



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

### **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 14 June 2023 at 5.00 pm

This meeting was live streamed, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

#### **County Borough Councillors – The following Councillors were present in the Council Chamber:-**

Councillor G Hughes (Chair)

Councillor S Evans	Councillor B Stephens
Councillor L Addiscott	Councillor R Bevan
Councillor S Bradwick	Councillor J Brencher
Councillor G Caple	Councillor J Cook
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor E L Dunning
Councillor R Davis	Councillor L Ellis
Councillor V Dunn	Councillor D Evans
Councillor J Edwards	Councillor S Emanuel
Councillor D Grehan	Councillor S Hickman
Councillor B Harris	Councillor G Holmes
Councillor W Hughes	Councillor K Johnson
Councillor G Jones	Councillor G O Jones
Councillor W Jones	Councillor C Leyshon
Councillor W Lewis	Councillor M Maohoub
Councillor C Lises	Councillor A Morgan
Councillor N H Morgan	Councillor S Morgans
Councillor M Norris	Councillor D Parkin
Councillor A Roberts	Councillor C Preedy
Councillor J Smith	Councillor S Rees
Councillor L A Tomkinson	Councillor G Stacey
Councillor J Turner	Councillor S Trask
Councillor M Webber	Councillor G L Warren
Councillor R Williams	

#### **County Borough Councillors – The following Councillors were present online:-**

Councillor M Ashford	Councillor J Barton
Councillor P Binning	Councillor J Bonetto
Councillor S J Davies	Councillor J Elliott
Councillor A Dennis	Councillor A J Ellis
Councillor S Evans	Councillor A Fox
Councillor G Hopkins	Councillor H Gronow
Councillor C Middle	Councillor W Owen
Councillor S Powderhill	Councillor R Lewis
Councillor A O Rogers	Councillor D Owen-Jones
Councillor W Treeby	Councillor G E Williams
Councillor D Wood	Councillor T Williams
Councillor R Yeo	

### **Officers in attendance**

Mr P Mee, Chief Executive  
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services  
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services and Democratic Services  
Mr R Waters, Director, Frontline Services

### **Apologies for absence**

Councillor P Evans    Councillor R Evans  
Councillor K Morgan    Councillor M Powell  
Councillor K Webb    Councillor D Williams

## **12 Welcome & Apologies**

The Presiding Member welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors P Evans, R Evans, K Morgan, M Powell, K Webb and D Williams.

## **13 Declaration of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations were made pertaining to the agenda:

### **Agenda item 9 - THE TRANSITION TO A SINGLE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) FOR CWM TAF MORGANNWG - JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS**

- County Borough Councillor S Bradwick – “I am Chair of the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service”
- County Borough Councillor D R Bevan – “I am a member of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee”
- County Borough Councillor A Crimmings – “I am a member of the PSB Board”
- County Borough Councillor B Stephens - “I am a member of the PSB Board”

## **14 Minutes**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the hybrid meetings held on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (4pm and 5pm) and on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023, as an accurate reflection of the meetings.

## **15 Announcements**

The following announcements were made:

- The Leader of the Council, Councillor A Morgan OBE, paid the following

tribute to the late Tyrone O'Sullivan OBE who sadly passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> May at the age of 77. Tyrone was born into a mining family in Abercwmboi, and he was well aware of the dangers of the pits, losing both his great-grandfather at Maerdy, and also his father at Tower when Tyrone was just 17. Despite this, Tyrone entered the pit as an apprentice electrician and soon became a leading figure in the Union movement – famously never losing a vote for industrial action in 22 years as an underground NUM Branch Secretary. He played a leading role in the 1984-85 strike, eventually organising picketing in Wales, the south of England, Essex, and South Yorkshire. His most infamous accomplishment was persuading the fellow miners of Tower to commit £8,000 each from the redundancy money as the basis for a £1m down payment to take over the Tower site after its closure. The Leader added that as many will remember the sight of the 239 miners marching back to work in January 1995 – a year after the mine shut - following the successful buyout. Tower remained open for a further 13 years, and today the popular Zip World Tower is situated on the site. The Leader recounted a memory with Tyrone during a trip to North Wales and, on behalf of the Local Authority wished to pass his condolences to Tyrone's wife, Elaine and family.

