial terms. In light of the above updates it is now appropriate that these risks are removed from our base budget requirement for next year, albeit they will continue to be monitored as we go forward and continue to refresh our MTFP.

Table 3: Risk Value to Remove

	£'000
Removal of Risk Items	- 1,877

- 5.14 The combined effects of the above updates on the budget gap are now shown in table 4.

Table 4: Revised Budget Gap 2021/22

	£'000
Budget Gap at Provisional Settlement	9,085
Updated Base Budget Requirements	- 3,151
Removal of Budget Risks	- 1,877
Remaining Budget Gap	4,057

- 5.15 It will now be for Cabinet to consider the implications of the above scenario in the preparation of its draft budget strategy. As part of this, consideration will be given to the outcome of the first phase of the budget consultation process.
- 5.16 It is customary for our services to deliver on an efficiency requirement year on year which for the current year (2020/21) amounted to £6M. Senior Finance Officers continue to work in the background to identify any such opportunities which can be factored into the 2021/22 budget strategy, noting that the focus of our service managers remains appropriately concentrated on responding to the pandemic.
- 5.17 It is important to note that our base budget as set out above, does not include any additional cost implications which continue to arise as a direct consequence of the pandemic. Welsh Government continue to fund these costs outside of the base budget, an arrangement which is set to continue into 2021/22.
- 5.18 Cabinet may though wish to consider the wider and ongoing implications of the pandemic on our services and staff, residents, businesses and communities. This will include council tax levels, the treatment of schools, our levels of fees and charges for next year and any opportunities to allocate additional resources to priority service areas.

6.0 DEVELOPING AN EQUITABLE BUDGET STRATEGY FOR 2021/22

- 6.1 Against the backdrop of a sustained period of financial challenges and more recently significant storm damage and the pandemic, the Council must maintain a focus on robust financial management and stability. A key ingredient of this is the responsible approach taken to how we address the development of our annual budgets. Therefore, we still, as in

previous years, need to ensure that the parameters for producing the 2021/22 budget are adhered to, these being:-

- a) Maintain the Council's financial stability, whilst targeting any available funding, in an efficient and effective manner, towards our key services and priorities;
- b) Look to protect those key services and jobs wherever possible;
- c) Review **all** areas of service provision, including eligibility to those services and charging policies in place;
- d) Take maximum advantage of all new funding opportunities made available by the Welsh Government and others where it is in the best interests of the Council;
- e) "Top slice" appropriate necessary sums to fund corporate budgets;
- f) Fully allocate any sums "earmarked" for specific services which are demonstrably the direct result of legislative changes included in the 2021/22 Local Government Settlement, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Welsh Government;
- g) Allocate to our Service Groups, initially, an adequate allowance for movements in employee costs;
- h) Allocate an appropriate level of funding to support our schools;
- i) Continue to deploy our procurement strategy to offset the impact of certain supplies and services inflation in the coming financial year;
- j) Actively pursue efficiency in all areas of the Council, for example, through continuing our work on digitalisation, reducing office accommodation, on-going transformational change as a result of the pandemic and a focus on invest to save and preventative activities.

6.2 These parameters will provide an effective and pragmatic framework for the delivery of a fair and equitable Council budget.

6.3 Council Tax Levels

6.4 As is the case every year in respect of Council Tax levels, the Council will have due regard to the level of increase and the ability of residents to pay, but it also has to balance this against the need to fund important services. The 'modelled' increase assumed at this time is +2.85% for 2021/22.

- 6.5 The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), will continue to operate within a national framework, and at the same level of funding as that originally provided for through Revenue Support Grant in 2014/15. Costs therefore associated with Council Tax uplifts and changing caseloads remain a risk that the Council must fund. To illustrate the cost implications further, a 1% increase in Council Tax will generate an additional income for the Council of £1,157k (at the 2021/22 tax base level), but will also cost £247k in additional CTRS requirements. It therefore follows that a 1% increase generates a net additional income of £910k, or stated another way, 21 per cent of any Council Tax increase is lost to support the increased costs associated with the Welsh Government's CTRS.
- 6.6 The cost of the CTRS during this year (2020/21) has increased substantially as a consequence of significantly more residents qualifying for support, clearly linked to the economic impact of the pandemic. These costs have been funded by WG during 2020/21 and we would anticipate this arrangement to continue into 2021/22, noting that it is of course a national scheme in Wales.

