



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**A virtual meeting of the CABINET will be held on
Thursday, 29th April, 2021 at 10.30 am**

Contact: Hannah Williams - Council Business Unit (Tel No. 01443 424062)

Councillors and members of the public wishing to request the facility to address the Cabinet on any of the business as listed below, must request to do so by 5pm on the Tuesday, 27 April 2021 Councillors and Members of the public should stipulate if this address will be in the medium of English or Welsh.

It must be noted that the facility to address the Cabinet is at the discretion of the Chair and each request will be considered based on the agenda items being considered, the public interest/interest of the member in each matter and the demands of the business on that day. To make such a request please email:- ExecutiveandRegulatoryBusinessUnit@rctcbc.gov.uk

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

Note:

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter 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 a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

2. MINUTES

To receive the minutes of the Cabinet Committee on the 25th March 2021 as an accurate record.

(Pages 7 - 20)

3. DIRECT CREMATIONS

To receive the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, which provides the Cabinet with an opportunity to consider the outcome of the pilot project to offer direct cremations in Rhondda Cynon Taf and to approve continuation of this service on a permanent basis.

(Pages 21 - 26)

4. RCT THEATRES: 2021 CHRISTMAS OFFER

To receive the report of the Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services, which provides Cabinet with a proposal for RCT Theatres' 2021 Christmas offer, given continued uncertainty for the sector and the reopening of theatres during the Covid-19 pandemic.

(Pages 27 - 34)

5. PORTH TRANSPORT HUB: COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

To receive the report of the Group Director, Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services, which seeks Cabinet approval to exercise Compulsory Purchase Order powers in respect of land adjacent to the site of the Porth Transport Hub for the purpose of creating a safe access route to the new facility.

(Pages 35 - 46)

6. RHONDDA CYNON TAF: SOCIAL HOUSING GRANT OFFER 2021/2022

To receive the report of the Director, Prosperity and Development, which seeks to inform Cabinet members of the Social Housing Grant offer for 2021/2022 and the potential benefits that this grant will have on meeting housing need and supporting economic growth across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

(Pages 47 - 54)

7. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN: INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

To receive the report of the Director, Finance and Digital Services, which sets out the position with regard to one-off resources which have become available as a result of additional external funding being awarded from Welsh Government (WG) during March 2021 after the Council's Capital Programme was agreed by Council on 10th March 2021. A further allocation from existing earmarked reserves (set aside to support our infrastructure) is also proposed to supplement the additional WG funding. It provides the opportunity for the Council to further invest in its priority areas, aligned to the Corporate Plan, "Making a Difference" 2020 – 2024.

(Pages 55 - 60)

8. TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

“That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act”.

9. WRITE OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS

To receive the report of the Director, Finance and Digital Services, which provides Members with a position statement on irrecoverable debt and identifies the requirement to write-off certain amounts in accordance with strict review criteria.

(Pages 61 - 76)

10. ACQUISITION OF LAND TO THE NORTH WEST OF HARRIET STREET, TRECYNON, BEING THE FORMER MAYHEW CHICKEN FACTORY, TRECYNON, ABERDARE, RCT

To receive the report of the Director, Corporate Estates, which seeks authority to acquire the Freehold interest of land to the North West of Harriet Street, Trecynon, comprising the Former Mayhew Chicken Factory site which is located in a key position adjacent to the Aberdare bypass road, to facilitate the development of a new railway halt together with a park and ride facility. Acquiring the Freehold ownership of this strategic site adjacent to the Aberdare – Hirwaun mineral line will facilitate the redevelopment of the land for future use in support of the South Wales Metro. This will achieve social, economic and environmental benefits for the area. The land offers the potential to provide a strategic access off the A4059 bypass enabling development of a strategic park and ride site to serve a wide area of the upper valley and A465 corridor and a new station to be created to serve local residents and businesses in the Llwydcoed/Trecynon area.

(Pages 77 - 82)

11. ACQUISITION OF LAND AND BUILDINGS AT WILLOWFORD HOUSE, WILLOWFORD ROAD, GWAELOD-Y-GARTH, TAFFS WELL

To receive the report of the Director, Corporate Estates, which seeks authority to acquire the Freehold interest of land and buildings at Willowford House, Willowford Road, Gwaelod -Y -Garth, Taffs Well, comprising a residential property and land immediately adjacent, being primarily woodland which is located in a key position adjacent the Willowford Road to facilitate the development of a new railway halt. Acquiring the Freehold ownership of this strategic site adjacent to the Willowford Road will safeguard the land for future use in support of the South Wales Metro. The land offers the potential to provide a new, relocated railway Halt, replacing the existing Treforest Halt situated 0.71 km (0.4 miles) to the north. The public transport offer linking to the Treforest Industrial Estate will be enhanced providing tangible benefits to Pontypridd, the Treforest Industrial Estate and the surrounding area.

(Pages 83 - 90)

12. URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any urgent business as the Chairman feels appropriate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew S. Hwang", is written over a faint, circular official stamp.

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Circulation:-

Councillors: Councillor A Morgan (Chair)
Councillor M Webber (Vice-Chair)
Councillor R Bevan
Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor M Norris
Councillor J Rosser
Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon
Councillor G Hopkins

Officers: Chris Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Christian Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Nigel Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Paul Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Richard Evans, Director of Human Resources
David Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Simon Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Andy Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Barrie Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Louise Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Gaynor Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Derek James, Service Director – Prosperity & Development
Paul Griffiths, Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 25 March 2021 at 10.30 am

County Borough Councillors - Cabinet Members in attendance:-

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

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

Others in attendance

Councillor G Caple
Councillor P Howe
Councillor P Jarman

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr N Wheeler, Group Director – Prosperity, Development & Frontline Services
Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Ms L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Ms G Davies, Director of Education and Inclusion Services
Mr N Elliott, Director of Adult Services
Ms M Warburton, Diversity & Inclusion Manager
Mr P Griffiths, Service Director, Finance & Improvement
Mr R Waters, Service Director Frontline Services

72 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct the following personal declarations of interest were made:

County Borough Councillor R Lewis – 'I declare a Personal Interest in respect of Item 12 – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Update 2021 and Item 13 - Education & Inclusion Services Planned Capital Programme 2021/22 'I am Chair of Governors YGG Abercynon, which is referenced within the reports'

County Borough Councillor J Rosser - 'I declare a Personal Interest in respect of Item 13 - Education & Inclusion Services Planned Capital Programme 2021/22 'I am on the governing body of Alaw Primary School, which is referenced within the reports'

County Borough Councillor P Howe - 'I declare a Personal Interest in respect of Item 17 - Acquisition of Former Chubb Factory Site, Maerdy Industrial Estate, Ferndale, RCT, CF43 'I am on the governing body of YGG Lyn Yr Forwyn'.

73 Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 25th February 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

74 Cabinet Work Programme

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided Cabinet Members with a draft work programme for the 2020-2021 Municipal Year, which listed matters requiring consideration by Cabinet.

The Service Director spoke of the current circumstances, commenting that there was a greater need for flexibility of the programme.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report and were advised that the programme is a live document to allow for any additional / deletion of reports throughout the year.

The Deputy Leader commented that utilising the programme assists with openness and transparency of the decision-making process within the Council and gives greater opportunity for Pre-Scrutiny.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Work Programme for the 2020-2021 Municipal Year (with appropriate amendment where necessary) and to receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

75 The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided Members with an overview of the duties placed upon the Authority through the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which received royal assent on the 20th January 2021. Members were advised that in accordance with the requirements of the Act, a number of actions would need to be addressed to ensure RCT comply with the legislative requirements.

The Service Director provided Members with a general overview of the Act which will change the way the Council operates across a range of areas from electoral reform, public participation, governance and performance management, democratic processes and stronger working arrangements with Town and Community Councils. Members were advised that the 'Coming into Force' provisions of the Act were complex, with some provisions coming into force within days of Royal Assent, others within two months and the majority via Ministerial statutory instruments.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the report and spoke of the work of the

Democratic Services Committee working group looking at aspects of the Act in respect of diversity within democracy. The Deputy Leader agreed that different elements of the Act would be reported to respective Committees when appropriate.

The Leader spoke positively on the introduction of the youth vote which is contained within the Act and spoke of the importance of encouraging diversity within democracy, to ensure all residents are represented equally.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. To note the update provided in the report.
2. To note the Council's position statement outlined within the report in respect of the requirements of the Act and agreed that the appropriate officers identified are charged with taking forward the required actions in line with the timescales stipulated within the Act or as relevant regulations are made by Welsh Government.

76 Pre-Scrutiny - Annual Equality Report 2019-2020

The Diversity and Inclusion Manager provided Members with the Annual Equality Report that had been developed to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties. Members were advised that the report contained progress made in year 2019/20 in meeting the equality objectives contained in Council's Strategic Equality Plan.

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication advised Cabinet that Members of the Overview & Scrutiny were provided with the opportunity to undertake pre scrutiny on the Annual Equality Report in advance of Cabinet's consideration.

The Deputy Leader thanked the Diversity and Inclusion Manager and her team for the work carried out on behalf of the Council and referenced a number of initiatives the Council has driven forward in driving to achieve an equitable Council.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the comments and observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
2. To endorse the recommendations outlined within the Annual Equality Report 2019/20 as attached to the report.