- Councillor A O Rogers, as ward councillor for Tower Colliery, also paid tribute to the late Tyrone O'Sullivan OBE, referring to the many tributes and comments that have been made about him in recent weeks. He added that many would agree his legacy will be his leadership and the fight to keep Tower colliery open and the successful buyout of the mine by the miners. Councillor Rogers spoke of Tyrone's vision for young people having opportunities, to give them a future, to build and develop the communities post mining, such as Zip World providing local employment for the many not the few.
- Councillor R Lewis wished to congratulate Abercynon R.F.C on a successful season of rugby being crowned champions of East Central Division 2 and securing promotion. The whole team, support staff and volunteers have done the whole community proud. Cllr Lewis, on behalf of Cllr Dennis, wished the team well for the next season.
- Councillor S Emanuel, on behalf of Councillor W Jones, congratulated Maggie Davies, a resident from Blaenrhondda who ran the London marathon in memory of her late husband Paul and has raised over £4000 for Brain Bank which is a dementia charity.
- Councillor Ros Davis congratulated Mr David Ferns, who lives in Porth. He completed the London Marathon on 23 April, in 3hrs :40 minute and raised over £600 for Tommy's, the baby charity that funds research into miscarriage, still birth and premature birth. It was an exceptional personal achievement for David and great news for the charity.
- Councillor K Johnson wished to congratulate a young resident of Llantwit

Fardre, Coral Brush-Davies, who has been invited to China as a member of Team GB to compete as a solo amateur in the Elite 2023 Dance World Cup. Cora will be the first ever soloist in her age group to be invited as part of Team GB and is the only Welsh competitor. She will represent Efail Isaf and the Dance Crazy Studios in Llantwit Fardre where her talent has been developed. Councillor Johnson requested the mayor send a letter to Coral on her achievement and sought the permission of the Presiding Member to circulate the details of a Just Giving Page to all Members following the meeting.

- Councillor Sheryl Evans congratulated Abercwmboi RFC on their recent promotion to Division 1 of the Welsh Rugby Union East Central League. This is a well-deserved achievement for the whole team, players, coaches and everyone involved with the Club. Councillor Evans wished them luck for the next season.
- Councillor A S Fox wished to pay tribute to a remarkable young resident from Penrhiwceiber who attends Penrhiwceiber Primary School. Oliver Wilson was born with cerebral palsy 11 years ago and takes on every challenge set before him with a smile on his face. He took part in trials for the England Cerebral Palsy team and has now been selected and offered a place on this prestigious team. Councillor Fox was sure that all Members would like to join him in wishing Oliver every success for the future.
- Councillors G O Jones and E Dunning wished to present a petition on behalf of residents calling on traffic calming measures in Bronllwyn Rd and surrounding streets in Gelli.

## 16 **Members' Questions**

### **1. Question from County Borough Councillor G. E. Williams to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

“Ahead of the winter and the preparations for severe weather, will there be an opportunity for Members to have engagement and briefings on the preparations?”

#### **Response from County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

Councillor A Morgan responded that each year, the Council holds an annual briefing session for Elected Members in advance of the winter period. Last year's session was held in November with this year's session to be held earlier, possibly in October. The Leader advised that the primary focus of these sessions is the Council's Winter Maintenance Plan, and this outlines what actions the Council is taking to prepare for inclement weather over the winter months, the roles and responsibilities for Members and Officers, how to share information, directing Members to the out of hours number, how to log issues via

the contact centre and what they are able to offer in support of their communities and to Council Services and staff.