7.0 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Whilst the primary focus is necessarily on setting out an annual budget strategy and required Council Tax levels for the forthcoming financial year, the medium term financial and service planning emphasis has been a cornerstone of robust financial management at this Council.
- 7.2 Work is now underway to revisit all of the assumptions through to 2023/24 within the Medium Term Financial Plan and this will be reported to Members when available. The Council must continue to identify opportunities for savings and whilst Members will clearly focus on their legal obligation to set a balanced budget for 2021/22 by March of this year, we must also be mindful of the medium and longer term requirements.

8.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no immediate equality and diversity implications to consider as an Equality Impact Assessment will be an integral part of the budget strategy itself and will be reported on later in the process.

9.0 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The proposed approach to budget consultation for 2021/22 is set out in the Cabinet report dated 13th October 2020. It comprises 2 phases as follows :

Phase 1 - to provide residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to feedback their views on some of the key strategic building blocks used to construct the Council's budget.

Phase 2 - once Cabinet have agreed a draft budget strategy, and in light of the provisional local government settlement, then this draft strategy will itself be consulted upon as part of Phase 2.

10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The financial modelling assumptions and implications are set out in the detail of this report. Members are not being asked to make any new financial decisions at this stage.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS or LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

11.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

12.0 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

12.1 The budget strategy is a key enabler for the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 "Making a Difference".

12.2 With regard to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, at the 4th March 2020 Council meeting, it was agreed that the Corporate Plan priorities would also serve as its Well-being Objectives in line with the Act.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS

13.1 The Minister for Housing and Local Government (Julie James MS) announced the Provisional 2021/22 Local Government Settlement on the 22nd December 2020.

13.2 The reported Provisional Settlement represents an increase in revenue funding for the Council of +3.8% and a slight increase in capital support.

13.3 The Council's primary objective continues to be setting a budget in 2021/22 that maintains key services and jobs as well as ensuring the ongoing financial stability of the Council.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Provisional Local Government Settlement 2021-22**

DATE **22 December 2020**

BY **Julie James MS, Minister for Housing and Local Government**

Today I am publishing details of the core funding allocations for unitary authorities for the forthcoming financial year through the Provisional Local Government Revenue and Capital Settlements for 2021-22 (the Settlement).

Adjusting for transfers, the core revenue funding for local government in 2021-22 will increase by 3.8% on a like-for-like basis compared to the current year. In 2021-22, local authorities will receive £4.65 billion from the Welsh Government in core revenue funding and non-domestic rates to spend on delivering key services.

In addition to this, I am publishing information on revenue and capital grants planned for 2021-22. These amount to nearly £1 billion for revenue and over £720 million for capital. The Government is providing these indicative grant values and distributions now so that local authorities are able to plan their budgets efficiently. This information will be further updated for the final settlement.

As set out in yesterday's draft budget the Welsh Government's funding priorities continue to be health and local government services. While I know local government has been facing significant pressures, particularly arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, I hope that this increase, building as it does on a significantly improved settlement in 2020-21, enables Authorities to continue to support and deliver critical and valued local services. In setting the overall Settlement at this level the Government has responded to the negative impact of the pandemic on Non Domestic Rate (NDR) collection. The baseline Settlement increase of £176m reflects a larger increase in the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) to compensate for the fall in NDR. It also accounts for the impact of freezing the NDR multiplier. After adjusting for transfers into the Settlement, this equates to an increase of £172 million in Settlement funding, compared with 2020-21.

The Minister for Finance and Trefnydd was clear in the draft budget that one of the hard choices we have faced in setting our spending plans for next year is our approach to public sector pay. The reality is that we did not receive any additional funding through the Barnett

formula to provide for public sector wide pay awards next year given the UK Government's decision to pause public sector pay rises, with the exception of the NHS and those on the lowest wages. The implications of pay awards in 2021-22 will therefore need to be accommodated within Authorities' budget planning in the light of this Settlement. Our decisions in the budget, target as much support as we can to health and local government to support pressure in frontline services focusing on schools and social services.

Whilst we did not receive any additional funding from the UK Government for public sector pay, in determining the distribution of funding across authorities for the Settlement, we have recognised the decisions made on the 2020/21 teachers' pay deal and the commitment made by local government to fund this deal by directing funding into the schools part of the formula. We are also continuing to provide funding for our proposals for new eligibility criteria for free school meals, given the continued rollout of Universal Credit by the UK Government.

