



CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMITTEE SUMMONS

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

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

YOU ARE SUMMONED to a virtual meeting of **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL** to be held on **WEDNESDAY, 19TH JANUARY, 2022** at **5.00 PM.**

AGENDA

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No's**

TIME	ITEM	PAGE(S)
5 Minutes	ITEM 1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive disclosures of personal interests from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct <ol style="list-style-type: none">Members are requested to identify the item number and subject that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest; andWhere Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.	
5 Minutes	ITEM 2. ANNOUNCEMENTS	
5 Minutes	ITEM 3. MINUTES To approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 24 th November (5pm meeting) and the 15 th December 2021.	7 - 30
5 Minutes	ITEM 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS	31 - 34

	To receive public questions in accordance with the Open Government Council Meeting Procedure Rules.	
	OPEN GOVERNMENT:	
10 Minutes	ITEM 5. STATEMENTS In accordance with Open Government Council Meeting Procedure Rule 2, to receive any statements from the Leader of the Council and/or statements from Cabinet Portfolio Holders:	
20 Minutes	ITEM 6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS To receive Members questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2. (N.B a maximum of 20 minutes shall be allowed for questions on notice.)	35 - 44
	COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME - FOR MEMBERS INFORMATION Council Work Programme 2021/22	
	OFFICERS' REPORTS	
10 Minutes	ITEM 7. AUDIT WALES - ANNUAL AUDIT SUMMARY 2021 (RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL) To receive the Audit Wales report.	45 - 60
20 Minutes	ITEM 8. COUNCIL REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT To receive a report from the Director of Financial & Digital Services	61 - 74
10 Minutes	ITEM 9. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME To consider the report of the Director of Financial & Digital Services.	75 - 84
10 Minutes	ITEM 10. WELSH CHURCH ACT FUND ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021 To receive the report of the Director of Finance & Digital Services	85 - 130
5 Minutes	ITEM 11. URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISIONS To note the report of the Service Director Democratic Services & Communications.	131 - 134
10 Minutes	ITEM 12. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP REPORT - THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF	135 - 148

	<p>To receive the report from the Service Director, Democratic Services & Communication.</p>	
<p>45 Minutes</p>	<p>ITEM 13. NOTICES OF MOTION</p> <p>13A To consider the under-mentioned Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors, A Roberts, W. Lewis, L. M. Adams, J. Barton, D. R. Bevan, H. Boggis, J. Bonetto, S. Bradwick, J. Brencher, A. Calvert, G. Caple, A. Crimmings, A. Davies-Jones, L. De- Vet, J. Edwards, J. Elliott, S. Evans, M Griffiths, G. Jones, M. Fidler Jones, M. Forey, A. Fox, E. George, J. Harries, G. Holmes, G. Hopkins, R. Lewis, C. Leyshon, A. Morgan, S. Morgans, M. A. Norris, D. Owen-Jones, S. Pickering, S. Powell, S. Rees, J. Rosser, G. Stacey, M. Tegg, G. Thomas, W. Treeby, R. K. Turner, M. Webber, D. Williams, R. Williams, T. Williams, R. Yeo:</p> <p>This Council recognises the efforts of the Welsh Government in helping to address the issue of fuel poverty in Wales, both in terms of providing financial support to low income households, and also through a range of home energy efficiency improvements through the Warm Homes initiative.</p> <p>Since 2009/10, over 67,000 lower income households have benefitted from energy efficiency improvements, at an estimated average saving on their energy bills of £300 with the added benefit of reduced carbon emissions.</p> <p>One element of the Welsh Government’s Warm Homes programme is the Nest Grant scheme, which offers a range of free, impartial advice and if eligible applicants can access a package of free home energy efficiency improvements such as a new boiler, central heating or insulation, which can lower energy bills and benefit the applicant’s health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Excellent work has been carried out by the Council’s Heat and Save team, despite the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, with RCT being the 2nd highest referring area in 20-21 with 9% of Nest referrals being received from RCT residents and the 2nd highest area for successful installs at 12.5%. During 2021-2022 the Council’s Heat & Save Department, have sent out 3,631 direct mailers to strategic areas in partnership with Nest offering a targeted intervention helping the correct households access Nest assistance.</p> <p>Despite this positive work undertaken in Wales and locally in RCT, the continually increasing costs of energy prices means more and more households are being pushed toward fuel poverty.</p> <p>This trend threatens the targets outlined in the Welsh Government’s Tackling Fuel Poverty 2021-2035 strategy and with the Welsh Government recently launching a consultation on shaping the next iteration of the Warm Homes programme, it is now an opportune time to examine the feasibility of broadening</p>	

the criteria for applications for the Nest scheme.

This Council therefore notes:

- The good work undertaken in Wales by the Welsh Government, and on a local level by the Council's Heat and Save team in tackling fuel poverty.