The Leader stressed the importance of achieving as much engagement and participation from Members as possible – he explained that the session is worthwhile and he encouraged all Members to attend. The Leader concluded that though Democratic Services, a date would be confirmed and circulated in due course.

**Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor G Williams:**

“We can’t guarantee that Pentre won’t flood again but the works conducted to the culvert and drainage systems provides much needed peace of mind for the residents in Pentre, could the Leader provide further details of the Council’s preferred option of works?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

The Leader commented that Pentre was obviously one of the hardest hit communities during Storm Dennis, and of course over subsequent weather events and over £1m has been spent on the area to date. He confirmed the preferred option is bringing a new culvert through the streets which although will be disruptive to residents (which was relayed in the consultation information that was circulated) would alleviate their concerns through face to face and online sessions with Officers and drop-in sessions.

The Leader advised that the scheme will be a multi-million-pound investment in local infrastructure, delivered in phases but the Council has secured significant funding for the scheme this year. The scheme will be necessary in the face of climate change and the need to protect houses and residents. The Leader commented that preparation is key to the scheme and that is why training is essential for Members, as the Leader outlined earlier.

**2. Question from County Borough Councillor J. Cook B.E.M. to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

“What support is available for food banks and similar local schemes in the coming year?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

The Leader commented that recently he held a key meeting recently to discuss what further support can be provided to local foodbanks and food clubs/pantries where there is a lot of excellent work being undertaken across the county borough to support older persons groups and families. There are a range of grants available for example community groups are able to apply for small grants of up to £500 (up to three times a year) to allow the groups to utilise the money locally.

The Leader advised that the anticipated total financial value of support is in excess of £160,000 and the relevant teams will be working to release these

funds, such as the Food Fund worth £500, which any community organisation can apply for as well as community funds worth up to £1,000.

The Leader wished to commend all the community groups working hard to support families and residents through difficult times and he stressed that the Council is once again looking to provide direct support this financial year with further allocations being made in the future.

### **There was no supplementary question**

#### **3. Question from County Borough Councillor S. Emanuel to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

“Can the Leader please make a statement on capital investment in Rhondda Cynon Taf?”

#### **Response from County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

The Leader advised that the level of Capital spend is larger than ever, for 2022/23 it totalled £135m. By way of comparison, in 2015/16, the Council’s total capital spend equated to £66.9m. The new 3-year capital programme represents a total investment of £187m for 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The Leader advised that the Council receives large amounts of Capital funding throughout the year, recently receiving over £5m from Welsh Government for active travel (with further details being published shortly). A further bid, in excess of £10m has been submitted for works associated with the tips and a grant worth £5m for flood alleviation projects. He further advised that significant funding for schools is also forthcoming, either fully funded or a shared investment model.

The Leader explained that the programme also includes additional specific investments in areas including Highways, Structures, Parks, Play Areas and Multi-Use Games Areas and other investment areas aligned with the Council’s Corporate Plan. He added that the capital programmes over the last 8 years have averaged out at over £100m per year – so this shows the relentless levels of capital investment that has been going into the communities, improving local infrastructure, boosting local spend for the economy and investing in maintenance costs in the future where the revenue budget is under pressure. The Leader concluded that he is pleased with the way the capital investment is pushed to the front end of services.

#### **Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor S Emanuel:**

“Blaenrhondda Park has benefitted from the much-needed investment, can the Leader outline what further investments there will be in this very well used and well-loved local Park?”

#### **Response from County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

The Leader advised that all parks across the county borough have been assessed and this year the council intends to spend £1m on its parks. He

explained that there is a real understanding of what exactly is required, and the money is split across different categories such as infrastructure (such as footways, drainage, fencing), the pavilions (changing rooms). The Leader added that the pavilions are costly therefore only a few are refurbished every year. Another programme involves drainage on pitches and now work on nine each year is undertaken across the county borough.

The Leader concluded that the Council would continue to invest in this area.