77 The Socio Economic Duty (Equality Act 2010)

The Diversity and Inclusion Manager provided Members with details of the Socio economic Duty which comes into force on 31 March 2021. Members were advised that the Socio economic Duty is viewed as a key mechanism to support the most vulnerable within society.

Members were advised that the duty needed to be applied to all Council Key

decisions and the process for taking forward this duty was outlined, including the creation of a review panel to strengthen and safeguard the decision-making process. It was advised that the Panel will act as an independent review mechanism to scrutinise the proposal being considered.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the importance of the duty placed upon the Council and the need for this duty to strengthen the impact assessment process undertaken to ensure that no one was disadvantaged from any decision taken forward by the Council.

With the agreement of the Chair, County Borough Councillor P Jarman addressed the Cabinet on this item.

In response to Councillor Jarman's address the Leader and Chief Executive advised of the work and discussions already undertaken in respect of electric vehicle charging points, which was detailed within the draft climate change strategy.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the content of the report in respect of the requirements of the Socio economic Duty and the need to ensure that the duty is incorporated into key Council decisions, to reduce the inequalities of outcomes from socio economic disadvantage.

78 Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy 2021-2025 for Public Consultation

The Chief Executive provided Members with an overview of the work of the Council in respect of Climate Change, advising of the positive commitment made to meet and contribute to global, national and local targets to reduce carbon across the Council's services. Members were advised that the Council already purchases 100% of its electrical energy supply from renewable energy sources and has reduced its carbon footprint by 37% or 12,725 tonnes over the past five years.

Reference was made to the work of the Climate Change Steering Group, a sub-committee of the Council's Cabinet, which is charged with developing the Council's response to the Climate Change agenda and supporting Cabinet to achieve the 2030 Net Zero target. The focus of the Steering Group has been on understanding the various carbon issues within the County Borough, making a series of recommendations to the Council's Cabinet and gathering information to inform the development of the Council's Tackling Climate Change Strategy.

The Chief Executive referred Members to the Council's draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy set out in Appendix A of the report, which set the overall direction for the Council over the coming five years, describing its vision, purpose and ambition as local authority in respect of the Council's carbon footprint and the carbon footprint for the County Borough.

Members were advised that subject to Members determination, the draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy would be subject to a comprehensive public consultation over the two months to 31 May 2021. It was also the intention for the strategy to be scrutinised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, also noting

the importance of involving all elected members in the consultation process.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the engagement with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the local communities to ensure that the strategy was focused in the right direction.

The Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, Well-being & Cultural Services commented on the wide ranging and ambitious draft strategy presented which incorporated both long- and short-term objectives. The Cabinet Member commented on the planned robust consultation process and the need for such engagement. He added that the strategy would be reviewed periodically to ensure it was always 'fit for purpose' and reacted to changing climate priorities.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and the Leader also spoke on the item and welcomed the consultation process on the strategy.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the contents of the report and the Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy appended to the report.
2. To the draft 'Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy' and the recommendations arising from the Climate Change Cabinet Steering Group on [17th March](#), in particular that officers engage and consult with residents and businesses on the Council's response to Climate Change.
3. To request that the results of the consultation on the 'Draft Council Tackling Climate Change Strategy' is presented to a future meeting of Cabinet.

79 Local Authority Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults at Risk

The Group Director, Community and Children's Services provided Members with an update on the progress made in respect of the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements in the last 12 months. Reference was made to the Wales Audit Office review conducted in 2019 which had found that the Council had met, or partially met, most of the previous recommendations and proposals for improvement. However, the Group Director added that some further proposals for improvement were made to strengthen aspects of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and details of the six proposals were provided.

The Group Director confirmed that the Council continues to make progress in delivering its Corporate Safeguarding responsibilities as evidenced by the information provided within his report and the ongoing nature of the actions being delivered.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the work of the Council to ensure its responsibilities for Corporate Safeguarding were adhered to and spoke of the partnership work with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board, which is the multi-agency statutory partnership that has the responsibility for safeguarding across the region.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Jarman spoke on this item. On response to the points raised by Councillor Jarman the Group Director referenced the work being undertaken in respect of the draft suicide prevention strategy.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To review the progress made against the improvement actions to support Corporate Safeguarding requirements and to request any further information on any areas where this is deemed insufficient.

80 The Safety of Women in Public Spaces

The Director of Public Health, Protection & Community Services provided a Verbal Update on the Safety of Women and Girls in Public Places following the tragic abduction and murder of Sarah Everard's in London on the 3rd March 2021.

The Director assured Members that keeping the people of RCT safe remains a key priority of the Council and its Partners and proceeded to outline some of those actions already in place to ensure the safety of people in RCT.

Members were advised of the investment of high quality, digital CCTV cameras following almost £400K of investment in the last three years. Details were also provided of The Pub Watch scheme, Public protection orders and the Comprehensive Strategy in place for RCT to tackle violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Director advised that following a request by Cabinet a review by the Council, Police and through the wider Community Safety Partnership was currently being undertaken to ensure strengthened collective arrangements were in place to keep women and girls safe in communities and in particular as the night time economy opens up in coming weeks.

The Deputy Leader referenced the positive work already undertaken by the Council and key partners in respect of ensuring the safety of all people within RCT and the need to work with key buildings and businesses to ensure staff are trained and able to recognise when a female is feeling unsafe.

The Leader referenced the importance of taxi marshals and the importance of registered taxis and also commented on the positive investment with CCTV which should be a reassurance to residents. The Leader welcomed the review and any opportunities that might come forward as an outcome of the review.

With the agreement of the Chair, County Borough Councillor P Jarman addressed the Cabinet on this item.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the verbal update provided
2. To receive a future report on the review currently being undertaken with partners in respect of safety of women in public spaces.

81 A Proposal to deliver Shared Regional Education Advisory Services for Children and Young People with a Sensory Impairment

The Director of Education & Inclusion Services provided Members with information regarding a proposal for Rhondda Cynon Taf's Sensory Team within the Access and Inclusion Service to move from a separate and autonomous sensory service to a shared sub-regional, educational advisory service for children and young people with a sensory impairment. Member were advised that it was proposed that the new sub-regional service would be developed in partnership with the two other Councils from the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region; Bridgend and Merthyr County Borough Council for at least the next three years.

The Director commented that the opportunity would enable the Council to drive forward and improve the way in which current sensory impairment services operate. Regionalising the resources and expertise across the three Councils would enable the Council to realise efficiencies in travel, equipment, training and direct support to families and schools. However, the main driver for the proposal was to provide resilience in the system to meet a growing area of ALN.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion services spoke of the independent review previously conducted and the shortfalls highlighted. The Cabinet Member commented that the proposal before members would address such shortfalls and would provide families, schools and local authority staff with assurance, during a period of significant insecurity, in respect of ALN within the educational sector in Wales.

With the agreement of the Leader County Borough Councillor P Jarman address the Cabinet on this item to which the Leader responded too.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To support the proposal developed in partnership with the Education Directors from Rhondda Cynon Taf, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg area, to deliver sub-regional, shared educational advisory services for children and young people with a sensory impairment, for at least the next three years.

82 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Update 2021

The Director Education & Inclusion Services referenced the duty placed on Council's to secure 'as far as is reasonably practicable' sufficient childcare to meet the requirements of parents in its area who require childcare to enable them to take up, or remain in, work, or to undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work. In respect of this duty, Councils are required to undertake a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) every five years, with annual reviews of the assessment and accompanying action plan. Members were advised that the last full CSA report was published in 2017 by the Council and that Officers are now starting to plan for the next full report, due in Spring 2022.

The Director provided Members with a detailed overview of the assessment adding that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the childcare sector across Wales has been significant. The Director commented that the Council were incredibly proud of all childcare providers in RCT who have continued to deliver safe, quality care for children and their families throughout the last year in a professional and compassionate manner. The Director concluded by adding that despite the challenges of the last 12 months, the Council continues to be well placed with its existing childcare provision to meet the current needs of most working parents. Development work continues to be undertaken in response to parental demand and in areas where there is an identified need

The Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services commented on the positive feedback provided in respect of the CSA and reiterated the comments of the Director in respect of the delivery of childcare provision during an extremely difficult 12 months and the safe environments and quality of care provided to the Children of the County Borough.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Jarman addressed the Cabinet on this item.

The Deputy Leader commented on the 30hour childcare provision and the benefits this provided for many working families. The Leader also paid thanks to the childcare sector.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. For the Director of Education and Inclusion Services to discuss with Welsh Government the future role of RCTCBC in delivery of the Childcare Offer for Wales.
3. To receive a further report and updated action plan in June 2021

83 Education & Inclusion Services Planned Capital Programme 2021/22

The Director of Education & Inclusion Services provided Cabinet Members with details of the capital works for approval for 2021/22 as part of the Council's three-year Capital Programme.

The Director reminded Cabinet Members that an amount of £7.170M has been allocated to the planned capital programme (minor works) for 2021/22, as agreed by Council on the 10th March 2021.

The Director continued by advising that continuation of the three-year rolling Capital Programme and sustaining the level of funding would continue to make significant enhancements to the quality of the Council's school premises and has been a vital part of the Council school modernisation programme which has undoubtedly contributed to improved standards.

