



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 13 December 2021 at 10.30 am Hybrid.

Council Chamber

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)
Councillor M Webber
Councillor R Lewis

Virtual

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

Officers in attendance: -

Council Chamber

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development

Virtual

Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources
Mr R Waters
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates
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 A Griffiths, Service Director – Highways & Engineering
Ms C Jones, Head of Access & Inclusion
Ms A Richards, Temporary Service Director - 21st Century Schools and Transformation
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services

82 Declaration of Interest

Cllr R Lewis declared a personal interest item 8 as Governor of YGG Abercynon.

83 Minutes

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 15 November 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

84 Cabinet Work Programme

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication provided Cabinet Members with the updated work programme for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year which was also considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 9th December 2021

He advised members that the following reports for consideration by Cabinet had been updated and this would reflect in the decision notice:

- Library Strategy and Action Plan added to March 2022
- Town Centre Strategy postponed to February 2022
- Regulatory of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) postponed to February 2022

Following consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

Approve the Work Programme for the 2021-22 Municipal Year with the amendments and receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

85 Proposals for the Regeneration of Penrhys

The Director of Prosperity and Development presented the report to members which set out the work being undertaken to explore options for the regeneration of the Penrhys Estate and surrounding area. Members of the Cabinet were also asked to agree a framework for taking the work forward in partnership with Trivallis and the Prince's Foundation.

He continued that Officers of the Council have been working closely with colleagues in Trivallis to explore the opportunities to address both the issues around the immediate future of the existing residents who wish to remain on the estate but are in need of improved housing conditions and also to address how a wider investment and regeneration programme can be developed that ensures that the community at Penrhys has a long term, sustainable future.

The Cabinet Member Enterprise, Housing and Development commented that it he welcomed the further development to the estate and stated that it was important that the Authority continued to work with residents and tenants throughout the process to bring the plans to reality.

Following consideration by Cabinet it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the information provided within the report, and the work undertaken so far in considering options for the future of the estate and its community.
2. Agree the aspirations and objectives for the high quality regeneration of the estate and surrounding area as set out in the report as a focus for ongoing work.
3. Agree to the engaging of the services of the Prince's Foundation to work with the Council and Trivallis as a key partner in delivering against the aspirations and objectives with Trivallis being the lead procurement body.
4. Enter into a formal Collaboration Agreement with Trivallis to establish a framework to govern the respective rights and obligations of the Council and Trivallis in the delivery of the regeneration project.

86 Progress Update On The Delivery Of The 'Llanilid' Strategic Opportunity Area

The Director of Prosperity and Development presented the report to Cabinet to update them on the progress made since September 2017 when Cabinet considered and approved the Strategic Opportunity Areas report and the further

development of schemes and projects within the 'Llanilid' Strategic Opportunity Area

He referred members to section 5.9 of the report which outlined collaborative working with Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board and the positive steps towards the delivery of new health care facilities in the area. He added that work is also well underway to develop a masterplan for the southern half of the SOA which comprises over 250HA of reclaimed former opencast mine

The Cabinet Member Enterprise, Housing and Development stated that this was one of the most important strategic sites in South Wales but also reminded members that it was a brownfield site so was not encroaching on Countryside areas. He added the project was of significant importance for South Wales

The Cabinet Member Adult Community Services and Welsh Language spoke as a Local Ward Member and welcomed the significant progress that had been made on range of infrastructure and noted that it was an important project to local residents as well as a large scale strategic project. He added that it was important to keep pace with the expansion of residential areas and welcomed the continuing developments on the Llanharan Link Road although moving towards less reliance on using our cars is crucial road transport is still key taking into consideration the size of the development plan. He commented that he was also pleased to see a robust public transport system was planned to keep pace with the development as it was a significant commuter area as well as Health care facilities to meet the current demands.

The Leader spoke positively of the Llanharan Link Road proposal with the potential to open up more development of the site to create further job opportunities

Following consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

Note progress made since September 2017 in the development and delivery of projects and investment opportunities within the Llanilid Strategic Opportunity Area (SOA).