**4. Question from County Borough Councillor W. Hughes to the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Council Business, County Borough Councillor M. Webber:**

“Can the Deputy Leader provide an update on the Council’s apprenticeship and graduate programmes?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor M. Webber:**

The Deputy Leader advised that the Apprenticeship and Graduate recruitment for the September 2023 intake has just closed and confirmation that the Council received just over 700 applications for 9 Graduate posts and 49 Apprenticeship opportunities which shows that the Council continues to be an attractive prospect as an employer and residents clearly see us as a good organisation to develop their careers.

The Deputy Leader commented that interviews will be conducted over the next two months with the cohort given a start date of the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023. She added that this Administration’s commitment is to provide another 150 apprenticeship and graduate positions over the course of this Council term. This year’s intake builds on the excellent work already undertaken over previous years to provide well-paid, good quality jobs to our residents.

The Deputy Leader explained that in the last Council term, there was a commitment to create 150 apprenticeship and graduate posts. Between 2018 and 2022, a total of 256 positions were created within the Authority, meaning that the Council far exceeded its commitment. Furthermore, since 2012 when the scheme began, a total of 324 apprenticeships and 125 graduate positions have been created.

The Deputy Leader advised that the Council’s Apprenticeship Programme is widely respected and has been recognised for the outstanding opportunities it provides, with the Council having been crowned Macro Employer of the Year at the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru in both 2018 and 2021. The Council currently support Trivallis with their apprenticeship scheme and have in the past supported Bridgend and Merthyr Councils.

In conclusion, the Deputy Leader commented that Council Officers have attended numerous meetings and conferences to speak about the apprenticeship programme and was proud to confirm that RCT’s Apprenticeship scheme is known as the flagship programme in Wales.

**There was no supplementary question**

**5. Question from County Borough Councillor S. Powderhill to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure, County Borough Councillor A. Crimmings:**

“Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the works to improve Ynysangharad War Memorial Park?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor A. Crimmings:**

Councillor Crimmings explained that works on the latest round of major improvements to Ynysangharad War Memorial Park are well advanced and will soon be completed with the work being supported by a significant £1.9m investment package from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Welsh Government’s Transforming Towns fund, and Council contributions. She added that the construction of the new Canolfan Calon Taf is nearing completion, with only the finishing touches and some snagging works remaining. The goal is to have the Centre fully operational during July.

Councillor Crimmings advised that the Centre will provide dedicated classroom space, an outdoor garden with raised flower beds, and a greenhouse with the intention that it will be a community hub that will encourage learning and active community engagement. She added that the old disused and derelict toilet block is being restored and converted into a Parks staff welfare facility and works are almost complete, with the Contractor currently rendering the outside of the building. The Parks staff have relocated all their equipment into the new facility.

Councillor Crimmings commented that the Bandstand and surrounding area have been fully restored, and planting works are currently underway. The timeline design for the Bandstand floor is almost finished, and this feature will be completed over the next few weeks. She added that work continues on the Sunken Garden area restoration - the perimeter walls and footpath repairs are nearing completion, and the new benches have also arrived. The planting is scheduled to commence shortly.

Councillor Crimmings informed Members that the Project Co-ordinator is facilitating the delivery of courses and activities in the park and also preparing for the planning and execution of the Park’s centenary project, which is scheduled to take place on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> August, in conjunction with the “Big Welsh Bite” event. The centenary celebration will feature live music from the bandstand, history walks and talks, and family-friendly activities. It promises to be an exciting event for the community to commemorate the Park’s hundredth anniversary.

**There was no supplementary question**

**6. Question from County Borough Councillor R. Williams to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**



“In light of the funding shortfall facing councils across Wales for next year, please can the Leader provide an update on discussions with other Council Leaders and Welsh Government?”

**Response from County Borough Councillor A. Morgan OBE:**

The Leader commented that discussions between Welsh Government and Council Leaders are held weekly where they continue to press the case for further investment and greater allocations from Welsh Government. He added that the funding outlook for public services over the next three years appears difficult and based on the three- year comprehensive spending review undertaken by the UK Government, the local authority is currently looking to receive an uplift of 3.1% which would leave the Council short in terms of maintaining services next year.

