



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

### **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL CABINET**

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 22 June 2022 at 1.00 pm at the Council Chamber, The Pavilions, Cambrian Park, Clydach Vale, Tonypany, CF40 2XX.

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

Councillor A Morgan (Chair)

Councillor M Webber    Councillor G Caple  
Councillor A Crimmings    Councillor R Lewis  
Councillor C Leyshon    Councillor M Norris  
Councillor B Harris

#### **Others in attendance**

Councillor J Brencher  
Councillor A J Ellis  
Councillor K Morgan  
Councillor D Williams  
Councillor D Wood

#### **Officers in attendance**

Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services  
Ms L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services  
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources  
Mr S Gale, Director of Prosperity & Development  
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services  
Mr D Powell, Director of Corporate Estates  
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services

#### **1 Declaration of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the Deputy Leader declared the following personal interest in respect of Item 5 of the agenda - Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme -Proposal To Amalgamate Cefn And Craig Yr Hesg Primary Schools To Create A New Community Primary School: 'I am a School Governor at Heol y Celyn Primary School'.

#### **2 Minutes**

The Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

#### **3 Cabinet Work Programme**

The Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication provided the Cabinet with an update on the Cabinet Work Programme, which included the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Cabinet over the 2022-23 Municipal Year.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the Cabinet approve the Work Programme for the 2022-23 Municipal Year (with appropriate amendment where necessary); and
2. To receive a further update on a 3 monthly basis.

#### **4 The Council's Tackling Climate Change Strategy 2022-2025**

The Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication provided the Cabinet with the final Tackling Climate Change Strategy – ‘Think Climate RCT’ following wider engagement with residents, partners and other stakeholders, including staff.

The Strategy set out a framework of the action the Council will take over the next three years to make significant progress and lay the strong foundations to enable the Council to make progress towards achieving the ambitious target to become a Carbon Neutral Council by 2030, and for the County Borough to be as near to Carbon Neutral as possible by the same date.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Corporate Services was in support of the Strategy and commented that she looked forward to continuing the conversation around climate change with the Council’s Climate Change Champion, community groups, residents, businesses and schools in order to share best practice.

The Deputy Leader voiced her support and spoke of the vast amount of work undertaken by the Council’s Climate Change Cabinet Sub-Committee.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the contents of this report and the Council’s draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy;
2. To consider the draft Tackling Climate Change Strategy as providing the framework for the Council’s work to:
  - a) Meet its stated carbon reduction targets for the Council and the County Borough.
  - b) Contribute to the response to the nationally declared climate and nature emergencies;
3. That monitoring of the strategy is included in the Council’s quarterly performance reports to Cabinet and thereafter the Climate Change, Frontline Services and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee; and
4. To continue the Climate Conversation with staff, residents of all ages and backgrounds, partners, communities and businesses, using relevant and different models of engagement so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

#### **5 Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme -Proposal To Amalgamate Cefn And Craig Yr Hesg Primary Schools To Create A New Community Primary School**

The Service Director of 21st Century Schools and Transformation sought to advise Cabinet Members of the outcome of the recent publication of a Statutory Notice in respect of the proposal to amalgamate the currently federated Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language welcomed the report and was pleased to note that much of the funding would be covered by the MIM model. The Cabinet Member commented that the two schools referenced needed costly repairs and thus, the amalgamation would provide modern facilities in readiness to deliver the new curriculum.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillors D. Williams and A. Ellis spoke on this item.

The Cabinet were in favour of the report and it was **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the one objection received in response to the publication of the statutory notice to progress this proposal;
2. To implement the proposal with no amendments; and
3. To note the financial implications as set out at section 8 of the report, which will be subject to further reports in due course.

## **6 Review of Learning Support Class Provision within RCT**

The Head of Inclusion Services presented the report, which sought to advise Members of the outcome of the publication of the Statutory Notice in respect of the proposal to enhance Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

The officer advised that a Statutory Notice was issued on the 4<sup>th</sup> April until 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 relating to the proposal to open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs in Ysgol Garth Olwg with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022. No objections were received in relation to the notice.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language welcomed the report and commented that the Local Authority were taking steps to create a bilingual system of specialist support for pupils with additional learning needs.

With the agreement of the Leader, County Borough Councillor K. Morgan spoke on this item.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To consider the information contained within the report;
2. To implement the proposal as published in the Statutory Notice which will open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC provision for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs in Ysgol Garth Olwg with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022; and
3. To the publication of the relevant Decision Notices in respect of any proposals taken forward as required by the School Organisation Code.