87 21st Century Schools Programme - Planning of School Places South of the County Borough

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation presented the report to members that updated them on the pressures on school places in the south of the County Borough, and for them to consider future planning and financial implications.

Members were advised that School places in the South of the County Borough have been carefully monitored over the last few years due to the number of housing developments being constructed in the locality, creating pressure on the capacity of schools in the area.

Members heard that the Council has taken action previously to alleviate the pressures by amending catchment boundaries and by providing additional accommodation on school sites to increase capacity. The Council continues to proactively manage the pressures and invest in schools through Band B of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme.

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation advised Cabinet that despite the interventions, capacity pressures at Y Pant School have become increasingly problematic. The considerable increase in housing developments in this area, as well as parents/carers making informed decisions to rent and purchase homes in the catchment areas of one of our highest performing schools, has placed undue pressure on school places at the school. The pressures have also been compounded through a recent catchment change made by the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation continued that there is a potential opportunity to increase the capacity at the school with relative ease, which would help alleviate pressures in the shorter term.

Officers in Corporate Estates have advised that that a simple 4-classroom block can be constructed at the rear of the school site, subject to gaining the relevant statutory consents, at an estimated cost of £900k. She added that it is also proposed that this block be designed and built to support the construction of another storey, at a later date, should demand for school places warrant this in the future. As such, the relevant statutory consents were sought for a two-storey build to be constructed in two phases, which will future proof the capacity at Y Pant until a medium to long-term solution is found. The proposed expansion will create capacity for the short-term ensuring pupils within catchment can attend, thereby avoiding increased school admission appeals, higher school transport costs, increasing our carbon footprint and impacting on our pupils' wellbeing. Without the additional capacity the Council will face significant challenges in meeting its statutory duty for the sufficiency of school places.

The Cabinet Member Education and Inclusion Services stated that there was unprecedented demand in the South of the County as a result of continued housing growth and recent changes in catchment areas and the plans in the report respond to that need. at a school with an excellent reputation also allow strategic approach to development

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the recent changes that impact upon school places as detailed within the report.
2. Approve the measures required to manage the pressures in the short to medium term.

Approve the capital investment of circa £900k to build a new teaching block on Y Pant which can be funded from resources within the existing 3 year capital programme.

88 21st Century Schools Programme - Proposals to Improve English Medium Primary Education Provision For Glyncoch, Tonysguboriau and Maesybryn

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation provided Cabinet with a report to seek approval to begin the relevant and required statutory consultation for the proposal to amalgamate the currently federated Cefn Primary and Craig-yr-Hesg Primary Schools by closing Cefn Primary and Craig-yr-Hesg Primary Schools and opening a new maintained community primary school on a new site. The report also requests approval to submit a Strategic Outline Business Case for three Mutual Investment Model (MIM Projects) to the Welsh Government.

She continued that the three projects are:

- A new Community Primary School for Glyncoch (replacing Cefn and Craig-yr-Hesg Primary Schools)
- A replacement Community Primary School for Maesybryn Primary School
- A replacement Community Primary School for Tonysguboriau Primary School.

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and Transformation continued that submission of the Strategic Outline Business Case will be subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation in relation to the new community primary school proposed for Glyncoch.

The Service Director 21st Century Schools and transformation advised Cabinet that the projects outlined in the report serves to increase capacity and improve the quality of the English medium primary education provision available to learners in the Glyncoch area of Rhondda Cynon Taf and continues the Council's ambitious school modernisation agenda.

The Cabinet Member Education and Inclusion spoke positively of the proposals and commented that existing schools in the Borough require a lot of investment. The proposals put before Cabinet will provide the opportunity for yet more Children and Young people and Communities to benefit from 21st Century School investments which has transformed education delivery in so many parts of RCT over the last decade.