Members were referred to section 5 of the report where the proposed allocations of the planned capital programme funds for 2021/22 were outlined. It was advised that further details of the programmes of work were detailed in appendices 1 –10 of the report.

Cabinet Member for Education & Inclusion Services welcomed the report and the investment being taken forward within the schools identified, which she felt would help modernise the buildings and improve the environment for children to learn.

The Leader also commented on the additional investment and the significant progress made with the programme, during a difficult year.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Jarman also spoke on this item.

Following discussions the Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the Education Capital Programme priority schemes for 2021/22 as outlined in Appendices 1-9 of the report and to approve scheme commencement.

84 Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects Supplementary Capital Programme 2021/22

The Service Director, Frontline Services provided Cabinet Members with the detailed capital programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects for 2020/21.

Members were provided with the detail against the specific 2020/21 capital allocations of £12.949M in favour of Highways Technical Services and of £12.076M in favour of Strategic Projects. It was added that these allocations were being made in order to safeguard the long-term integrity of the highways and transportation network and to enhance it, so as to deal with ever increasing travel demands. Specific regard was given to promoting safer and more sustainable travel and to enabling economic activity.

The Service Director referred Members of section 4.1.4 of his report which provided details of the programme and funding allocation and also confirmed that a number of the grant allocations referenced within the report had been confirmed from Welsh Government.

The Leader welcomed the investment and advised Members that the programme was a rolling programme of work. He welcomed the recognised improvements to highways infrastructure based on the data in the report and spoke of the unprecedented year and the effects on the County Borough in respect of Storm Dennis and the effects on the highways and infrastructure.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor G Caple and P Jarman addressed the Cabinet on this item.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note and approve the Supplementary Capital Programme for Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects as detailed within the report.
2. To note that the current allocations are part of a 3-year capital

programme and agreed to delegate authority to the Group Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Digital Services, to extend activity to deliver additional projects during the financial year, where capacity exists for accelerated delivery in accordance with the purpose of the wider programme, or to suspend programmes/projects and reallocate funding to optimise delivery.

85 Non Domestic Rate (NDR) Relief Scheme for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality

The Director of Finance & Digital Services reminded Members of the Welsh Government financial support package for businesses which was developed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Director advised that the package included a new temporary business rates relief scheme for the financial year 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021. He continued by advising that the scheme, provided a business rate “holiday” for all qualifying businesses for the whole period and was fully funded by WG. During 2020/21, around 1,300 businesses in Rhondda Cynon Taf had benefitted from £16M of rate relief through the scheme. Members were informed that an extension of this rate relief had been announced by Welsh Government and details of the extension were provided for Members consideration.

The Leader welcomed the rate relief extension which he added would provide further much needed financial support and certainty for local businesses to meet their 2021/22 rate liability and would supplement the Council’s wider commitment to maintain vibrant town centres across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the details of the RLH (Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief) Scheme and formally adopt the scheme for the year 2021/22.

(**N.B** The Service Director, Democratic Services and Communications advised Members that the item would be exempt from call in due to the need for Non Domestic Rate demands to be dispatched in line with requirements.)

86 Council Performance Report - 31st December 2020 (Quarter 3)

The Service Director, Performance and Improvement provided an overview of the Council’s performance, both from a financial and operational perspective, based on the first nine months of this financial year (to the 31st December 2020).

The Service Director advised that the third quarter revenue budget position was projecting a £1.049M overspend, representing an improved picture compared to quarters 1 and 2. He added that this projection reflected the continuation of key pressures primarily within Children’s and Adult Services. Members were reminded that the position was also set in the unprecedented context of Covid-19 and takes into account additional Welsh Government funding received for the first nine months of the year, and that forecasted to be received for the remainder of the year, in respect of additional expenditure incurred and income loss as a result of the pandemic.

As part of the Council’s robust service and financial management arrangements, the Service Director advised that work was continuing across all services to contribute to bringing the financial position closer in line with budget; refresh

financial forecasts for the full year as updated information becomes available; and engagement with Welsh Government to highlight the importance of providing additional funding to meet on-going permanent cost pressures.

Capital investment as at 31st December 2020 was £57.483M, with projects across the programme continuing to progress during Quarter 3, taking account of Covid-19 restrictions and safety requirements. The Service Director concluded his overview by advising of the good progress that had been made across the Council's three Corporate Plan priorities of People, Places and Prosperity with a continued focus on providing essential support to residents and businesses to help counter the significant impact Covid-19 is having on local communities and, alongside this, progressing the delivery of major projects.

The Deputy Leader referenced the positive indicators in respect of sickness absence and thanked all staff for their loyalty and hard work during a difficult year.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Estates welcomed the report and noted the improvements made since the previous quarter report. He referenced the ongoing pressures facing the Council in respect of Social Services and praised officers for the work undertaken to maximise on grant funding opportunities.

The Leader also reiterated his thanks for the work undertaken by Council staff and referenced work and investment in schools, town centres and empty properties across the County Borough. The Leader also commented on the substantial pressures in respect of Social Services.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the continued unprecedented circumstances Council Services are operating within as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Revenue

2. To note and agree the General Fund revenue outturn position of the Council as at the 31st December 2020 (Section 2 of the Executive Summary) including the on-going Welsh Government Covid-19 funding to support service delivery.

Capital

3. To note the capital outturn position of the Council as at the 31st December 2020 (Sections 3a – e of the Executive Summary).
4. To note the details of the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as at the 31st December 2020 (Section 3f of the Executive Summary).

Corporate Plan Priorities

5. To note the Quarter 2 progress updates for the Council's agreed Corporate Plan priorities (Sections 5 a – c of the Executive Summary).
6. To note the progress update to enhance the Council's short term and long-term response to extreme weather events (Section 6 of the Executive Summary).

87 To consider passing the following Resolution:

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

88 Acquisition of Former Chubb Factory Site, Maerdy Industrial Estate, Ferndale, RCT, CF43 4AB

The Director of Corporate Estates sought authority from Cabinet to acquire the Freehold interest of land comprising the Former Chubb Factory Site, Maerdy Industrial Estate, Ferndale, RCT. Through his exempt report, Members were advised that the land was located in a key position adjacent to private and Council land holdings, and could be used to potentially facilitate the development of a new Welsh Medium Primary School and/ or develop the site to meet the needs of the local community.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor P Howe addressed the Cabinet on this item.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To purchase the Freehold interest at the Former Chubb Factory site, Maerdy Industrial Estate, Ferndale.

(**N.B** During this item County Borough Councillor P Howe declared a personal interest which minute no.73 refers)

89 Danymynydd (Porth) Extra Care Development

The Group Director, Community & Children's Services provided Members with an update on the redevelopment of the former Danymynydd Care Home in Porth for the provision of extra care housing as part of the Council's extra care housing development programme previously approved by Cabinet. Within the exempt report, the Group Director sought Cabinets approval of the budget and required capital funding to deliver the scheme and the temporary relocation of the Specialist Autism Day Centre to Brynnar Jones Day Centre.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor G Caple spoke on this item.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the funding package as outlined in Section 5 of the report, to redevelop the former Danymynydd Care Home for the provision of extra care housing.
2. To include the Danymynydd Extra Care Housing Scheme within

the 3 year Capital Programme (Modernisation Programme (Adults)).

3. To the temporary relocation of the Specialist Autism Day Centre at Danymynydd Care Home, in Porth to the Brynnar Jones Day Centre facility, located in Gelli and that Social Worker and Day Centre staff continue to engage and work individually with the people who use the Day Centre and their families/carers to assess their needs and support them during and after the proposed move as set out in paragraph 5.7 of the report.
4. To receive update reports on progress in delivering the Council's extra care housing development programme and on individual scheme costs and funding requirements for consideration and approval.

This meeting closed at 12.30 pm

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH APRIL 2021

DIRECT CREMATATIONS

REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR. RHYS LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELL-BEING & CULTURAL SERVICES

Author: Janet Lewis, Bereavement Services Manager – 01443 402810

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider the outcome of the pilot project to offer direct cremations in Rhondda Cynon Taf and to approve continuation of this service on a permanent basis.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Approval be given for the continuation of the provision of offering a Direct/Simplicity cremation service at Glyntaff Crematorium, at the reduced prescribed fee of £568 for 2021/22 and in line with the rate applied for the pilot scheme.
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1, the Direct Cremation fee level for 2022/23 onwards be determined as part of Cabinet's consideration of Council fees and charges each year.
- 2.3 An update is reported to the Llwydcoed Crematorium Joint Committee seeking implementation of direct cremation arrangements at Llwydcoed Crematorium in line with those approved for Glyntaff Crematorium.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Funeral costs have increased substantially and are becoming increasingly unaffordable to those on the lowest incomes. Many funeral directors are now offering alternative options to families that are lower cost and allow for those who wish to have a simpler, less formal funeral. These are known as "direct" or "simplicity" cremations.
- 3.2 Several burial and cremation authorities across Wales have introduced the facility to accept direct cremations from funeral directors by introducing a reduced

cremation fee for such services. This proposal would ensure that this Council is offering a range of services that reflect demand and providing assistance to those who struggle to meet funeral costs.