The Leader advised that the picture is similar across Wales with many local authorities reporting a worse situation than in RCT. The Council has managed to balance its budget this year by prioritising appropriately for Schools and Social Care and taking difficult decisions. He added that there is pressure on services as a result of the potential further rise in interest rates which will impact on borrowing and markets. The Leader advised that regular meetings are held with the finance minister to discuss the funding outlook.

The Leader spoke of the ambiguity over how the UK Government will pay for the NHS pay award in England and how the lack of clarity will impact on the consequential for Wales. He added that this is no way to run public services and he hoped that the next few years will improve but assured Council that lobbying will continue with Central Government. He heralded the worth and value of all local authorities and hoped that there will be a change in direction as public services cannot operate effectively on a shoestring.

**There was no supplementary question due to the lapse of the allotted time.**

**17 Flood Resilience**

The Director of Frontline Services presented the report (supported with a Power Point presentation) with the purpose of providing an update on the Council's actions to mitigate flood risk since Storm Dennis, together with an overview of works undertaken to replace and upgrade flood affected public infrastructure. The Director commented that the report cross references previous reports and commitments following the storm and sets out a programme of works, as contained within the appendices to the report, following the storm events in February 2020 which left over 1,500 properties flooded.

The Director advised that the Council has investigated the flood events and produced a total of nineteen Section 19 Reports, and he referred to the work that has been undertaken in response to the devastation caused by Storm Dennis in 2020 and the areas of capital expenditure with grants and commitments from Welsh Government, together with almost £3m of the Council's own funding.

The Director explained that the four-year capital programme, which will come to an end this financial year, consists of around £84M in total which includes £42M

for direct upgrades and repairs, £20M for coal tips safety works, £14M relating to flood risk management and £4.75M for resilient roads.

The Director referred to Appendix A which provides an overview of the actions reported to Cabinet in December 2020, where they specifically relate to Frontline Services, such as growing its internal capacity at operational level and managing and maintaining the network of drainage assets, developing by laws, raising flood awareness, and enforcement as well as developing a flood risk strategy through a series of consultations, which will be considered by the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

The Director of Frontline Services continued his update on the infrastructure and flood risks through a series of images via a number of Power Point slides under the following headings, which served to demonstrate the volume of the schemes in hand and ongoing across the county borough:

- February 2020 Storm Events
- Receptor Sites
- Phase 3A Drainage & Clearance
- FAS - Park Lane – Pre-construction/Post construction
- Bronallt Terrace FAS
- Treorchy Phase 1a – Heol Tyle Du
- Heath Terrace FAS
- Cefnpennar Road – Internal Culvert Lining
- Pentre Lining & Culvert Replacement
- Pentre Road Inlet
- Tynyncoed Terrace Culvert Upgrade
- A4059 – Newtown Conveyance Swale
- Rhigos Road Culvert Replacements
- Nant Y Frwd – Allen Street, Mountain Ash Emergency Repairs & Upgrade
- Granville Terrace outfall
- Granville Terrace debris basin
- Campbell Terrace- culvert Inlet
- Cwmbach – Canal Road Inlet
- Bryn Ifor -culvert inlet
- Kingcraft Street - Inlet
- Painters Row – Inlet Improvements
- Tramway Culvert
- Glenboi Pumping Station
- Structures Work – Castle Inn Bridge
- Castle Inn Scour Treatment
- Berw Road – (White Bridge) Pontypridd
- Blaencwm Riverwall Phase 2
- Ynysangharad Park Footbridge
- Tynybryn Culvert Outlet Scour Repair
- Ynyshir Community Route
- Pontypridd Road River Wall – Porth
- Cross Street River Wall – Ynyshir
- Maes-Y-Ffynnon Footbridge
- Llwynceilyn Road Embankment
- Cwm Clydach Bridge Scour Repair
- Nant Clydach Bridge – Ynysybwl Scour
- Sion Street, Pontypridd
- Penydarran Tramroad Bridge, Aberdare

- Gelligaled Park Bridge, Ystrad
- Maerdy Mountain Landslip

Following the visual aids, the Director of Frontline Services stressed the importance of continuing the momentum of the series of works across RCT, as with its unique topography and geography the local authority represents the highest risk of surface water flooding.