## **7 CAR MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE FOR COUNCIL EMPLOYEES**

The Director of Finance and Digital Services presented the report, which sought Cabinet to determine the rate of reimbursement payable to Council employees who utilise their own vehicles for work related purposes.

The Leader and Deputy both recognised the substantial increase in fuel prices and spoke in favour of continuing with the increase in the rate of reimbursement payable to staff who utilise their own vehicles for work related purposes to the HMRC rate of 45p per mile as set out in the report.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To continue with the increase in the rate of reimbursement payable to Council employees who utilise their own vehicles for work related purposes to the HMRC rate of 45p per mile as set out in the report.

## **8 Youth Engagement and Participation Service: Overview of Additional Funding 2020-2022**

The Head of Community Wellbeing and Resilience provided Cabinet Members with an overview of the additional support the Youth Engagement and Participation Service has offered young people, as a result of the Council's additional investment since 2020.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language spoke positive of the work of the service and commented that the funding had assisted many young people across the RCT. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the negative impact Covid-19 and lockdowns had had on young people's mental health, wellbeing, and education; and was pleased to note that there were multiple support services available within the YEPS team.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the increase in anti-social behaviour following the pandemic and paid compliment to the Youth Engagement and Participation Service for supporting the youth community in changing attitudes and behaviours.

The Leader endorsed the recommendation to double the use of the youth hub vehicles and commented that it allowed the team to engage with young people whom, otherwise, would not come forward.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To review and comment on the information contained within the report; and
2. To commit to double the number of community youth hub vehicles from two to four vehicles.

## **9 Play Sufficiency Assessment**

The Group Director of Community and Children's Services updated Cabinet Members on the Play Sufficiency Assessment, following Pre-scrutiny by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The Group Director sought endorsement from Members for the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) and action plan to be submitted to the Welsh Government by 30th June 2022, as per statutory obligation placed upon the

Council in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 and the Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care emphasised the importance of play in the child's formative years and stated that it had been promoted for many years in Rhondda Cynon Taf with continuous investment.

The Deputy Leader was in support of the recommendations and spoke of the significant investment by the Council and the work undertaken by voluntary groups to ensure that children in the most deprived areas of RCT had enhanced play experiences.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To consider the PSA for 2022 - 25 and the supporting action plan;
2. To consider comments from the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee as detailed in section 7.6 of the report; and
3. To endorse the PSA and action plan and agree for it to be submitted to Welsh Government.

## **10 Food Resilience**

The Strategic Arts and Culture Manager provided Cabinet Members with an opportunity to review the support offered to residents who were experiencing food poverty, the work undertaken with partners to develop a strategic approach to food security and the progress made towards achieving a Sustainable Food Places Bronze Award, and plans for further development.

The Cabinet Member for Public Health & Communities spoke of the concerning statistics outlined within the report, such as over 50% of households in poverty in Wales have an adult that is working full-time. The Cabinet Member praised the work undertaken to support the vulnerable in the communities and endorsed the recommendations.

The Deputy Leader spoke of the opening times of a foodbank in a local ward which proved to be difficult for families to attend. The Deputy Leader suggested that moving forward, there is a better line of communication between the Sustainable Food Coordinator and food banks to ensure there is better availability for communities, where possible.

The Leader spoke of additional funding from the Council which allows Groups to apply for up to £500 three times a year to support tackling food poverty initiatives. The Leader advised that one group had used the £500 payment to help with transporting food to communities, which had helped families who could not afford travel fair to and from the foodbanks.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the content of the report;
2. To continue its support for developing Rhondda Cynon Taf as a 'Sustainable Food Place'; and
3. To approve the submission of an expression of interest for a Sustainable Food Place Bronze Award.

## 11 Community Wardens

The Frontline Services Officer presented the report, which sought approval from Cabinet to introduce a new Community Warden service, effective across RCT, to support the Police in providing a visible, reassuring presence in town centres, parks and communities.

The Leader thanked the officer for the report and explained that it was a commitment to the public by the administration that additional PCSOs would be funded within the Borough. The Leader advised that ultimately, he would like the Government to fund additional police on the street but welcomed the recommendation to establish a new Community Warden Service to support the work already undertaken by South Wales Police, existing PCSOs and the YEPS Service. The Leader concluded by speaking of the vast amount of work undertaken within the town centres and explained that despite this, surveys suggested that some residents still felt unsafe due to incidents such as anti-social behaviour or substance misuse etc. The Leader hoped that the additional presence of partners would be welcomed by the community.