- 3.3 During the term of the pilot, the feedback and demand for this service has been very positive and well received by stakeholders and bereaved families. In the initial 12 months of the pilot project, 65 “direct cremations” took place; 28 at Glyntaff and 37 at Llwydcoed Crematorium.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A “direct”, “simplicity” cremation or “cremation without ceremony” is where a funeral director arranges a service with no mourners and brings the deceased directly to the crematorium with no religious service or attendees. The fees and charges to the family of the deceased are significantly reduced making the service more affordable, particularly for those on low incomes.
- 4.2 The average cost of the essential elements of a funeral in the UK was estimated to be nearly £4,300 in 2018 (£3,744 for a cremation and £4,798 for a burial) with another £2,000 being spent on discretionary items such as flowers and catering. In Wales, the average cost of a burial is £3,934 and the average costs for a cremation is £3,142¹. Although these are below the national average, costs have increased substantially across Wales and the UK and are likely to continue to do so.
- 4.3 There has been increasing concern that the overall costs applied by the funerals industry have been increasing substantially and that funerals had become unaffordable for many. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) launched a review of the funerals industry on 1st June 2018, publishing its final report and decision on a market investigation reference on 28th March 2019². The CMA found that over the past 14 years the price of the essential elements of a funeral is estimated to have grown by 6% annually, twice the inflation rate over this period. The average spend on a funeral varies very little by household income, which means that the poorest are disproportionately affected by funeral costs. The cost of a funeral will amount to nearly 40% of the annual expenditure of someone on the lowest income².
- 4.4 In response to the increasing demand and price sensitivity of customers, funeral directors are increasingly offering low cost options to families. These services are often called “direct” or “simplicity” cremations or “cremations without ceremony”. A direct cremation is a disposition option in which the body of the deceased is cremated in the days immediately following the death without a funeral service beforehand or the viewing of the person who has died. This option significantly reduces the cost to the family.
- 4.5 In addition to being more affordable, this also meets the requirements of families or the wishes of the deceased who prefer the lack of fuss and formality that a direct cremation can offer and the flexibility to choose how to celebrate the life of a loved one at a later date if they wish.

- 4.6 With a direct cremation there is no service or mourners present at the crematorium; the cremation takes place at a crematorium of the funeral directors choosing and may not be restricted to a particular time of the day. Many crematoriums that accept direct cremations often do so in the early morning at times that are seldom utilised for full services.
- 4.7 During the pilot period direct cremations have been offered at the 9am timeslot which is rarely requested by families. During the initial pilot period, November 2019 to November 2020, 65 direct cremations took place, 28 in Glyntaff and 37 in Llwydcoed. In the subsequent three months a further 31 direct cremations have taken place across both crematoria.
- 4.8 On the evidence of the pilot scheme, the option of direct cremations is being taken up by bereaved families with increased frequency. If it is agreed to continue the scheme on a permanent basis, with the prescribed reduced fee for 2021/22 of £568, this will bring the arrangements at Glyntaff Crematorium in line with the majority of other burial authorities in Wales. With regard to the setting of the Direct Cremation fee level for 2022/23 (and annually thereafter), it is proposed that this is determined as part of Cabinet's consideration of Council fees and charges each year.
- 4.9 In terms of Llwydcoed Crematorium, the Joint Committee received and approved the 2021/22 Fees and Charges Report on 16th March 2021 and, as part of this report noted that *'...during the past year a pilot has been in place to apply a reduced cremation fee of £568 for funeral directors offering a direct cremation. Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC are currently finalising a review of the pilot and level of charge for the forthcoming financial year, and will update the Joint Committee to enable this to be implemented at Llwydcoed Crematorium in line with the arrangements for Rhondda Cynon Taf'*. Therefore, subject to the implementation of direct cremations on a permanent basis at Glyntaff Crematorium, an update will be reported to the Llwydcoed Crematorium Joint Committee seeking agreement for the same arrangements to be implemented at Llwydcoed Crematorium and for the setting of the Direct Cremation fee level from 2022/23 onwards.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An equality impact assessment screening form has been completed and identified that there are no equality or diversity issues arising from this proposal.

6. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 6.1 There are no consultation implications arising from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The Council currently charges £721 for a cremation. The fee for a direct cremation is £568 which is broadly comparable with the fees set by other burial authorities in Wales offering the same service.

7.2 It is difficult to predict the ongoing level of demand and the financial impact of direct cremations. Based on the pilot period it would be prudent to allow for 100 such services per annum which will be utilising times that would otherwise be unused.

7.3 Based on an estimated 100 direct cremations per annum, the forecasted total savings to bereaved families would be £15,300 each year. This position will be monitored during 2021/22 and, if a budgetary adjustment is required to the Service's budget, this will be built into the 2022/23 budget setting process.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no legal implications rising from this report.

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

9.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's well-being goals of People, Places and Prosperity. The growing cost of funerals across the UK has meant that funerals have become increasingly unaffordable for the poorest in society. This proposal supports our local people by making funeral costs more affordable to those in greatest need.

9.2 This proposal contributes to the Well Being goal of 'A Wales of Cohesive Communities'.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The pilot of offering direct cremations to bereaved families has been well received and following consideration from the pilot period it is recommended that the Council continue to offer this option on a permanent basis at Glyntaff Crematorium and report an update to Llwydcoed Crematorium Joint Committee seeking approval for the same arrangements to be implemented.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH APRIL 2021

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION & COMMUNITY SERVICES
IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, CLLR. RHYS LEWIS**

DIRECT CREMATIONS

Background Papers

¹Cost of Dying Report 2018, 12th edition; SunLife

²Funerals market study, final report and decision on a market investigation reference;
Competition & Markets Authority; 28th March 2019

Officer to contact:

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29th APRIL 2021

RCT THEATRES: 2021 CHRISTMAS OFFER

REPORT OF DIRECTOR – PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH CLLR. RHYS LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELL-BEING & CULTURAL SERVICES

Author: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager - 07786 523614

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a proposal for RCT Theatres' 2021 Christmas offer, given continued uncertainty for the sector and the reopening of theatres during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Consider the content of the report.
- 2.2 Approve the proposal to produce a digital Christmas offer of Aladdin to share online during December 2021 and the additional budget of £30,000 to deliver the production and make it available to view free of charge via the Council's social media channels.
- 2.3 Agree to postpone the live pantomime production of 'Dick Whittington' until December 2022.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 A sector meeting with Welsh Government on Monday 22nd March 2021 noted that the alert plan for Wales had been updated and that theatres will remain closed until Level 2, when they will be able to reopen with extremely restricted numbers – 30 indoors and 50 outdoors. At Level 1, numbers will also be restricted – 50 indoors and 100 outdoors. The 2m rule that is law is set to remain.

- 3.2 When theatres are able to reopen, the 2m social distancing restrictions are likely to remain, impacting on the capacity permitted within theatre auditoria and other areas within the buildings; therefore, capacity for income generation from tickets and secondary spend will be significantly decreased.
- 3.3 In order for RCT Theatres' to secure cast, crew and high-quality production values, approval is being sought to, once again, produce a digital Christmas offer for 2021 and to postpone the pantomime 'Dick Whittington' to December 2022. A decision is required by the end of April 2021 for this proposal to be fully realised.
- 3.4 It is important for the Arts Service to show its funders (in particular the Arts Council of Wales) that it is doing everything it can to ensure people can still access the Arts in RCT despite the challenges experienced at the present time, and likely to continue to be experienced in the coming months.

4. CONTEXT

- 4.1 Approval for RCT Theatres to postpone its 'Dick Whittington' pantomime until December 2021 and to produce a digital Christmas performance was granted at a Cabinet meeting in September 2020.
- 4.2 RCT Theatres' annual pantomime starts its development process in the January of its delivery year. Within a 12-week timescale, 'Once Upon a Panto' - a free production of 5 original individual stories with original music - were produced for 2020's online offer.
- 4.3 The skills of the cast and crew who had been contracted in January 2020 for December 2020's RCT Theatres' pantomime were used to create the Christmas offer. Overall, twenty one freelancers were supported in the creation of the production.
- 4.4 The production was filmed and edited at Orchard Ltd's studio, with a tight schedule of three hours filming per story, introducing cast and crew to new skills required for screen as opposed to stage performances.
- 4.5 In addition, the Christmas offer was the first of RCT Theatres' productions to be made fully accessible with captions, BSL and audio description for each story.
- 4.6 The first story of the 'Once Upon a Panto' production was released via RCT Theatres' YouTube channel on Sunday 20th December 2020, with a story released each day until Thursday 24th December. The production remained available until the New Year.

- 4.7 Until 2020, RCT Theatres had not utilised its social media platforms to broadcast performances. The 'Once Upon a Time' production reached 10,101 views and 205 new subscribers to the newly established RCT Theatres' YouTube channel. Each view could be seen by an individual or a family and each time the link is clicked, counts as another view. Therefore, 10,101 does not equate to 10,101 people viewing the production. It could be that in excess of 25,000 people engaged with the production with 75% of the views being watched by 3 people and the remaining 25% by individuals. With an average audience of 13,820 across the last three pantomimes, the Christmas offer has a positive reach.
- 4.8 The 'Once Upon a Panto' production is scheduled to be available again over the 2021 Easter period via the Coliseum and Park and Dare Theatre Facebook pages.
- 4.9 There are many positive comments received through our social media platforms in relation to the production, here is an example:
- "What a wonderful way to support the community";
 - Our family have loved these, thank you for doing this";
 - "This has been the first time our family have sat down together and enjoyed a show - my daughter is deaf. Just wonderful".