Through this Settlement, we are continuing to provide £4.8 million for authorities to deliver additional discretionary rates relief for local businesses and other ratepayers to respond to specific local issues.

In line with the Government's focus on countering the effects of poverty, we remain committed to protecting vulnerable and low-income households from any reduction in support under the Council Tax Reduction Schemes, despite the shortfall in the funding transferred by the UK Government following its abolition of Council Tax Benefit. We will continue to maintain full entitlements under our Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2021-22 and are again providing £244 million for CTRS in the Settlement in recognition of this.

Alongside the Settlement we are continuing to provide funding to support local government to waive fees for child burials. This shared commitment ensures a fair and consistent approach across Wales.

I am not minded to provide for a funding floor for this year given the increased settlement for 2020-21 and the proposed allocations I am announcing today for 2021-22. I have accordingly allocated all the funding available up front.

A wide range of services of course have been significantly impacted by the pandemic. As the Finance Minister's statement on the budget made clear, we recognise the need to continue to provide funding to support Local Government's response to the pandemic. This will be considered separately and does not form part of this Settlement.

This Settlement provides Local Authorities with a stable platform for planning their budgets for the forthcoming financial year. I fully appreciate the pressures local government is facing and am committed to protecting local government, particularly at this difficult and challenging time. This is as good a Settlement as the Government can offer and one which should help to alleviate some of the pressures Authorities are anticipating. While I can't guarantee that there will be no changes between the provisional and final settlements, due to the financial uncertainty that we currently face, I do not intend making any significant changes to the methodology or the data underpinning the distribution of this Settlement.

Attached to this statement is a summary table setting out the Settlement allocations by authority. The allocations are derived using the formula agreed with local government. As a result of the formula and related data, the table shows the range of the funding allocations, from a 2.0% increase over the 2020-21 settlement to a 5.6% increase.

Further details on the Settlement will be sent to all local authorities and published on the Welsh Government's website:

<https://gov.wales/local-government-revenue-and-capital-settlement-2021-2022>

General capital funding for 2021-22 will continue to be set at £198 million. Included within this amount is £20 million for the continuation of the public highways refurbishment grant, including support for active travel; £54 million of historic baselined general capital grant; and the continuation of an additional £35 million of general capital grant, which was announced as part of the 2019-20 and 2020-21 budgets. This additional £35 million will enable Authorities to begin to respond to our joint priority of decarbonisation, including for housing and economic recovery following Covid-19.

We have discussed, before, our shared recognition of the need to invest in the supply of housing. Investing in social housing should minimise the pressures on local authority budgets and on homelessness services. Investment in housing can also support the Welsh economy and local economies. I hope that this Settlement, capital and revenue, can support Authorities in increasing the scale and pace of housebuilding across Wales.

I know that Authorities will need to make choices in setting their budgets. They will need to engage meaningfully with their local communities as they consider their budget priorities. The setting of budgets, and in turn council tax, is the responsibility of each local authority and authorities will need to take account of the full range of sources of funding available to them, as well as the pressures they face, in setting their budgets for the coming year.

This announcement commences the formal seven-week consultation on the provisional local government settlement. This will end on 9 February 2021.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.

Summary Table

2021-22 provisional settlement – comparison of 2020-21 AEF (adjusted for transfers) and 2021-22 provisional AEF, and distribution of the 2020-21 Council Tax Reduction Schemes funding (distributed within AEF) (£000s)