The Deputy Leader welcomed the investment and commented that the additional presence would be paramount.

The Cabinet Member for Development and Prosperity echoed previous comments about the visibility of patrolling presence within communities. The Cabinet Member spoke of the need for clear communication with residents to ensure that they feel safer because of the improvements. The Cabinet Member hoped that the investment would support the Council's tackling anti-social behaviour agenda.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- 1) To delegate authority to the Director – Frontline Services, to proceed with the measures necessary to give effect to the proposals set out in the report, namely: -
  - a. To establish a new Community Warden Service to include a new team of Community Wardens with supervisory staff and provision of appropriate vehicles and equipment to support their deployment.
  - b. To undertake a review of the existing roles and responsibilities of the Streetcare Enforcement team.
  - c. To establish effective working procedures between the new team, the Council's Community Safety Team and the wider Community Safety Partnership to co-ordinate appropriate partner responses to areas of anti-social behaviour or community nuisances.
- 2) To provide funding to South Wales Police to employ an additional 10 Police Community Support Officers, (PCSOs), dedicated to RCT, but nevertheless deployed and directed by the Police.

## 12 Armed Forces and War Memorials Commitment

The Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication provided an update on the Council's ongoing support for the Armed Forces and Veteran community and outlined how the Council could increase the commitment to those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, through additional investment in the Armed Forces, including War Memorials.

The Leader took the opportunity to thank the Deputy Leader for her continued work and commitment in delivering support to the Armed Forces and veterans. The Leader welcomed the report and spoke of the need for a dedicated officer and budget to carry out the programme of investment over the next five years.

The Deputy Leader noted that RCT was the only Local Authority in Wales to hold a budget for the Armed Forces. The Deputy Leader spoke of positive initiatives within RCT such as breakfast clubs for veterans and praised the Armed Forces Officer for the continuous support and work undertaken.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the wide-ranging support that the Council is currently providing to support our Armed Forces and veterans;
2. That the Council continues with its commitment to the Armed Forces, through a further £100k programme of investment over the next 5 years; and
3. That the recently appointed Heritage and Ancient Monuments Officer will develop a programme of investment and improvement to War Memorials, as well as providing a key point of contact for the community.

### **13 Pontypridd Town Centre Placemaking Plan - Public Consultation Feedback and Project Updates**

The Director of Prosperity and Development provided Cabinet Members with the results of the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the draft Pontypridd Town Centre Placemaking Plan and the early ideas for redevelopment of the former M&S and Dorothy Perkins/Burtons buildings. In addition, the Director sought Cabinet to approve the Pontypridd Town Centre Placemaking Plan and the proposed changes and the further development and delivery of schemes within the report.

The Cabinet Member for Development and Prosperity was pleased to note that resident feedback was largely positive, with over 80% in support of most of the proposals, with the lowest area of support in the proposal to develop a stronger digital presence, to which he emphasised. The Cabinet Member believed that this was an exciting time for Pontypridd and commented that with investment planned elsewhere, the success would be replicated throughout RCT going forward.

The Cabinet Member for Development and Prosperity praised the investment already put into Pontypridd such as the Lido, Llys Cadwyn and the new bridge. The Cabinet Member felt that the proposals would bring life into the Southern end of Pontypridd and link it to the success of the Northern end.

With the agreement of the Leader, one public speaker and County Borough Councillors J. Brencher and S. Wood spoke on this item.

Discussions ensued and the Leader addressed comments made in respect of

the proposal for a hotel led development on the site of the former Bingo Hall on High Street / Sardis Road. In terms of demand for a hotel, the Leader emphasised that it would be a private sector led development. The Leader explained that a market test analysis had been undertaken by organisations, which had determined there was a demand for a hotel, particularly as Pontypridd becomes a vibrant hub as part of the South Wales Metro.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To consider the responses to the public consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the draft Pontypridd Placemaking Plan and the early ideas for the redevelopment of the former M&S and Dorothy Perkins/Burtons buildings and determines whether any amendments are required to the proposals;
2. To approve the Pontypridd Town Centre Placemaking Plan (subject to any changes as result of the consultation process) and the further development and delivery of schemes as set out within the document;
3. To note the progress made towards undertaking a procurement exercise to secure a development partner to deliver a hotel led development on the site of the former Bingo Hall on High Street / Sardis Road; and
4. To note progress made towards the demolition plans of the former M&S and Dorothy Perkins/Burtons buildings.