5. 2021 CHRISTMAS OFFER

5.1 Production

- 5.1.1 Last year, the Cabinet resolved to postpone the Dick Whittington pantomime scheduled for December 2020 until December 2021. In view of the ongoing pandemic, RCT Theatre's recommend that this is further postponed until December 2022.
- 5.1.2 Given the current situation, RCT Theatres proposes providing a Christmas digital offer of 'Aladdin' in December 2021, building on learning from 2020's production and, with earlier approval, providing a longer timescale for development and production.
- 5.1.3 Engaging the services of a professional production company, RCT Theatres will create a bespoke digital offer for RCT residents, filmed at the Park and Dare Theatre and on location across RCT.
- 5.1.4 Filming on location across RCT as well as on the Park and Dare Theatre stage will provide an RCT community backdrop to the production. It will not be enough to film the show and present it as a 'film'; the conventions are not authentic and the lack of an audience needs to be addressed.

- 5.1.5 To address the lack of an in-situ audience, an original script will be written to incorporate specific local references and, Covid restrictions allowing, we propose that segments will be filmed on location across RCT.
- 5.1.6 RCT Theatres' pantomime productions are around 2.5 hours in length (including a 20 minute interval). The narrative of 'Aladdin' will be condensed for a digital platform.
- 5.1.7 Once again, RCT Theatres will ensure that the production is fully accessible with captions, BSL and audio description.

5.2 Community Engagement

- 5.2.1 In order to create a bespoke production for RCT residents, additional content will be added to make the piece more relevant to this format. Additional content that could be considered include:
- Original advertisement breaks to add comedy and variety;
 - Key characters filmed volunteering at local organisations;
 - Short online cameos with local talent e.g. Sophie Evans, Callum Howells;
 - Online cameos 'starring' local people.
- 5.2.2 The additional content provides RCT Theatres with an opportunity to create a production that is both bespoke and relevant to RCT residents, raises awareness of community provision and celebrates local talent.
- 5.2.3 Children and young people feature annually within RCT Theatres' pantomime, developing their skills and knowledge of the sector through participating in the Panto Crew. There was no involvement from children and young people during the 2020 Christmas offer due to timescale restriction. We will explore the possibility of the inclusion of children and young people within the 2020 digital offer.

5.3 Viewing

- 5.3.1 The production will be filmed in a digital design format that enables it to be screened as a cinema experience; therefore, if cinema screenings are permitted and viable, the production can be screened at the Coliseum and Park and Dare Theatres.
- 5.3.2 If cinema screenings are not permitted, the production will be released for viewing, free of charge, via our social media platforms.

5.4 Budget

- 5.4.1 This proposal is costed at £75,000. As an Arts Council of Wales Portfolio client in receipt of revenue funding, £45,000 will be allocated from this budget.
- 5.4.2 If this is to be a fully online production, and it is to remain free of charge, no income will be generated.
- 5.4.3 If the production is able to be screened at the theatres, there is a potential to generate an income through ticket sales. If this approach is to be taken then the production will not be available online.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

7. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT

- 7.1 No consultation exercise has been required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 With limited or no income generation opportunity through ticket sales and secondary spend, a further £30,000 commitment is required to provide our communities with a free, high-quality, festive, feel good, accessible offer in December 2021.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

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

- 10.1 The proposal contributes to the Council's corporate priorities:
- People – such as developing cultural experiences for positive health and wellbeing and; providing cultural experiences for our residents;
 - Places – such as providing opportunities to engage with and participate in the arts and creative industries within our communities, town centres and parks and; developing themed bespoke projects;
 - Prosperity - such as supporting and developing freelancers; being innovative in our Christmas offer and; fulfilling the sectors potential to culturally serve its community.

10.2 The proposal contributes to the seven national wellbeing goals, particularly:

- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language;
- A prosperous Wales;
- A healthier Wales;
- A Wales of cohesive communities.

10.3 The proposal is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long-term – revenue investment seeks to achieve a long-term and sustainable arts and creative industries infrastructure with the Borough;
- Prevention – engagement and participation opportunities offering early intervention and prevention support;
- Integrated – contributing to a range of local, regional and national strategic priorities by adopting an integrated and coherent approach;
- Collaboration - through working across Council services and public, private and third sector agencies, locally, regionally and nationally;
- Involvement – through consultation, feedback, advisory groups and professional networks.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 This paper outlines a proposal to develop a digital production for RCT Theatres to be shared with the community in December 2021 and the financial commitment required.

11.2 With the remaining uncertainty regarding the reopening of theatres, this proposal will enable RCT Theatres to plan effectively to secure and produce a joyous digital Christmas offer, free of charge for the residents of RCT. If the situation improves and theatres are allowed to open during the festive period, this production can be screened as a cinema offer within RCT Theatres.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH APRIL 2021

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR – PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT
PORTFOLIO HOLDER, CLLR. RHYS LEWIS**

RCT THEATRES: 2021 CHRISTMAS OFFER

Background Papers

None

Officer to contact: Caroline O'Neill – Strategic Arts and Culture Manager
Tel: 07786 523614

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH APRIL 2021

PORTH TRANSPORT HUB: COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING – COUNCILLOR BEVAN AND THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION - COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN

Author(s): Roger Waters, Service Director Frontline Services and Derek James, Service Director Prosperity and Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to exercise Compulsory Purchase Order powers in respect of land adjacent to the site of the Porth Transport Hub for the purpose of creating a safe access route to the new facility.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet consider the preliminary investment and enabling works carried out in order to prepare the development site for the Porth Transport Hub and the position of the facility as the anchor project within the wider-reaching Porth Town Centre Strategy, and;
- 2.2 Grant authorisation to the Group Director of Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services to:
- 2.3 To take all necessary steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of a Compulsory Purchase Order (if required) in respect of the land identified in the reference plan at Appendix [1] to the report including but not limited to the following:
 - All steps up to and including seeking confirmation of the CPO by the Welsh Ministers (or, if permitted, by the Council pursuant to Section 14A Acquisition of Land Act 1981), including the preparation and presentation of the Council's case for any Written Representations, Hearing or Public Inquiry which may be necessary;



- Publication and service of notices of confirmation of the CPO and thereafter to execute and serve any General Vesting Declarations and/or Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry;
- To acquire the necessary interests in the land; and
- Referral and conduct of disputes, relating to compulsory purchase compensation, to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

3.0 REASONS FOR RECCOMENDATION

- 3.1 Although the Authority has made its best effort to acquire the necessary land for the provision of the safe access to the Porth Transport Hub development via a mutually beneficial agreement, no such outcome has been achieved at a critical juncture for the project.
- 3.2 Whilst constructive dialogue continues with the affected parties, there is still a risk that the discussions may not yield the required result which would have significant ramifications for the progress and viability of the development.
- 3.3 Although it is still hoped that the land can be acquired via agreement, it has become necessary to develop a case for a Compulsory Purchase Order as a contingency in order to ensure the authority can still acquire the necessary land, which is integral for the provision of safe and secure access to the new Porth Transport Hub.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities, is a clear commitment within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Corporate Plan. The plan also makes a commitment that they will benefit from investment to ensure an attractive environment exists for businesses, residents and shoppers.
- 4.2 To deliver this commitment and to tackle the many challenges faced by our town centres, the solution requires a sophisticated and sustainable approach to regeneration.
- 4.3 As such, the Porth Town Centre Strategy sets out an integrated, co-ordinated and holistic approach to town centre regeneration that takes into account the distinctive role Porth has at the gateway to the Rhondda Valleys and its important location for services, employment, housing and transport function. The Porth Transport Hub is the anchor project within the Strategy that will serve as the key catalyst for the holistic regeneration of the town.



5.0 CONTEXT: PORTH TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY

- 5.1 With the creation of strong, resilient and vibrant town centres as a key component of the Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan, 'The Way Ahead', The Porth Town Centre Strategy was created to rejuvenate Porth and the surrounding area through a holistic and comprehensive strategy of targeted regeneration. The strategy proposed that this would be cultivated via the delivery of a series of projects based on connectivity, housing and retail and maximising the potential of Porth's geographical and cultural designation as the 'Gateway to the Rhondda'.
- 5.2 The Porth Transport Hub is the largest project within the Strategy's programme and will serve as an anchor for comprehensive regeneration, development and investment across Porth Town Centre and the surrounding area.
- 5.3 Through support from the Cardiff Capital City Deal, modernisation via the South Wales Metro development and an increase in trains on valleys lines from two to four per hour, the development of the Porth Transport Hub is timed perfectly to coincide with the most significant development of the Welsh rail network in decades and provides a prime opportunity to capitalise upon the benefits.