Unitary authority	2020-21 adjusted AEF ¹	2021-22 provisional AEF	% change on adjusted 2020-21 AEF	Rank	Council Tax Reduction Schemes (within AEF)
Isle of Anglesey	101,369	104,825	3.4%	18	5,186
Gwynedd	188,409	194,793	3.4%	19	8,541
Conwy	161,181	166,906	3.6%	17	9,138
Denbighshire	153,089	158,632	3.6%	16	8,920
Flintshire	199,267	206,778	3.8%	14	9,609
Wrexham	184,569	188,856	2.3%	21	9,062
Powys	184,554	191,897	4.0%	8	8,775
Ceredigion	107,545	109,658	2.0%	22	5,122
Pembrokeshire	172,502	179,387	4.0%	7	8,187
Carmarthenshire	274,355	284,820	3.8%	13	13,996
Swansea	339,445	352,642	3.9%	10	19,264
Neath Port Talbot	227,198	236,680	4.2%	6	15,977
Bridgend	203,540	212,192	4.3%	5	13,088
The Vale Of Glamorgan	160,455	168,316	4.9%	2	9,062
Rhondda Cynon Taf	389,403	404,375	3.8%	11	21,936
Merthyr Tydfil	96,973	101,476	4.6%	3	5,595
Caerphilly	283,708	292,367	3.1%	20	12,372
Blaenau Gwent	116,112	120,361	3.7%	15	8,067
Torfaen	140,308	146,340	4.3%	4	8,331
Monmouthshire	97,673	101,483	3.9%	9	5,753
Newport	228,000	240,796	5.6%	1	10,083
Cardiff	469,913	487,913	3.8%	12	27,934
All Unitary Authorities	4,479,570	4,651,494	3.8%		244,000

Note: Total may not sum correctly due to rounding

1. 2020-21 AEF adjusted transfers of £5.127m (at 2020-21 prices) into the Settlement



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/21

COUNCIL

20TH JANUARY 2021

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

REPORT OF: THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES

Author: Barrie Davies (01443 424026)

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. This report fulfils the requirement to annually consider whether to revise or replace the Council's existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme ("CTRS") and the requirement to adopt a scheme by 31st January 2021.
- 1.2. As part of the review, the report sets out the changes to the CTRS that were introduced in April 2013. It explains the amendments proposed, the funding implications likely and documents the consultation outcomes allowing Members to consider the adoption of the Council's local CTRS for the 2021/22 financial year, which must be adopted by 31st January 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. It is recommended that Members:

- a) Note and adopt the provisions of the Prescribed Requirements Regulations and the amendments made to those regulations by the Amendment Regulations (as approved by Welsh Government (WG) on 12th January 2021) as the Council's local CTRS for 2021/22, subject to the local discretions that the Council is able to exercise;
- b) Note the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken by the Council on the local discretions applicable to the CTRS for 2021/22; and
- c) Confirm the discretions applicable to the Council's local CTRS for 2021/22 as set out at paragraph 5.3 (Table 2) of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The CTRS in Wales is set by regulations made under Schedule 1B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as inserted by the Local Government Finance Act 2012). On 26th November 2013, the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) approved two sets of regulations:
- (a) the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Schemes) (Wales) Regulations 2013 (“the Default Scheme Regulations”); and
 - (b) the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 (“the Prescribed Requirements Regulations”) (together the “Regulations”).

The Regulations at (b) above prescribe the main features of the CTRS to be adopted by all councils in Wales.

- 3.2. The Prescribed Requirements Regulations contain an obligation, where each year a council must consider whether to revise its scheme, or to replace it with another scheme. Any revision or replacement must be made no later than 31st January in the year preceding the financial year for which the revision or replacement scheme will take effect. However, the Regulations were amended in January 2015 to remove the requirement for Local Authorities to consult in relation to changes made by Welsh Ministers where authorities have no discretion. This means that Local Authorities do not need to consult when the Prescribed Requirements Regulations are amended by WG annually, to reflect consequential amendments to other state benefit changes made by Welsh Ministers.
- 3.3. Although there is a national scheme for Wales, the Prescribed Requirements Regulations provide limited discretion for the Council to apply minor additional discretionary elements that are more generous than the national scheme and which provide for additional administrative flexibility. If the Council does decide to offer more generous local discretions this would further increase the cost of the CTRS. These are:-
- (a) The ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to persons who have ceased to receive qualifying benefits after they return to work (or increase hours or increase earnings), where they have previously been receiving a Council Tax reduction that is to end as a result of the change in their circumstances;
 - (b) The ability to backdate the application of Council Tax reduction for periods longer than the standard period of 3 months before the claim is made; and
 - (c) Discretion to disregard more than the statutory weekly £10 of income received in respect of War Disablement Pensions and War Widow’s Pensions (disregarded when calculating income of the applicant).
- 3.4. The Prescribed Requirements Regulations require the Council to adopt a CTRS by 31st January each year, regardless of whether it applies any of the discretionary elements set out in the preceding paragraph. If the Council fails to make a scheme, then a default scheme shall apply under the provisions of the Default Scheme Regulations. The Council can only apply discretion if it adopts a scheme under the Prescribed Requirements Regulations.