Following a detailed discussion on the scale of the works that has been and continues to be undertaken across the county borough, the Leader praised the Director of Frontline Services and the relevant teams (particularly that under the Head of Flood Risk Management and Strategic Projects) that have been heavily involved in the delivery of programmes to address the physical impacts of Storm Dennis on public infrastructure and the mitigation of flood risk.

Following the discussion, the Leader, Group/Deputy Group Leaders and the Presiding Member wished to place on record their thanks to the Director of Frontline Services, Mr Roger Waters who would soon be retiring, they paid tribute to his commitment, dedication and hard work during his long career in RCT and they all wished him a long and happy retirement.

The Presiding Member advised that any outstanding questions could be directed to the Director of Frontline Services following the meeting via the Council Business Unit inbox.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the content of the report and the presentation.

## **18 Council Work Programme 2023/24**

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communication presented for Members' comment and approval, a draft Work Programme on the proposed list of matters requiring consideration by Council for the 2023-2024 Municipal Year. He added that further to that announced at the AGM, additional dates have now been added to the work programme.

During the period outlined, the Service Director advised that the work programme may be subject to change to reflect additional reporting requirements or any legislative changes or business that may arise from considerations of another committee, such as Scrutiny recommendations or those from the Appointments Committee. He added that any changes to business will be agreed by the Proper Officer with final agreement from the Presiding Member and where possible Group Leaders will also be informed of the changes through the municipal year.

In conclusion and following consideration of the report, the Service Director advised that subject to agreement, the items within the 'Miscellaneous' section on the council work programme would be allocated during the municipal year and Members advised accordingly through the regular updates at each Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Work Programme for the 2023-2024 Municipal Year and thereafter receive further updates from the Service Director Democratic Services & Communication as appropriate.

## 19 Notices of Motion Reporting Mechanism

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communications presented the report which sought Council's consideration of the proposals for formally recording and reporting the outcome and effect of the Council's representation made by Members following the adoption and/or referral of a Notice of Motion (NOM).

At the Council meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Members supported the motion as presented by Councillors D Grehan and A Rogers in respect of extending the existing reporting mechanism. The Service Director referred to the existing arrangements in place to record the outcomes of motions adopted by Council and where appropriate, those referred to another committee. In the case of a referral to a Scrutiny committee the outcome is currently rereferred back to Council in a substantive report to advise Members of the outcome of the original motion.

The Service Director set out the proposals for those matters which require external correspondence which, it is proposed would follow the same arrangements as those internal matters, the outcomes would be recorded and published to the Council webpages. He added that this matter was recently considered by the Constitution Committee where Members resolved to agree the proposals.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to note the support provided by the Council's Constitution Committee for the revised arrangements.

## 20 THE TRANSITION TO A SINGLE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) FOR CWM TAF MORGANNWG - JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communications presented the report which sought Council's approval of the new arrangements for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board, following the transition to a single Public Services Board (PSB) for Cwm Taf Morgannwg which now includes Bridgend County Borough Council as part of the footprint, in addition to RCT and Merthyr County Borough Councils.

The Service Director advised of the existing arrangements in place for a joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee between RCT and Merthyr Tydfil Councils which scrutinise and challenge the work of the Public Service Board and its partners, in line with the statutory requirement set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015 and associated statutory guidance. The Service Director added that following a number of discussions between the three unitary authorities, the proposed terms of reference and composition of the committee have been agreed and considered and are set out in the report, which seeks to build on the existing joint scrutiny arrangements.