6.0 THE PORTH TRANSPORT HUB

- 6.1 The Porth Transport Hub will be a structure adjacent to the existing Porth Train Station platform which will serve as a transport interchange, linking bus passengers via the new Transport Hub with the existing rail platform. It will be conveniently built at the North end of Hannah Street, allowing easy access for residents, visitors and workers into the heart of Porth Town Centre.
- 6.2 The total land footprint of the Porth Transport Hub is approximately 3,400 square metres. The complete site encompasses a plot of land created through the purchase and demolition of three key structures; the vacated Barclays Bank building; Porth Farm Surgery and the Alec Jones Day Centre; services from which have been relocated to the nearby Porth Plaza Community Hub.
- 6.3 In order to provide a safe route to the Porth Transport Hub, it is necessary to construct a new access route off Porth Street, Porth. Rights of access will be maintained for the adjacent nightclub and telephone exchange to allow for continued use of their rear car parks and entrances.
- 6.4 To construct this new access route additional land must be acquired.

7.0 LAND TO BE ACQUIRED THROUGH COMPULSORY PURCHASE

- 7.1 The land to be acquired comprises an area of 369m² and is located to the East of Porth Street adjacent to a private access lane on its Northern boundary, which is currently within the ownership of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (See appendix 1).
- 7.2 The land is located at the Northern boundary of the British Telecom site and comprises of a flat area of tarmac which forms an access point off Porth Street. This leads to the rear of the building which is in the ownership of British Telecom but has shared access rights with the adjacent property owners (Meadbro Ltd, owners of the adjacent Squares Nightclub) and leads to a lockable double gated access, with key access controlled by Meadbro Ltd.
- 7.3 The site boundary is formed by an access gate on the Western edge which forms the main access / egress to the site; a 1500mm high chain link fence on the Northern side which runs the full length of the boundary; a rendered brickwork wall along the Eastern edge and the British Telecom building on the Southern edge.
- 7.4 While the land in question is generally used for access for British Telecom vehicles (and a right of way for vehicles for Meadbro Ltd), British Telecom engineers also use the South Western area for parking for two non-service vehicles. There is also an area for loading mid-way along the building elevation and a number of access chambers containing British Telecom services which require unfettered access periodically.

8.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR COMPULSORY PURCHASE

- 8.1 As part of the Porth Transport Hub development, the Council has maintained consistent, constructive and positive engagement with the parties affected in order to reach a mutually beneficial agreement which would allow the Council to utilise the land in question as part of the Porth Transport Hub development.
- 8.2 Despite the Council's best efforts over an extensive period of time, no suitable agreement with the affected parties has been reached to date. In its attempts to reach an agreement, the Council has worked to ensure that the affected parties would have continued and unfettered access to their properties for the purposes of their business. Additionally, the Council has offered to address any concerns over the acquisition, such as guaranteed rights of access and additional security features for the land in question.
- 8.3 There has been consistent discussion via email and telephone over the proposals and multiple site meetings have been facilitated by the Council in order to properly illustrate the proposals. A range of feedback has been taken on board



by the Council and considerable progress has been made recently in working to acquire the land from the affected parties via agreement.

- 8.4 Council representatives have worked closely with the affected parties **to develop heads of terms** for a mutually beneficial agreement. This agreement would see the Council acquire the land in return for reasonable compensation, without the need for a Compulsory Purchase Order. Negotiations suggest that the affected parties are close to agreeing the heads of terms in principle. Feedback has been provided by the affected parties on the proposals which the Council continues to address in order to maximise the potential for a successful agreement.
- 8.5 Whilst acquiring the land via agreement is the preferred route there is still a risk that discussions may be unsuccessful in producing such an outcome. Therefore, it is necessary at this point in time to begin Compulsory Purchase Order proceedings as a contingency in order to acquire land that is integral to the project's success.
- 8.6 The land in question is critical to the Porth Transport Hub development as a safe access route. Significant analysis of the proposals and any alternatives has been conducted by the Council with no suitable alternative being determined. The land to be acquired through this proposal has been judged by multiple professionals to be necessary to deliver the safest viable route to the new Porth Transport Hub. Given that the development is now at a critical stage, with construction due to start in early summer, the acquisition of the land in a timely manner is essential for the development.

9.0 NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 In order to proceed with a CPO, the Council will need to prepare a Statement of Reasons which will set out why it is necessary to exercise CPO powers. A Land Reference plan will also need to be prepared detailing the land to be acquired.
- 9.2 Once these have been finalised the CPO will be drafted and sealed. Notice of making the CPO is then published in the press, erected on site and provided to the landowners and other parties who have a legal interest (if any). The CPO is then submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for confirmation. Depending on whether relevant objections are received, the CPO may be considered following written representations, a hearing or a public inquiry.
- 9.3 The Welsh Ministers will then refuse or confirm the CPO with or without modification. If no objections are received and the order may be confirmed without modification the Welsh Ministers may permit the Council to confirm the CPO under section 14A Acquisition of Land Act 1980. If the CPO is confirmed the Council will need to take the necessary steps to acquire the land. This will be by serving a Notice to Treat and a Notice to Enter or by making a General Vesting Declaration. Compensation will also need to be agreed with the affected parties.



10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATION

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form has been completed for this project, in accordance with The Council's Equality Impact Assessment Guidance (2015). The initial EqIA screening process did not identify any high or negative impacts on any particular group or groups, thus a full EqIA is not required for this project.

11.0 CONSULTATION

- 11.1 The development of the Porth Town Centre Strategy included full and comprehensive consultation involving direct interface with the public through events scheduled in Porth and the surrounding area throughout November and December 2018.
- 11.2 Events were programmed in Porth Plaza; Morrisons Supermarket Porth; Gilfach Goch Community Centre; Tonyrefail Leisure Centre; Rhiwgarn Community Centre and Ferndale Library. This programme of events offered the Council and public an opportunity to participate in the development of the series of projects contained within the Porth Regeneration Strategy, including the Porth Transport Hub.

12.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 12.1 The Compulsory Purchase Order will generate financial implications by means of the fees to be incurred undertaking the statutory processes involved in seeking confirmation of the Order. If confirmed, the Council will need to agree and pay the settled compensation amounts (if the compensation cannot be agreed this may mean that the matter is referred to the Lands Tribunal). It is considered that the approved budget in place for the development of the Porth Transport Hub means that there is sufficient existing resource in the capital programme to fund the recommendations.

13.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 13.1 The Council has the power to make the CPO under the provisions of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and Highways Act 1980.

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

- 14.1 The delivery of this project will contribute to the Council's corporate priorities:



- Economy – building a strong economy
- People – promoting greater connectivity and independence
- Place – creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work

14.2 Enabling vibrant and enticing town centres, with a strong offer, which recognises that they are at the heart of our communities is a clear commitment within. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan "The Way Ahead". The strategy is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

14.3 **Long term** – the Porth Transport Hub development is an investment designed to bring significant long-term benefits to the town, its people and the local economy. The facility will promote greater use of public transport; provide an opportunity to physically regenerate the town and attract greater investment into Porth as an excellent place in which to visit, live and work.

14.4 **Prevention** – Once constructed and complemented by the increase in trains from two to four per hour, the Porth Transport Hub will enable access to a seamless and integrated transport system for the public; preventing significant traffic congestion and pollution in the region from worsening.

14.5 **Integration** – The Porth Transport Hub will help deliver a number of the objectives identified within the Council's Corporate Plan. The Hub is also firmly established within the Porth Town Centre Strategy as the key basis for providing holistic and comprehensive physical and economic regeneration throughout the Town.

14.6 **Collaboration** – Constructive partnerships with other public services and third sector organisations such as Transport for Wales are critical and intrinsic to the success of this project.

14.7 **Involvement** – Extensive public consultation has been carried out; with 83% of local respondents agreeing that improving connectivity within the town centre and surrounding areas through the development of the Transport Hub was important in the regeneration of Porth.

14.8 This approach makes a direct contribution to the seven national well-being goals, in particular a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities and a more equal Wales.

15.0 CONCLUSION

15.1 This report sets out the reasons a Compulsory Purchase Order is necessary to acquire the land to develop the Porth Transport Hub and the steps required.



- 15.2 The acquisition of the necessary land would enable the progression of the Porth Transport Hub development, which would bring improved connectivity within the wider area. The development has the potential to attract more people to the town to work, live, visit and invest.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer:

Derek James / Roger Waters



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH APRIL 2021

PORTH TRANSPORT HUB COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY, DEVELOPMENT AND
FRONTLINE SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR
ENTERPRISE, DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING – COUNCILLOR BEVAN AND
THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS
AND TRANSPORTATION - COUNCILLOR ANDREW MORGAN**