- 3.5. Each year, WG updates the Regulations to amend the financial values used to assess an applicant's entitlement. On 14th December 2020 the amending Regulations ~ (The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020) (the "Amendment Regulations") ~ were laid before WG. Due to the WG's procedures which govern the making of the Regulations, the Amendment Regulations were formally considered by Plenary session of WG on 12th January 2021 and came into force the following day.
- 3.6. As detailed above, each year WG has to amend the Regulations to ensure that certain financial values used to calculate entitlement to a reduction for non-passported CTRS applicants are up-rated. For 2021/22, these changes relate to: -
- Personal allowances in relation to working age, carer and disabled applicants;
 - Personal allowances in relation to pensioner applicants; and
 - Non-dependant deductions.
- 3.7. In addition to any changes to the up-rating provisions referred to above, the Amendment Regulations incorporate further amendments to reflect consequential changes relating to social security benefits and other technical changes. A summary of all the main changes is set out in Appendix 1 to this report for information.

4. CONSULTATION AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1. The Regulations specify that in preparing its CTRS, a council must consult with any person it considers are likely to have an interest. Consequently, this requirement is met by incorporating a number of questions on the discretionary areas in the local CTRS, within the Council's general budget consultation process (which includes council tax levels and service priorities to inform the annual budget setting process).
- 4.2. Phase 1 of the annual budget consultation process for the 2021/22 financial year ran from 26th October to 7th December 2020 and was conducted using a 'digital by default' approach supplemented by alternative means of engagement for those having reduced or no access to the Internet and for those who prefer to engage through more traditional methods.
- 4.3. The overall response from the consultation process on the three discretionary areas available to the Council and which it could apply to its CTRS was as follows: -

Table 1

Discretion Area	No. of Respondents	Yes	No	Don't Know
Do you think that 4 weeks is a reasonable period to continue paying Council Tax Reduction when someone returns to work?	1,032	823	120	89
Do you think that it is reasonable for the Council to continue to totally disregard War Disablement and War Widow's Pensions income when assessing entitlement to CTR Scheme?	1,030	713	176	141
Do you think that 6 months is reasonable period to backdate claims for working age and pensioners?	1,033	790	133	110

- 4.4. In addition, presentations were made via Zoom to the Council's Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 16th November 2020, the Older Persons Advisory Group on 25th November 2020 and the Disability Forum on the 1st December 2020. Feedback from these groups is included at Appendix 2.
- 4.5. In terms of an Equality Impact Assessment, the Council undertook a comprehensive equality impact assessment in January 2013 based on the original scheme. This has been reviewed in light of the minor changes to each subsequent year's scheme and it is evident that there are no amendments required.
- 4.6. The NAFW undertook a comprehensive Regulatory Impact Assessment in respect of the national Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which accompanied the Regulations when they were considered by the NAFW in November 2013.

5. ADOPTION OF THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

- 5.1 The Council is required to adopt its CTRS by 31st January 2021. This requirement is a statutory duty and applies even if the Council chooses not to apply any of the discretions available to it. If the Council fails to make a scheme, then a default scheme will apply under the Default Scheme Regulations (as amended).
- 5.2 As set out in paragraph 3.3, the Council does have limited discretion to be more generous than the national scheme and provide for additional administrative flexibility (specified under Part 5, paragraphs (32) to (34) of the Prescribed Requirements Regulations).
- 5.3 Taking account of:-
- (a) the responses to the Council's consultation exercise relating to the discretionary elements of the scheme;
 - (b) the existing Housing Benefit Scheme in relation to the treatment of War Pensions (widows, widowers and disablement), which disregards these payments in full; and
 - (c) the fixed funding made available by WG (as detailed at paragraph 6),

it is recommended that the approach to the available discretions should continue in line with the arrangements for 2020/21 as set out in Table 2.