And resolves to:

- Request that the Council Leader writes to Julie James MS, the Welsh Government's Minister for Climate Change, to make the necessary representations for the criteria of eligibility of the Nest (and other schemes) to be widened to allow further applications to be approved, to the benefit of our residents.

13B To consider the under-mentioned Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors, J. Barton, J. Edwards, L. M. Adams, D. R. Bevan, H. Boggis, J. Bonetto, S. Bradwick, J. Brencher, A. Calvert, G. Caple, A. Crimmings, A. Davies-Jones, L. De- Vet, J. Elliott, S. Evans, M Griffiths, G. Jones, M. Fidler Jones, M. Forey, A. Fox, E. George, J. Harries, G. Holmes, G. Hopkins, R. Lewis, W. Lewis, C. Leyshon, A. Morgan, S. Morgans, M. A. Norris, D. Owen-Jones, S. Pickering, S. Powell, S. Rees, A Roberts, J. Rosser, G. Stacey, M. Tegg, G. Thomas, W. Treeby, R. K. Turner, M. Webber, D. Williams, R. Williams, T. Williams, R. Yeo:

The rising cost of energy prices is being described as a "national crisis" affecting households, businesses and the energy companies themselves.

The significant rise in gas prices has seen the U.K. energy sector pay approximately £20bn more this year. With the energy price cap, which currently sits at £1,277 set to jump in April, households could see their energy bills alone rise by 50%, meaning that households could be as much as £1,200 a year worse off as National Insurance contributions also rise.

The rising price of energy has seen more than 20 energy suppliers go out of business since September, with many customers unfairly moved on to new providers on more expensive tariffs.

Whilst most consumers are protected by the energy price cap at £1,277 for normal domestic usage, the limit will rise on 1st April in line with an expected announcement in early February – meaning the U.K. Government is running out of time to tackle the crisis.

The charity National Energy Action (NEA) has warned that a record 6 million UK households will be in fuel poverty when the next increase in the energy price cap comes into force in April, and this view is compounded by the findings of the Resolution

Foundation think tank, which warned that millions of UK families face a "year of squeeze" in 2022 thanks to rising energy bills, stagnant wages and tax rises. The Bank of England has also said it expects inflation to reach 6% by the spring.

The Resolution Foundation have said that an increase in National Insurance contributions from April, along with an expected rise in energy bills in the same month could amount to a £1,200 hit to household finances, with low-income families forced to bear the brunt of these rises as they spend a greater proportion of their income on electricity and gas.

Earlier this month, a group of twenty Conservative MPs and Peers – including five former Ministers – called on the Prime Minister to take action to tackle the spiralling cost of living and alleviate the pressures on the lowest income families.

Energy suppliers including Good Energy, EDF and trade body Energy UK have called for government intervention, after the cost of gas in wholesale markets rose by more than 500% in less than a year. The increase has bankrupted over twenty providers, forced to buy wholesale gas at higher prices than they are allowed to sell it.

The Westminster Government's inaction is leading to "an enormous crisis for 2022" with energy bills potentially increasing by another 50% unless the government intervenes. Many other governments across Europe have reduced taxes and other levies, and similar action taken in the U.K. could save close to £200 a year on an average bill.

One solution voiced by the industry is to move green levies from energy bills to general taxation as it would mean higher earners pay more than lower income households, who spend a larger proportion of their income on essentials like heating.

They also argue it would lower the measure of inflation, saving the government money on inflation linked borrowing costs. The Treasury, however, appear not to favour this approach in reluctance to increase the general tax burden, and the indications are that the U.K. Government will instead seek to expand the £140 Warm Homes Discount Scheme as part of a targeted relief package to up to 6 million households.

Despite the Westminster Government's apparent inability to act decisively, residents in Wales and across RCT have benefitted from initiatives designed to cut fuel poverty and increase household energy efficiency.

The Welsh Government's Arbed am Byth scheme has delivered 206 energy measures to 113 homes in Penrhiwceiber, whilst RCT was also the 2nd highest referring area and 2nd highest successful install area in Wales in 2020-21. The Council's own RCT Heating Grant - which provides funding of up to £5,000 to assist up to 20 households who are at risk of fuel poverty but not eligible for other assistance schemes – has received 24 applications with 7 grants approved at a cost of £1,500 per property.

	<p>Council Officers are also working closely with the Citizen's Advice Bureau and other organisations to signpost individuals and families in need of support to the most appropriate stream of financial assistance.</p> <p>This Council therefore resolves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To call on the U.K. Government to honour the Brexit campaign promise of cutting the 5% VAT rate on energy bills, or to bring forward an alternative support package that provides additional funding – both to subsidise energy companies and to provide relief to households - so that families across the U.K., including here in Rhondda Cynon Taf, are not the ones to bear the brunt of price increases. - To request that the Council Leader writes to the Business Secretary, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister to request that urgent action is taken to address the energy price crisis. 	
	<p>ITEM 14. URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>To consider any items which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.</p>	

Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

To: All Members of the Council