The Deputy Leader also stated that this opportunity will improve and deliver fantastic facilities for Learners in the Borough.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the content of this report
2. Give formal approval to commence consultation with relevant stakeholders on the proposal to close Cefn Primary and Craig-yr-Hesg Primary Schools and open a new community primary school on a new site to serve the combined existing catchment areas of Cefn Primary and Craig-yr-Hesg Primary Schools
3. Note any proposal, should it be approved following completion of the required statutory processes, would be implemented by September 2026;
4. Subject to 2 above, give delegated authority to the Director of Education to make any minor changes that are required to the proposed consultation document (attached at Appendix B to the report) prior to its publication and the consultation commencing

Agree to a Strategic Outline Business Case for three proposed MIM Projects being submitted to the Welsh Government – the projects being a new community primary school for Glyncoch; a replacement community primary school for Maesybryn Primary School and a replacement community primary school for Tonysguboriau Primary School. Such submission to be subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation in relation to the new community primary school proposed for Glyncoch, noting that any that formal approval to proceed to deliver any new project will be brought back to Cabinet for further determination

Report

The Director Education and Inclusion Services presented Members with the opportunity for them to adopt the proposed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) following the feedback received through the statutory consultation for the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032.

Cabinet were advised that the proposed WESP was subject to a comprehensive public statutory consultation that was undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders for an eight week period. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee also formed part of the consultation process, following consideration of the draft WESP at its meeting on the 13th October 2021. In addition, the draft WESP was also considered by the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group on 19th July 2021. Cabinet were provided with an overview of the feedback within the report.

The Cabinet Member Education and Inclusion commented that the document was hugely important with ambitious targets which we must strive to achieve. The Authorities investment in Welsh Medium Education proposed for the future will be key to meeting the ambitions. She wished to add thanks to scrutiny for their engagement and welcomed future scrutiny in monitoring the delivery of the targets.

Following consideration of the WESP it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider the comments of the statutory consultation and determine if any amendments are required to the proposed WESP, in addition to the amendments undertaken to original draft WESP.
2. Note the comments and observations of the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group which considered the draft WESP on 19th July 2021 and the proposed WESP on the 8th December 2021, following the statutory consultation.
3. Note the comments and observations of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which provided feedback as part of the statutory consultation of the draft WESP on the 13th October 2021 and pre-scrutiny of the proposed WESP on the 8th December 2021, following the statutory consultation.

Subject to 1 and 3 above, adopt the proposed WESP as the strategy that underpins the Local Authority's approach to achieve the ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the proposed WESP for the forthcoming ten years, up to and including 2032

90 **Consultation Outcomes On The Education And Inclusion Services Draft Strategic Plan 2021-2024**

The Director Education and Inclusion presented the report to Cabinet on the stakeholder consultation outcomes on the Education and Inclusion Services Draft Strategic Plan for 2021-2024 and provided Cabinet with the opportunity to contribute to the non-statutory consultation process in respect of the Education and Inclusion Services Draft Strategic Plan for 2021-2024.

Members were advised that the pandemic shone light on the critical and invaluable role that our schools play in supporting our learners, their families, and wider communities. The workforce has worked tirelessly and creatively

throughout the pandemic to keep our learners and staff safe, maintaining continuity in learning and supporting the most vulnerable during a period of unprecedented challenge.

Cabinet were advised that the Strategic Plan sets out the direction for the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate and schools for the next 3 years, describing the mission, vision and ambition for schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Members were directed to the stakeholder responses detailed in the Consultation Report and advised that they have been used to inform changes to the revised strategic plan. In light of the robust consultation processes and extended deadlines, it was therefore proposed that the timescales for implementing the strategic plan are amended from 2021-2024 (academic year) to 2022-2025 (financial year). The updated Education and Inclusion Services Strategic Plan sets out the high-level strategic actions the Directorate will take over the next three years.

The Cabinet Member Education and Inclusion welcomed the report and commented that the strong foundations mean we should have every confidence in realising the ambitious of this plan. She was pleased to see how the positive engagement had also been developed with stakeholders. She also wished to thank scrutiny for their participation in the process of the delivery of the plan.

91 Review of Learning Support Class Provision For Pupils with Significant Additional Learning Needs

The Head of Inclusion Services presented the report to Cabinet with an opportunity for them to reconsider the proposal for the creation of additional mainstream Welsh medium Learning Support Class (LSC) provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg following a report that was previously submitted in December 2019 requesting approval to consult with stakeholders regarding the proposal to create new LSC provisions in a number of RCT secondary settings. She continued that whilst approval was given and the consultation process was implemented. Unfortunately, the statutory process lapsed due to the Covid pandemic.