Table 2

<p align="center">Discretionary Parts of the Prescribed Requirements Regulations <i>(Part 5 – Other Matters that must be included in an authority’s scheme)</i></p>	<p align="center">Prescribed Requirements Regulations (Minimum Requirement)</p>	<p align="center">Recommended Discretion to be adopted</p>
<p>Ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to applicants where they have previously been receiving a Council Tax reduction that is to end, as they have ceased receiving qualifying benefits as a result of returning to work, increasing their hours of work, or receiving increased earnings.</p> <p><i>Regulation 32 (3) paragraph (33) of Schedule 1 and Regulation 33 (3), paragraph (35) and (40) of Schedule 6.</i></p>	<p align="center">4 Weeks</p>	<p><u>Pensioners:</u> The standard period of 4 weeks specified in paragraph (33) of Schedule 1 will apply, and</p> <p><u>Non- Pensioners:</u> The standard period of 4 weeks specified in paragraph (35) and (40) of Schedule 6 will apply</p>
<p>Ability to backdate an application for CTR with regard to late claims prior to the standard period of 3 months before the claim is made.</p> <p><i>Regulation 34 (4) and paragraph (3) and (4) of Schedule 13.</i></p>	<p align="center">3 Months</p>	<p><u>Pensioners:</u> A period of 6 months will apply.</p> <p><u>Non-Pensioners:</u> A period of 6 months will apply.</p>
<p>Ability to disregard more than the statutory weekly £10 of income received in respect of War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions (disregarded when calculating income of the applicant);</p> <p><i>Regulation 34 (5), paragraphs 1(a) and 1(b) Schedule 4 and paragraphs 20(a) and 20(b) of Schedule 9</i></p>	<p align="center">£10</p>	<p><u>Pensioners:</u> The total value of any pension specified in paragraphs 1 (a) and (b), Schedule 4 will be disregarded.</p> <p><u>Non-Pensioners:</u> The total value of any pension specified in paragraphs 20 (a) and (b), Schedule 9 will be disregarded.</p>

5.4 It should be noted that there is no additional funding available from WG to fund the discretionary elements of the CTRS. The estimated cost of funding the discretionary elements of the Prescribed Scheme in **2020/21** is set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3

Discretionary Element	Est. Annual Cost	No. of Applicants
Extended Payments	£15,000	160
Backdated Payments	£4,500	45
War Disablement & War Widow's Pensions	£26,500	70
Total est. cost	£46,000	275

5.5 Accordingly, it is recommended that the Council adopts the Prescribed Requirements Regulations (as amended by the Amendment Regulations) which set out all the components that must be included in a CTR Scheme, as the Council's CTR Scheme for 2021/22 along with the discretions as set out in Table 2.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

6.1. The current estimated annual value of CTRS to be paid in **2020/21** is £25.375M, to 25,495 applicants (£23.984M to 24,650 applicants for 2019/20, as at December 2019). The additional cost implications which have arisen due to the increased caseload linked to the economic impact of the pandemic continue to be funded by WG.

6.2. Local Authorities receive fixed funding for the CTRS from WG, which means that as a local authority's caseload, and hence costs, changes from that assumed when the WG funding was set, the local authority bears the financial risk of any variance.

6.3 The amount allocated to councils by WG through the local government settlement takes no account of:

- Any increase in Council Tax levels that may be applied for 2021/22;
- The increase or decrease in the costs of awards under the CTRS if the number of claimants increase/decrease, or if claimants become eligible for more/less help; and
- The provision for Council Tax bad debt.

6.4 The total amount of cash-limited funding for 2021/22 distributed to the local authorities in Wales contained in the provisional Local Government Settlement announced on 22nd December 2020 is £244M (this has remained unchanged since 2013/14) and the Council's allocation for 2021/22 is £21.936M (representing 9.0% of the all Wales funding). This Council's allocation for 2020/21 was £21.564M.

6.5 Any change to actual Council Tax levels in 2021/22 made by the Council, will affect the cost of providing the local CTRS, which equates to approximately £247k for each 1% increase in Council Tax.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The equality and diversity implications are set out in the main body of the report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation arrangements have been set out in the main body of the report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The relevant legislation has been referenced throughout the main body of the report.

10. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

10.1 The recommendation for the adoption of this CTRS and the local discretions will contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 "Making a Difference" through focussing on supporting the economy, prosperity and promoting people's independence. In doing so, it will also contribute to the well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 Each year local authorities in Wales are under a statutory obligation to consider whether to revise their CTRS or to replace it with another scheme and any revision or replacement must be made by no later than 31st January in the year preceding the financial year for which the revision or replacement scheme will take effect.