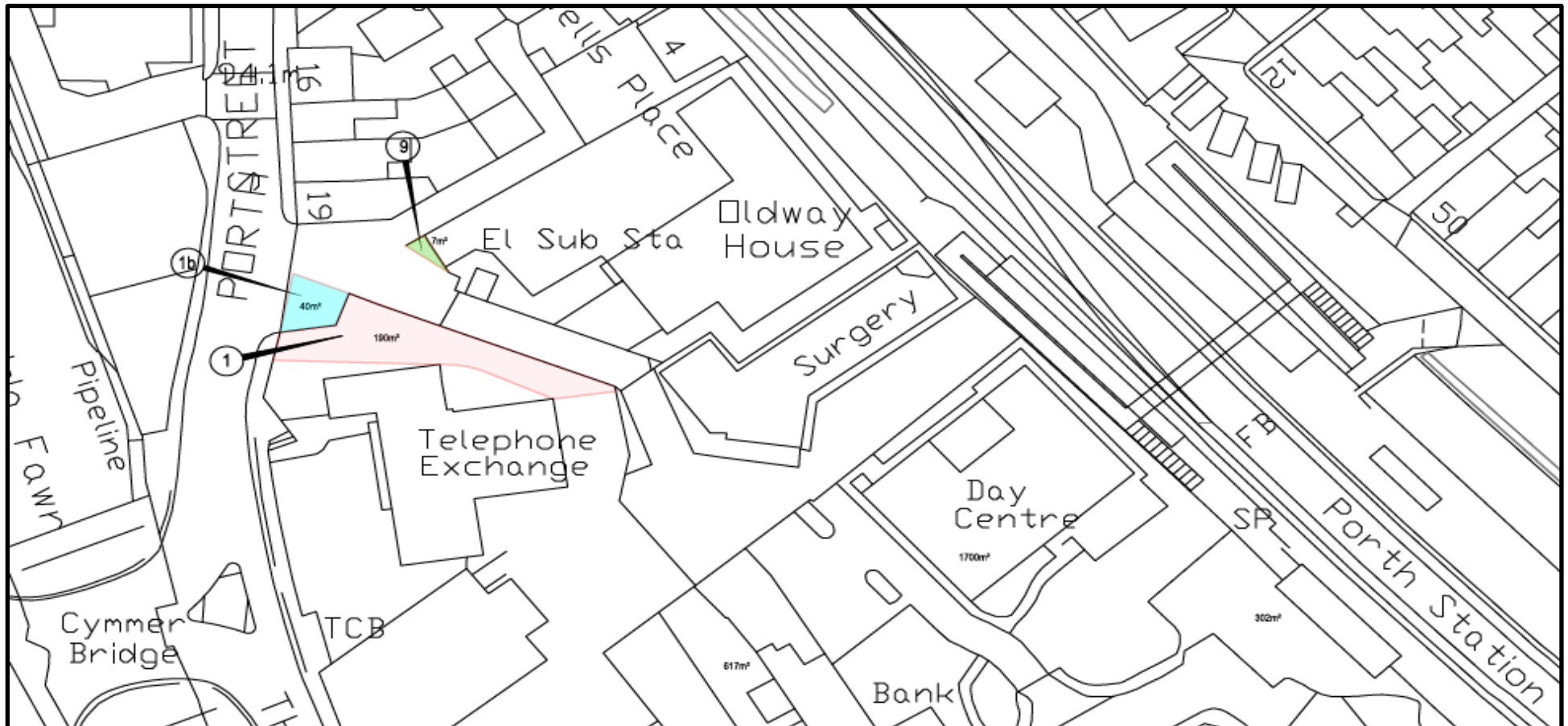
Item:

Background Papers

None.

Appendix

Appendix 1.0: Map of the Site of the Porth Transport Hub and Sections of Land to be Acquired (1; 1b; 9)





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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

29TH APRIL 2021

RHONDDA CYNON TAF: SOCIAL HOUSING GRANT OFFER 2021/2022

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER CLLR R BEVAN

AUTHOR: DEREK JAMES – SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet members of the Social Housing Grant offer for 2021/2022 and the potential benefits that this grant will have on meeting housing need and supporting economic growth across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the new Social Housing Grant offer for 2021/2022.
- 2.2 Note the proposed schemes set out in the report to receive the SHG allocation for 2021/2022, and the benefits that this grant will bring to meeting housing need and supporting economic growth across RCT.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure Cabinet members are aware of the Social Housing Grant offer for 2021/2022, the proposed schemes and the benefits that this grant will bring to meeting housing need and supporting economic growth across RCT.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Social Housing Grant (SHG) is the main capital grant provided by Welsh Government (WG) for the provision of affordable housing. It is used to

fund housing schemes that meet local housing need and priorities as identified by Local Authorities in Wales. Local Authorities are responsible for working with their Regional Social Landlords (RSLs), who are paid SHG directly by Welsh Government to develop, own and manage affordable housing.

- 4.2 All Social Housing Schemes are required to comply with Welsh Government Development Quality Requirements (DQR), with the grant paid at a fixed rate of 58%, with the remaining 42% funded by the RSL.
- 4.3 The SHG budget is an annual budget, which is allocated to Local Authorities. Funding cannot be carried forward into future years, therefore Local Authorities have a duty to monitor delivery of their programmes, prudently over the programme in line with Welsh Government limits and maintain a reserve programme to ensure full spend.
- 4.4 Over the last 3 years, RCT has been allocated SHG investment to the sum of **£29M**. This investment has supported 38 Social Housing Schemes, which has delivered 335 social housing units to date. In order to deliver these schemes, RSLs have invested **£21M** of their own funding over the last 3 years, resulting in a total investment of **£50M**.
- 4.5 The affordable housing that has been developed through these SHG schemes consists of a mixture of general need units, with the majority being 1 bed accommodation, in order to meet housing need. There have also been a number of accessible, adapted and specialist units that have been developed, including supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities. The SHG investment has also provided an opportunity to develop bariatric bungalows, which again have been identified as a housing need.
- 4.6 Over the past year whilst the pandemic has brought a number of challenges to the delivery of this programme, it is pleasing to see that of the 10 schemes due to be delivered for 2020/2021, all continue to progress well and remain on programme.

5.0 SOCIAL HOUSING GRANT OFFER 2021/2022

- 5.1 In March 2021, WG highlights in their Final Budget that investment in social housing can play a key role in supporting a green recovery alongside delivering wider economic and societal impact. As such, WG have allocated an additional £100m into the Social Housing programme, taking the total investment to nearly £250m in 2021-22, with the aim of supporting jobs and training opportunities for Welsh SME builders and local supply chains.

- 5.2 Following this announcement, RCT received confirmation from WG that the 2021/2022 Social Housing Grant allocation would be **£15.3M.**
- 5.3 As part of our planning process, officers have worked with RSLs to develop a robust pipeline of schemes. This has resulted in the council being in a good position to start allocating this funding as of the 1st April 2021.

PROPOSED SCHEMES

- 5.4 There are currently 14 schemes proposed to receive the SHG allocation for 2021/2022. Of these schemes, 11 (shaded GREEN) are currently in the 2020/2021 SHG programme and will need to draw down further funding in 2021/2022. The remaining 3 schemes (shaded AMBER) are on the SHG reserve list and can start construction from the 1st April 2021.

The 14 schemes are:

Site	Number of units	SHG Required	RSL	Position
Gelynog Yard, Beddau	18	£459,000	Newydd	PDP
Miskin School	11	£403,000	Trivallis	PDP
Edward St, Abercynon	6	£311,000	Newydd	PDP
Dunraven Street, Tonypany	21	£371,000	RHA Wales	PDP
Library Court, Rhydyfelin	2	£192,000	Trivallis	PDP
YGG Tonyrefail	18	£827,000	Trivallis	PDP
Glyntaf Close, Rhydyfelin	7	£789,000	Trivallis	PDP
Former Co-op, Tonypany	35	£828,000	RHA Wales	PDP
Penygraig School	11	£414,000	Cynon Taf	PDP
Heddfan	35	£2.6million	Hafod	PDP
Garth House	20	£1.3million	Hafod	PDP
Land off Quarry Road	14 units	£1.6million	Newydd	Reserve
Penywaun Housing Office	5 units	£370,000	Trivallis	Reserve

Aderyn Bach, Bungalow,Porth	4 units	£345,000	First Choice	Reserve
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- 5.5 These 14 proposed schemes would require a combined investment of **£10.8M**.
- 5.6 There are a further 3 proposed schemes to receive the SHG allocation for 2021/2022. The 3 schemes (shaded BLUE) are not ready to start straight away, however, all schemes are able start during this financial year (2021/22) subject to all agreed processes and procedures being in place i.e. planning permission.

Site	Number of units	SHG Required	RSL	Position
Porth Infants	19 units	£1.7million	Cynon Taf	Reserve (start 2021/2022)
High St, Graig	15 units	£1.2million	Trivallis	Reserve (Start 2021/2022)
Former Workingman's Club, Tonyrefail	42 units	£4.7million	RHA Wales	Reserve (start 2021/2022)

- 5.7 These 3 proposed schemes would require a combined investment of **£7.6M**.
- 5.8 Whilst the total amount for the 17 proposed schemes total **£18.4M** and is over and above the SHG allocation for 2021/2022, the council is expecting 2021/2022 slippage from WG which will be utilised towards the 17 proposed schemes.
- 5.9 In addition to this, the council will work with RSLs to explore new scheme submissions in preparation for the 2022/2023 SHG allocation.

6.0 BENEFITS OF THE NEW SOCIAL HOUSING GRANT OFFER

- 6.1 Housing in general, and affordable housing in particular, contributes to other social and economic priorities across RCT, including health, education, employment, social cohesion, environment, future generations and opportunity.
- 6.2 The significant increase in SHG investment will help to increase the supply of affordable homes across RCT. Based on SHG spend over the past 3 years, 1 unit requires approximately £70,000 of SHG funding, therefore a

grant allocation of £15.3M for 2021/2022 should result in the delivery of 218 units. However, it is important to note that scheme costs can vary depending on the number of units being developed, size of the units, accessible or adapted units, unforeseen ground works, or Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) developments, all of which can increase scheme costs.