Members were referred to the proposal detailed in the report that a new Welsh medium Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant additional learning needs be established from September 2022 at Ysgol Garth Olwg to ensure the LA meets its new statutory duties to provide bi-lingual ALN provision. She added that the Local Authority does not currently have any dedicated Learning Support Class provision to support pupils with additional learning needs that wish to be educated via the medium of Welsh. From September 2021 it is the statutory duty of the Authority to work proactively towards establishing a fully bi-lingual system and therefore it is imperative that the above Welsh medium provision is put in place as soon as possible.

The Cabinet Member Education and Inclusion Services supported the proposal for the creation of a Welsh medium LSC provision to support pupils with significant additional learning needs within the context of the School Organisation Code and the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme.

Following consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider the information contained within this report.
2. Note the proposal for the creation of a Welsh medium LSC provision to support pupils with significant additional learning needs within the context of the School Organisation Code (2018) and the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme.

Formally approve to recommence consultation on the following proposal: To create a new Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

92 Update On The RCT National Eisteddfod 2024 - Community Engagement

The Service Director Community Services presented the report to Cabinet with an update on the work currently being undertaken in collaboration with National Eisteddfod officers in preparation for the 2024 Eisteddfod in Rhondda Cynon Taf specifically in relation to community engagement.

Members were advised that preparatory work and discussions have been on-going and the Council appointed an Eisteddfod Project Officer at the end of 2019 to work closely with National Eisteddfod Officers to promote the festival and engage with communities. The pandemic limited the opportunities to engage directly with communities but during this period National Eisteddfod Officers applied for funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to pilot a new strategy for community engagement in Rhondda Cynon Taf

As part of the project to develop a community strategy the National Eisteddfod has appointed a Community Development Officer whose role is funded by the NLHF. The aim will be to use culture and heritage to bring people together and to create opportunities through events and activities to engage with local people. She will work closely with the Council's Eisteddfod Project Officer

The Service Director Community Services continued that the National Eisteddfod's NLHF project is divided into 2 parts:

- Phase 1 of the project will target young people aged 16- 25 to make the Welsh language and the Eisteddfod relevant outside of the classroom and school – music will form an important element of this engagement. During Phase 1 older people will also be targeted as they often influence family decisions. Events and activities celebrating the local area's heritage and culture using Welsh will be developed to attract this group. 5 events will be delivered between December 2021 and April 2022.
- Phase 2 of the project will see the delivery of a further 5 events between May and August 2022. At the end of this period, it is envisaged that the National Eisteddfod's Community Strategy will be finalised and that these events will help shape the National Eisteddfod in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Service Director Community Services concluded that the common aim is to ensure maximum involvement by communities and to promote the message that the Eisteddfod is for everyone and you do not need to be able to speak Welsh to enjoy and participate in its activities and events.

The Cabinet Member Stronger Communities, Wellbeing and Cultural Services thanked officers for the work in developing the Community Engagement Strategy and recognised that it was Socially and economically important. He was also pleased to see the work of the community engagement officer as it was vital to

engage with communities who speak welsh and those who don't so was pleased to see the event being promoted as fully inclusive.

The Cabinet Member Enterprise Development and Housing echoed the comments and was pleased to see the event will be inclusive so all communities can participate.

Following consideration it was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

93 Regional Employability Framework

The Service Director Community Services presented the report to members The purpose of the report is to gain Cabinet approval for the principle of a locally delivered, regionally coordinated approach to employability after European funding has ended.

Members were advised that all 10 Local Authorities in the CCR deliver employability programmes to support residents into employment or to help them progress to more sustainable or better paid employment. The 2019 Cardiff Capital Region Employment and Skills Plan highlights the value and importance that employers place on 'employability' and the key role that it plays in helping residents into the jobs of the future.

European Funding is ending in 2022/23. In order to plan ahead and prepare for changes, Local Authority Lead Officers who sit on the Regional Skills Partnership Local Authority Cluster Group developed a discussion paper - 'Shaping Employability to Achieve the Vision of the CCR Employment and Skills Plan' which was set out in the report.

The Service Director Community Services continued that the Framework has been based on shared principles which reflect lessons learnt from 20 years of experience delivering employability projects.

Members were advised that it is not yet clear whether the same level of financial resource as is currently available from the ESF will be made available from the SPF. At this stage, the proposed Framework for Future Employability in the CCR is not a funding application – it is a strategic document setting out the principles of how employability activity should be delivered within the region and what it should seek to achieve. Any funding application/s will need to be scaled to the resources available.

The Service Director Community Services concluded that with European funding coming to an end there is an opportunity to agree the principles of a regional approach to future employability that is consistent with the CCR Employment and Skills Plan. She added that the principles can form the basis of future regional applications for funding that will benefit individuals, communities and businesses across South East Wales.

The Cabinet Member Enterprise Development and Housing commented that Local Authorities across South East Wales have developed extensive expertise over the past twenty years in supporting their residents to improve their employability, develop their skills and gain and progress in work. With European funding coming to an end there is an opportunity to agree the principles of a regional approach to future employability. He added that there was huge opportunity to move to a Regional

Employability Framework and that there is a vast amount of expertise with educational partners also. He supported the recommendations in the report and stated that he welcomes additional information on funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund from UK Government as soon as possible.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the content of the report
2. Endorse the principle of a locally delivered, regionally coordinated approach to employability post-EU funding.
3. Approves the Framework for Future Employability in the Cardiff City Region (CCR) as outlined in sections 4.4 – 4.8 and Appendix A.

Welcomes information on funding from UK Government from the Shared Prosperity Fund as soon as possible

94 Outcome Of Active Travel Consultation Exercise : Next Steps

The Service Director Highways and Engineering presented the report for Cabinet to consider the outcome of a statutory active travel consultation exercise that the Council has recently undertaken, in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government.

This report asks Members to note the outcome of this exercise, the Council's response to the comments received and the next stage of the active travel consultation process, which is the submission of an Active Travel Network Map and supporting documents to the Welsh Government by no later than 31st December 2021.

For a period of almost 14 weeks, the Council conducted a public consultation exercise over a draft Active Travel Network Map (ATNM) for Rhondda Cynon Taf. Members were referred to the detail of the outcome of the consultation in Appendix A of the report. Members were advised that respondents were made aware during the consultation exercise that the details shown on the draft ATNM are considered as aspirational, that the Council will seek to deliver, but these details do not commit the Council to implementing any of them.

The Service Director Highways and Engineering continued that it is intended that the details shown in the final version of the ATNM, is to be submitted to the Welsh Government, together with the details in Appendix C of the report which represent the Council's aspirations for developing a safe and high-quality network of active travel routes in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the next 5, 10 and 15 years. He added that the outcome of the recent active travel consultation exercise will help to build upon the Council's achievements to date and inform the Council in its preparation of future bids for funding Community Routes and Safe Routes in Communities Schemes.

The Leader welcomed the report and was pleased to see the level of engagement received by the public. He commented that due to the current network of highways it was difficult to create the links required as unfortunately we do not have the infrastructure that many towns and cities have. He added the team are reviewing a number of potential routes and there are a number of highway routes that have commenced design work in RCT and with continued funding from Welsh Government, the plans within the report can be implemented

The Deputy Leader commented that there is a challenge in achieving mutual respect when using these routes as they are used by cyclists, walkers, disabled people, children and dog walkers and she noted that some cyclists taking part in the tour de France also use the route which was fantastic but reaching a mutual level of respect for the users was needed.

The Cabinet Member thanked the officers for inclusive consultation that reached a wide range of residents and organisations, especially representing those with visual impairments.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the comments received during the period the active travel consultation exercise was live and the response of the Council to these comments, including making proposed changes to the draft Active Travel Network Map – as set out in Appendix B.

Note the next stage of the active travel consultation process and endorse the submission of the final version of the Active Travel Network Map and supporting documents to the Welsh Government – by no later than 31st December 2021.

95 Urgent Items

None

This meeting closed at 11.23 am

**Cllr A Morgan
Chairman.**