11.2 This report provides Council with details of the proposed scheme to be applicable for financial year 2021/22.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Amendments to the 2013 Regulations made by 2021

Regulations

1. The new statutory instrument¹ amends the 2013 CTRS Regulations to up-rate certain figures used within those Regulations to calculate entitlement to a Council Tax Reduction, and the amount of any reduction awarded to applicants in 2021/22. It also makes a number of consequential and technical amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations to take account of interrelated benefits and ensure they remain fit for purpose.
2. The up-rating increases the various figures used to calculate an applicant's entitlement to a reduction and the amount of the reduction, in line with variations for living costs and earnings. The uprated figures relate to:

Change	Impact
<p>Personal allowances in relation to working age, carer and disabled applicants</p> <p>The financial figures in respect of these allowances have been amended and have increased in line with the cost of living rises. The convention is to uprate in line with the Consumer Price Index September figure from the previous year (2020), which is 0.5%.</p>	<p>Costs</p> <p>Uprating the financial figures in respect of pensioners and working age allowances would slightly increase total reductions under Council Tax Reduction Schemes. However, if the financial figures in relation to Non-Dependant Deductions were also uprated, this would mitigate some of the increase in total reductions. Consequently, total council tax reductions are not expected to rise significantly because of the uprating.</p> <p>Benefits</p> <p>Uprating the financial figures in the 2013 CTRS Regulations will ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the personal allowance for working age applicants continues to increase in line with the CPI (which is set at 0.5%). For example in 2021-22, the single person allowance would increase from £79.20 to £79.60 (an increase of £0.40). ▪ the personal allowance for pensioners continues to increase in line with the standard minimum guarantee and savings credit. For example in 2021-2022, the single person allowance would increase from £187.80 to £191.50 (an increase of £3.70). ▪ non-dependant deduction rates are uprated, this will ensure the calculation used to assess the eligibility of non-dependant households remains up-to-date. The calculation would continue to make a fair assessment of the income of non-dependants and the cost of council tax. This will ensure the system remains fair and equitable.
<p>Personal allowances in relation to pensioner applicants</p> <p>The financial figures in respect of pensioner rates have been amended and are aligned with Housing Benefit. These have been calculated with assistance from the Department of Work and Pensions and have been uprated by different mechanisms. For example, the Pension Credit standard minimum guarantee is uprated by earnings, whereas the Additional Pension and increments are uprated by prices.</p>	
<p>Non-dependant deductions</p> <p>The financial figures in relation to both the income bands and deductions made in relation to 'non-dependants' will be uprated. If amendments are not made, appropriate deductions would not be made from CTRS awards as the income thresholds would no longer reflect average earnings and the deduction would no longer reflect the overall cost of council tax.</p>	

¹ The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021

3. Additional Consequential Amendments

In addition to the uprating of financial figures, this statutory instrument makes a number of consequential amendments to the 2013 CTRS Regulations. These will ensure the 2013 Regulations remain up-to-date and fit for purpose.

Area/Issue	Effect of 2021 “Amendment” Regulations
<p><u>Windrush Compensation Scheme</u> The scheme is designed to compensate individuals who have suffered loss in connection with being unable to demonstrate their lawful status in the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>The amendment is to make provision that compensation payments made under the scheme are disregarded from capital when determining an applicant’s eligibility for a reduction and the amount of that reduction.</p>
<p><u>Universal Credit Run-On Disregard</u> Entitlement to Universal Credit (UC) ends when a person (or mixed-age couple) reaches the qualifying age for state pension credit (PC). From this point, claimants can instead claim pension-age benefits such as Pension Credit (PC).</p> <p>Previously, claimants who reached state pension age during the assessment period risked there being a gap between their last UC payment and their first PC (and other pension-age benefits) payments. DWP is taking steps towards a smoother transition from UC to pension-age benefits, with no risk of gaps in entitlement for claimants. To achieve this, DWP is making additional UC run on payments to cover the entire month in which a claimant reaches pension-age. For some claimants, depending on which date within the month they reach this age, there will be an overlap in the receipt of this UC run-on payment and pension-age benefits.</p>	<p>The amendment is to make provision that any ‘additional income’ resulting from such an overlap is not to be considered as income when determining for a pension-age council tax reduction in Wales.</p>
<p><u>Changes to income and capital disregards</u> A number of payments are disregarded for the purposes of calculating ‘income’ and/or ‘capital’.</p>	<p>Will ensure these references in the 2013 Regulations remain up-to-date for 2021/2022.</p>

Budget Consultation Feedback

Feedback from the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee (Virtual meeting via Zoom) – 16th November 2020

Council Tax Reduction Scheme – 4 week period reasonable for return to work?