- 6.3 The increase in SHG investment will contribute to the local economy providing a valuable work programme to local building contractors. In response to the pandemic the initial messages from Welsh Government are positive in respect of tackling the economic recession through large scale capital infrastructure. It is proven that building new infrastructure lays the groundwork for future economic growth. Furthermore, regions that spend on new infrastructure tend to attract more private investment, which boosts productivity and enables sustained economic activity.
- 6.4 As a result, there is a significant net economic benefit from WG investing in new affordable housing. According to a report by the Local Government Association, 'Delivery of housing, developing a stimulus package post-pandemic' (June 2020), for every pound invested in affordable house building, a further £2.84 is generated in the wider economy. Based on this research, it is therefore reasonable to suggest that the **£15.3M (58%) SHG investment and the £11M (42%) RSL investment into social housing schemes could generate nearly £74.6M into the wider economy.**
- 6.5 Over the past 3 years, in order to deliver affordable housing through the SHG the council has worked closely with RSL's to develop schemes that meet the housing need. Those RSL's that are successful with their scheme submissions, procure their own contractors to carry out the required building works. Since 2018, the 38 schemes that have been developed through the RCT SHG programme **have all been delivered by local contractors (South Wales region), with 50% of these being delivered by contractors from RCT.** The increase in SHG is therefore very likely to provide a significant boost to the local economy.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening test has been complete and indicated that a full Equality Impact assessment was not required.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A consultation exercise is not required.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 The Social Housing Grant for 2021/2022 has nearly doubled when compared to last financial year, with an investment of £15,314,340. In partnership with its RSL partners, RCT commits to allocating the full amount to affordable housing schemes which will draw down the grant by the end of the financial year.
- 9.2 As all SHG is held by WG, and paid directly to RSLs following recommendations for approval by the council, there are no financial implications associated with this report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 9.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

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

- 10.1 The Scheme will assist RCT to contribute to the delivery all three of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of economy, people and place. The Scheme will also assist RCT and MTCBC to contribute to three of the seven wellbeing goals that 'The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015' puts in place as follows:

1. A healthier Wales
2. A prosperous Wales
3. A Wales of cohesive communities

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 This report has set out to Cabinet members the Social Housing Grant offer for 2021/2022 and the potential benefits this grant will have on meeting housing need and supporting economic growth across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).
- 11.2 The Welsh Government's 'Prosperity for All: the national strategy' recognises that the bedrock of living well is a good quality affordable home. There has long been recognition of the significant role that appropriate housing can play in improving society and the economy, for example, contributing to good physical and mental health and increasing educational attainment. Increasing the supply of housing to meet need across all tenures is therefore critical in these and other ways. Increasing the supply of affordable homes can help reduce homelessness and poverty. Furthermore, affordable housing provision provides people who

cannot afford market housing to access adequate and suitable accommodation.

- 11.3 The increase in SHG investment for 2021/2022 to the amount of £15.3M is therefore welcomed, and it is recognised that this investment will result in increased and better quality affordable homes in RCT and benefit the local economy.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

Derek James

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020 – 2021

CABINET

29th APRIL 2021

COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN – INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND DIGITAL SERVICES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, CLLR A MORGAN

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

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out the position with regard to one-off resources which have become available as a result of additional external funding being awarded from Welsh Government (WG) during March 2021 after the Council's Capital Programme was agreed by Council on 10th March 2021. A further allocation from existing earmarked reserves (set aside to support our infrastructure) is also proposed to supplement the additional WG funding.
- 1.2 It provides the opportunity for the Council to further invest in its priority areas, aligned to the Corporate Plan, "Making a Difference" 2020 – 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - 2.1.1 Note the additional resources provided by Welsh Government; and
 - 2.1.2 Agree the additional investment and funding arrangements as set out in Section 4 of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 During March 2021 WG announced several grant awards to fund expenditure in both 2020/21 and 2021/22, providing flexibility within our Capital Programme and between the respective financial years. Additional grants have related to Revenue Maintenance for schools, Resilient Roads Fund, Roads Maintenance Grant and Highways Refurbishment.

4. **ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT**

- 4.1 In line with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, additional investment is now proposed across the following areas. An additional allocation (£0.569M) has been made from an existing earmarked reserve (set aside to support our infrastructure) to supplement the additional WG resources.

Investment Priority	£M
Highways & Roads	1.260
Highways Structures	1.400
Parks	0.300
Schools	3.580
Total Investment	6.540

- 4.2 Further detail on the proposed additional investment is shown below and in line with the Corporate Plan Priorities which they support.

a) Highways & Roads (£1.260M)

Funding will continue to support the enhanced investment in the Council's largest asset, building on sustained increases in annual funding for highways maintenance over recent years. In addition to this, the Footways works will be supplemented with an additional £0.100M contribution from Trivallis.

Appendix 1, table 1 provides more details of the proposed schemes.

b) Highways Structures (£1.400M)

Funding will allow the continuation of the enhanced programme of capital repairs and maintenance of over 1,500 structures including, bridges, culverts, retaining walls, reinforced earth embankments and rock anchors. These structures are often critical to the continued safe operation of the highway network.

Appendix 1, table 2 provides more details of the proposed schemes.

c) Parks (£0.300M)

This additional funding will allow the ongoing investment programme into the refurbishment of sports pavilions, upgrading of sports pitches and the repairs to parks infrastructure to be enhanced even further.

The above investments support the Corporate Plan priority of **Places**: where people are proud to live, work and play.

d) Schools (£3.580M)

The additional funding will support the long-term strategic investment programme of modernisation to create school environments that meet the

needs of our communities and provide the best learning provision and outcomes for young people and the wider community

The above investment supports the Corporate Plan priority of **Prosperity**: creating the opportunity for people and businesses to: be innovative; be entrepreneurial; and fulfil their potential and prosper.

Appendix 1, table 3 provides more details of the proposed schemes.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 There are no consultation implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report. Subject to the decision of Cabinet, consultation will be undertaken on specific areas, as appropriate, as part of developing/implementing projects.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 7.1 The financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. The proposed investment priorities are fully funded from flexibility provided by WG grants and Council resources already set aside for this purpose.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The recommendations have been compiled ensuring continued compliance with the Council's legal requirement to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs as set out in Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. In addition, the proposed investment areas support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, in line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

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

- 9.1 The proposed investment areas are in line with the priorities included within the Council's Corporate Plan and support the sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, in particular, planning for the 'long term', helping to 'prevent' problems occurring or getting worse in the future and delivering services in 'collaboration' with others.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 This report has identified the opportunity to invest a further £6.540M of additional resources in our local area including our own assets in order to improve our infrastructure and the services which are available to our residents supported in large part by additional funding being made available by Welsh Government.

Table 1

Highways & Roads	£M
Carriageways	
Alfred Street, Gilfach Goch	0.051
Gorsedd Street, Mountain Ash	0.019
Cambrian Avenue, Giffach Goch	0.024
Gadlys Roundabout, Gadlys	0.078
Cwmneol Place, Cwmaman	0.010
Aman Court, Cwmaman	0.008
Talbot Road, Talbot Green	0.049
Tan-Y-Bryn Street, Aberdare	0.034
Trevor Street, Aberdare	0.033
Kenry Street, Tonypany	0.079
Dunraven Street, Tonypany	0.042
Martin Crescent, Tonyrefail	0.045
Park Place, Treherbert	0.015
Station Road, Treorchy	0.050
Bryn Ivor Street, Llwyn-Y-Pia	0.020
Alaw Road, Trealaw	0.024
Thomas Street, Maerdy	0.017
Graigwen Road, Cymmer	0.031
Addison Avenue, Llanharry	0.038
Heol Ida, Beddau	0.038
Elm Street, Rhydyfelin	0.014
Dan-Yr-Allt Close, Rhydyfelin	0.018
Ashford Close, Glyncoch	0.017
Clive Terrace, Ynysybwll	0.022
Jenkin Street, Abercynon	0.023
Cherry Drive, Cwmdare	0.020
Haulfryn, Penywaun	0.041
Highways drainage – various schemes	0.100
Road markings and coloured surfacing – various schemes	0.100
Sub Total	1.060
Footways	
Maes Y Coed, Cwmdare	0.050
Brodeg, Cwmbach	0.045
Bedw Estate, Cymmer	0.040
Brynna Access Improvements, Brynna	0.020
Heol Clwyddau, Beddau	0.045
Sub Total	0.200
Total	1.260

Table 2

Highways Structures	£M
Imperial Bridge Refurbishment (initial budget allocation)	0.400
Darren Ddu Bridge	0.150
Ynys Meurig Bridge Parapets	0.040
Major Retaining Walls Refurbishment	0.360
Confined Space Culvert Repairs	0.300
Advanced Preparation of Schemes	0.150
Total	1.400

Table 3

Schools	£M
External canopies to create outdoor teaching areas	0.700
Improved ventilation	0.300
New toilet and hygiene areas	0.600
Roofing works	0.500
General repairs to the fabric of buildings	0.680
Upgrade classrooms to 21 st Century Schools Standard	0.500
New external doors and windows	0.300
Total	3.580

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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