#### **14 Draft RCT Tree, Woodlands, and Hedgerow Strategy**

The Director of Prosperity and Development presented the report, which sought Cabinet to consider the contents of a new, draft RCT Tree, Woodlands and Hedgerow Strategy and agree that the draft is used as the basis on which to engage the public and other relevant stakeholders in an eight week consultation to ascertain a wider range of views.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Corporate Services endorsed the recommendation and commented that the tree strategy would provide the foundation of the Council's ambition to deliver RCT's largest tree planting programme in a generation and will promote the principles of 'right tree – right place'.

The Leader was in support of the ambitious strategy and spoke of work already undertaken by Natural Resources Wales.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To approve the draft RCT Tree, Woodlands and Hedgerow Strategy for consultation with the public and other relevant stakeholders.

#### **15 Proposed Levelling Up Fund Submission for the Cynon Valley**

The Director of Prosperity and Development provided Cabinet with a summary of the UK Government Leveling Up Fund (Round 2) and the proposed project application for the Former Chicken Factory, Trecynon for the Cynon Valley Parliamentary Constituency.

The Cabinet Member for Development and Prosperity stated that in July 2021, a total of four bids were submitted from Rhondda Cynon Taf but the Former Mayhew Chicken Factory bid for the Cynon Valley Parliamentary Constituency



was unsuccessful. The Cabinet Member advised that with Government feedback, the scheme had been further strengthened for submission for round two of the fund and was hopeful that it would be successful.

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To consider the content of the report; and
2. To agree to progress the development of a project application for submission to the UK Levelling Up Fund Round 2, as set out in section 5 of the report.

## **16 Leader's Scheme of Delegation**

The Cabinet Members noted the Leader's Scheme of Delegation for the 2022-2023 Municipal Year.

## **17 To consider Passing the Following Resolution:**

It was **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 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".

## **18 Sustainable Communities Learning Programme (Formerly 21st Century Schools) - Financial Close for MIM Pathfinder Project**

The Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the position as set out in this report on the submission of a Full Business Case (FBC) to Welsh Government (WG) in respect of the batched project of Pontyclun, Llanilltud Faerdref and Penygawsi primary schools, and the next step which is to proceed to financial close;
2. That subject to Welsh Government's approval of the FBC:
  - 2.2.1 Review and agree the updated costs and funding package for the schools as outlined in section 8 of the report;
  - 2.2.2 Approve the execution, delivery and performance of the Project Agreement with Project Co (to be established by the Welsh Education Partnership Co Limited) together with the Funders' Direct Agreement, the Collateral Agreements, the Independent Tester Contract and the Insurance Proceeds Account Agreement, (together the "**Agreements**") (and any documents to be delivered by the Agreements pursuant thereto) to facilitate the delivery of the batched primary schools Pontyclun Primary, Llanilltud Faerdref Primary and Penygawsi Primary schools;
  - 2.2.3 Approve the Project Agreement which will incorporate Schedule 14 Payment Mechanism and summarised in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report so as to give effect to recommendation (2.2.2), subject to recommendation (2.2.5) below;
  - 2.2.4 Approve the Funders' Direct Agreement, the Collateral Agreements, the Independent Tester Contract and the Insurance Proceeds Account Agreement (also as Schedules of the Project Agreement) (attached at Appendices C, D, E and F) so as to give effect to recommendation (2.2.2), subject to recommendation (2.2.5) below;

- 2.2.5 Note that the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer shall complete the Agreements for execution and is approved to:
- i. complete all information gaps including but not limited to confirmation of financial obligations (including the Annual Service Charge and Monthly Service Payment in consultation with the Director of Finance and Digital Services) and commitments of the Council and programme dates; and
  - ii. make any further genuine project specific drafting changes to the Agreements, as may be required and that by the act of execution any final changes are approved;
- 2.2.6 Give delegated authority to the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to approve any further deeds and documents for execution by the Council which are ancillary to the Agreements approved here; and
- 2.2.7 Note that the Chief Executive, the S151 Officer, or the Monitoring Officer will complete certificates under the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 and agree to indemnify this officer in the act of doing so.

**This meeting closed at 4.00 pm**

**Cllr A Morgan  
Chairman.**