- Committee Members agreed that 4 weeks is a reasonable period to continue paying Council Tax Reduction when someone returns to work.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme – Exclude war disablement and war widow pension when assessing CTR scheme?

- Members agreed that it is reasonable for the Council to continue to totally exclude War Disablement and War Widow's Pensions income when assessing entitlement to the CTR Scheme.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme – Backdating claims by 6 months?

- Members agreed that 6 months is a reasonable period to backdate claims for working age and pensioners.

Feedback / Views from the Older Persons Advisory Group (Virtual meeting via Zoom) – 25th November 2020

Council Tax Reduction Scheme – 4-week period reasonable for return to work?

- Attendees agreed that this was a reasonable approach.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme – Exclude war disablement and war widow pension when assessing CTR scheme?

- Attendees agreed that this was a reasonable approach.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme – Backdating claims by 6 months?

- Attendees agreed that this was a reasonable approach.

Feedback / Views from the Disability Forum (Virtual meeting via Zoom) – 1st December 2020

Attendees fed back that they were in agreement with the statements proposed on Extended Payments, disregard War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions income when assessing the CTR Scheme and backdating claims. Specific feedback was provided in respect of backdating claims - "It is important in RCT because people don't claim and they need that discretion in place".

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

20 JANUARY 2021

URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN FORWARD

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
COMMUNICATION**

Author: Hannah Williams, Council Business Unit – 01443 424062

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present, for Members' information an overview of the Urgent Decisions taken forward by the Cabinet Committee and the Urgent Key Officer Delegated Decisions taken forward outside of the Cabinet Committee during the period October - December 2020.
- 1.2 This is excluding those reports which were presented to another Committee of the Council for final decision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules 17.2(a) Urgent Executive Decisions taken forward should be reported to Council for information purposes.
- 3.2 To assist in the openness and transparency of the Decision making process within the Council.

4. URGENT DECISIONS OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE

- 4.1 There were no urgent decisions taken forward by the Cabinet Committee during the period October - December 2020.

5. DELEGATIONS OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

- 5.1 As outlined in Section 3 of the Leader's Scheme of Delegation, Cabinet Members are permitted to make decisions falling under their portfolio if deemed urgent to protect the interest of the Council, subject to prior consultation with the relevant Senior Leadership Team Officer(s).
- 5.2 The Leader can take urgent decisions in the absence of the appropriate portfolio holder.
- 5.3 The confirmation and signature of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor to the proposed decision must be sought in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 17.2(a)
- 5.4 The following urgent Cabinet Member Decision was taken forward during the period October - December 2020:

Date	Decision Taken	Reason for Exemption
23-10-20	Funding for Food Banks and Mental Health Support during 'firebreak' lockdown	To immediately provide assistance to the services, which play vital roles in our communities and have come under considerable pressures due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS TO OFFICERS.

- 6.1 As outlined within section 6 of the Leaders Scheme of Delegation, and in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act 2000, executive functions can be delegated to Officers (as set out within the terms of Section 5 of Part 3 of this part of the Council Constitution)
- 6.2 Following the Council AGM in 2016 and to increase transparency and accountability, Key Officer Delegated Decisions taken forward would be subject to the Overview and Scrutiny Call in procedure Rules.
- 6.3 There have been no urgent Key officer Delegated Decisions taken forward during this time period.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 None Applicable, this report is for information purposes only.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED.

10.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

11.1 All of the decisions taken forward link to the Councils Corporate plan / priorities and Members should look to each of the decisions to see how they link accordingly.

11.2 All decisions taken by the Executive are taken through the lens of the Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, ensuring that the decision takes account of the impact it could have on people living their lives in Wales now and in the future.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Members are advised of the current position in respect of urgent decisions taken forward within Cabinet Committee and through Individual Cabinet Members and Officer Decisions.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee – Overview & Scrutiny Committee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

JANUARY 2021

URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN FORWARD

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND
COMMUNICATION**

Item: URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN FORWARD

Background Papers

- Annual General Meeting – May 2016

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