The Service Director commented that the new joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee will comprise of five Members from each Local Authority in addition to the co-opted members where appropriate, to include citizen representatives, representatives from Natural Resources Wales, the Health Board and South

Wales Fire & Rescue Service. He added that local authorities are also requested to nominate a substitute representative, which will reflect the political balance of the respective Councils. In line with the previous joint arrangements, the Chair will be appointed by the Committee with the Vice Chair being nominated from another local authority.

The Service Director advised that it is proposed that for the next two years, Rhondda Cynon Taf will continue to provide support to the joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity afforded to the other local authorities to review this arrangement at the end of the two-year period.

In conclusion, the Service Director advised that the proposals have been considered by the PSB who were content to support adoption by the respective Councils and in addition to consideration by this Council, the Councils of Merthyr and Bridgend would also be considering similar reports.

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

1. Agree to the creation of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee comprising elected Members from Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend County Borough Councils to scrutinise the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board;
2. Endorse the Draft Terms of Reference of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Appendix 1, and to make any further comments as felt appropriate;
3. Determine the PSB Statutory members (non-executive) and `invited participants` to serve as co-opted members on the Cwm Taf PSB JOSC as highlighted within section 6 of the report;
4. Agree that the Chair and Vice Chair arrangements, highlighted within section 7 of the report, be taken forward, commencing from the beginning of the 2023/24 Municipal Year;
5. Agree that the support and administrative arrangements, highlighted within section 8 of the report be provided by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, for a 2-year period, commencing from the beginning of the 2023/24 Municipal Year before a review of the arrangements is undertaken;
6. Agree that all Members of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSB JOSC be provided with training to assist them in undertaking their new role; and
7. Nominate the following 5 Elected Members, 4 (Labour), 1 (Plaid Cymru) and 1 additional substitute member (Labour), in accordance with the Council's political balance arrangements:

County Borough Councillors D R Bevan, B Stephens, J Bonetto, M Ashford, and K Morgan (Councillor Sheryl Evans as substitute member).

## **21 Annual Report 2022/2023**

The Service Director, Democratic Services & Communications presented his report which provided Council with the Annual Report of the Democratic

Services Committee for the 2022/23 Municipal Year with the opportunity for the Chair and Vice Chair to contribute to the business of the committee. He added that key areas of consideration contained within the report included Members development, Members Services and the support for the non-executive democratic functions of the council for the municipal year.

In his role as the Head of Democratic Services he wished to place on record his thanks to the Democratic Services Committee for the continued support he and the Democratic Services team had received.

Members received County Borough Councillor W Jones and County Borough Councillor M Webber, Chair and Vice Chair respectively of the Democratic Services Committee, to present the annual report for the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to note the content of the Democratic Services Committee Annual report for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

## 22 Notice of Motion

**To consider the under-mentioned Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors S Trask and K Johnson:**

Loneliness and social isolation is an issue that makes a huge impact on the mental health of people of all ages, and has grown in prevalence significantly since the coronavirus pandemic. The Welsh Government set up a fund of £500,000 per year for three years to cover the whole of Wales, in order to help tackle the issue. The fund so far has only allocated £22,727 per year in the past 2 years for the entirety of Rhondda Cynon Taf, that equates to around 9p per person in RCT. RCTCBC has each year allocated this to small local groups via its Neighbourhood Network Fund. We applaud the work of these small community groups but feel that the current funding level from the Welsh Government is woefully insufficient to have any widespread impact.

The original 3 -year funding package expires after the financial year 2023/2024.

We therefore move that:

- This council notes that loneliness and social isolation is damaging the mental health of many residents of RCT, and Welsh Government funding does not go far enough to make a real difference.
- This council calls on the Leader of the council to write to Eluned Morgan MS to request the funding level is increased from this year onwards to a level sufficient to make real difference in the lives of RCT residents who benefit from the funding.

Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Notice of Motion.

**This meeting closed at 6.35 pm**

**Councillor G Hughes  
Chair.**

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh