



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 14 July 2021 at 5.00 pm.

County Borough Councillors - Council Members in attendance:-

Councillor S Powderhill (Chair)

Councillor S Trask	Councillor R Williams
Councillor G Hughes	Councillor H Boggis
Councillor J Bonetto	Councillor S Bradwick
Councillor R Bevan	Councillor A Calvert
Councillor T Williams	Councillor A Crimmings
Councillor D Williams	Councillor S Rees
Councillor J Elliott	Councillor S Evans
Councillor S Evans	Councillor A Fox
Councillor M Norris	Councillor E Webster
Councillor M Webber	Councillor M Griffiths
Councillor A Roberts	Councillor M Weaver
Councillor L Walker	Councillor G Hopkins
Councillor P Howe	Councillor K Morgan
Councillor R Yeo	Councillor P Jarman
Councillor G Thomas	Councillor A Morgan
Councillor M Adams	Councillor J Rosser
Councillor G Stacey	Councillor R Lewis
Councillor C Leyshon	Councillor J Brencher
Councillor S Powell	Councillor W Owen
Councillor S Morgans	Councillor E Stephens
Councillor W Lewis	Councillor G Jones
Councillor W Treeby	Councillor K Jones
Councillor W Jones	Councillor L Jones
Councillor L Hooper	Councillor D Grehan
Councillor E George	Councillor J Williams
Councillor J Cullwick	Councillor A Cox
Councillor A Chapman	Councillor E Griffiths
Councillor G Caple	Councillor J Edwards

Officers in attendance

Mr C Bradshaw, Chief Executive
Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Mr B Davies, Director of Finance & Digital Services
Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services
Mr A Wilkins, Director of Legal Services
Mr R Evans, Director of Human Resources

An apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillors S Belzak, G R Davies, J Davies, L De Vet, M Forey, H Fychan MS, J Harries, G Holmes, J James MS, A Davies-Jones, Martin Fidler Jones, D Owen-Jones, S Pickering, M J Powell, S Rees-Owen, M Tegg and R Turner.

39 Declaration of Interest

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

**Agenda item 6: ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW
2020/21 Agenda item 7: CHIEF OFFICER VER & REDUNDANCY
PACKAGES**

**Agenda Item 8 – Review of the Council's Pay and Grading Structure &
Agenda Item 10 - The Council's Senior Management Structure**

County Borough Councillor P Jarman's dispensation granted by the Standards Committee on 27th November 2020 providing the member "dispensation to speak and vote on all matters for the duration and adoption of the 2021-22 Budget process in her capacity as Leader of the Opposition"

**Agenda Item 8 – Review of the Council's Pay and Grading Structure &
Agenda Item 10 - The Council's Senior Management Structure**

County Borough Councillor D R Bevan declared a personal and prejudicial interest and advised that he would leave the meeting when the items are discussed and he referred to his dispensation received by the Standards Committee on the 27th November 2020 to speak and vote on all matters relating to the Community & Children's Services Group, save for any specific matters that directly affect his daughter who is employed by the Council in the Community and Children's Services Group.

Agenda item 10 – The Council's Senior Management Structure

THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES:

"I wish to declare a Personal and Pecuniary interest on behalf of myself and all Chief Officers present in relation to Agenda Item 10 as our posts are referenced in the report. All Chief Officers will leave the meeting for this item save for the Chief Executive, as the author and presenter of the report and the Director of Human Resources who will remain in the meeting to address any Member queries. Whilst I will leave the meeting during its discussion, I shall be available should any legal or constitutional queries arise during discussion of the item. "

40 Announcements

County Borough Council M Webber

Councillor M Webber announced that Mr Paul Bromwell, Chief Executive of Valleys Veterans has been honoured at the inaugural Aneurin Bevan People's NHS Awards in recognition of his work in Rhondda Cynon Taf, supporting the Armed Forces community. Councillor Webber advised that she had met with Mr Bromwell to convey the Council's as well as her own personal congratulations.

County Borough Councillor S A Bradwick

Councillor Bradwick, as Chair of Governors at Aberdare Community School, announced that Mr James Jones, Digital Competency Co-ordinator at Aberdare Community School had won an award for Inspirational Teacher or Adviser of the Year from the University of South Wales by providing support to his students during lockdown as they were struggling to follow online tutorials. He was nominated by one of his Year 10 students. Mr Jones created a series of video tutorials for his students by using free software to create a timer to help them with remote learning. This was a combination of pastoral and subject support.

Councillor Bradwick thanked the University of South Wales for hosting the award ceremony and asked if the Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion Services and/or Director of Education & Inclusion Services could send a letter of congratulations to Mr James Jones.

County Borough Councillor S Evans

Councillor S Evans also wished to congratulate Mr James Jones for his success at the University of South Wales Teacher and Adviser awards 2021 which her team within the University of South Wales had organised and she had hosted. Councillor Evans described the nomination by Alexander Martin, a Year 10 pupil as very emotional, depicting Mr James as a teacher who made you feel 'like you could do anything'. Councillor Evans concluded that it was pleasing to see a Teacher from RCT win the award.

County Borough Councillor D Grehan

Councillor Grehan wished to congratulate pupils in the class of Mr & Ms Hughes at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail for undertaking research as part of the 2021 Census initiative 'Let's Count'. Students researched and compared the number of Welsh speakers in 1901 and in 2011 by giving special attention to their own community. The purpose of the research was to raise information for the 2021 Census. Out of 250 applications the school won first prize in Wales and second prize in Wales & England. This means the school will receive and play a key role in the providing the results of the Census next Autumn.

41 Minutes

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Extra Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 30th June at 4pm as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

42 Statements

The Leader of the Council provided an update on the recent figures for cases of Covid-19 across Cwm Taf Morgannwg. The Leader advised the number of positive cases in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region as 143.5 cases per 100,000 which represents a significant increase over recent weeks. In Wales the positivity rate has increased to 7.6%, in RCT the positivity rate is 7.5%. The highest rate of positivity remains with younger people, particularly in those aged 25 years and under. In recognition of this, the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board is encouraging this age group to come forward and have the vaccine which does help reduce the spread of the virus. The Leader advised that unfortunately, the number of deaths may increase within the next few weeks as the number of positive cases increase.

From the 17th July Wales will move to Alert Level 1 but the Leader advised caution as the country moves into this stage of alert level. Residents are encouraged to wear masks where necessary and to take personal responsibility for the safety of everyone around them. In conclusion, the Leader advised that a more detailed review of the changes would be circulated following the meeting to all Members, so they are aware of the changes following the 17th July, the 19th July and the 7th August.

In a further statement, the Leader commented that there would be a flood alleviation update to Full Council in September to reflect the progress to date and ahead of the winter months. Press releases will also be published regularly to keep residents updated on the work to culverts and pumping stations ahead of the winter months.

The Leader advised that he and the Deputy Leader had visited the new emergency control room which will operate in the event of any type of emergency. It houses the appropriate equipment to enable Officers and Members to make strategic decisions effectively such as monitored alarm systems at culvert inlets and pumphouses to remotely alert the council of any problems and access to the Council's CCTV system.

43 Members' Questions

Question from County Borough Councillor A. S. Fox to the Deputy Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor M. Webber:

“How does this Council support its local Armed Forces community?”

Response from County Borough Councillor M Webber:

“Councillor Webber advised that RCT is the first Council in Wales to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant which is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the armed forces and the civilian communities and pledges to recognise the dual respect between the Council partner agencies and our Armed Forces personnel and their families. In 2019 RCT Council launched its Veteran Advice Service for the Armed Forces community by the Armed Forces Liaison Officer (AFLOW) which provides awareness raising sessions to staff and ensures the best level of support is offered. The Council offers discounted burial fees to serving and retired armed forces community who reside in the County Borough. The Council

has worked closely on the Aberdare War Memorial, the Llantrisant War Memorial, Gilfach Goch Memorial and held discussions regarding Tonypany, Penrhiwceiber and Cwmparc War Memorials. This year the Council has bid successfully for funding from the Armed Forces Covenant fund for the Veterans Connect Project to help maintain contact between veterans and their families through digital technology which reduces social isolation.

Future work will include a report to Cabinet regarding overcoming barriers to civilian employment which may introduce a guaranteed interview scheme for armed forces service personnel leavers, reservist veterans and their spouses if they meet the vacancy essential criteria.

In conclusion, the Deputy Leader advised that her own personal involvement has included supporting the War Memorial projects, Valleys Veterans Groups with their projects and breakfast clubs, giving evidence to the Commons Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill, supporting Veterans through lockdown and is the WLGA Armed Forces Spokesperson.

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor A S Fox

“Councillor Fox stated that the community of Penrhiwceiber are committed to paying tribute to the members of the armed forces community and asked if the Deputy Leader can provide an update on the work to restore the memorial clock”

Response from County Borough Councillor M Webber

“Councillor Webber confirmed that she has visited the War Memorial in Penrhiwceiber and advised that the Memorial clock is Listed but added that the Council has been in touch with Cadw. Although there are few clock experts available, an architect’s report and expert advice on the clock have been collated and sent to Cadw. The Council has applied for a level of funding from the War Memorial Fund towards the clock repair and the Deputy Leader gave a commitment that the clock will be restored.”

Question from County Borough Councillor E Webster to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:

"What happens when a major river defence wall in the borough is in danger of collapse, but there is no identifiable owner with riparian rights?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

“The Leader responded that the Flood Water Act Management Act 2010 identifies the appropriate risk management authority in dealing with any flood issues. RCT Council is the Lead Flood Risk Authority with direct responsibility for flood risk to ordinary water courses, surface water flooding it is Natural Resources Wales (NRW) who are responsible for main rivers and risk of river flooding. In the first instance referrals would be made to NRW who would identify whether the assets were theirs and if there was a riparian issue”

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor E Webster:

“The river defence wall is a continuous structure which runs from the Barracks in Pentre through Treorchy up to Ynyswen. Parts are the responsibility of this authority, other parts are that of private residents and business and others like Swyn yr Afon are not the responsibility of anyone. The wall is showing signs of age and the failure at Swyn Yr Afon during Storm Dennis is a sign of that. The sink hole has grown to over 30 feet which is a concern to the residents. NRW claim that this breach has a low risk of flooding to residents, but they haven’t considered the damage should it fall into the river. There’s a similar sink hole at the top end of Treorchy and many areas on the wall where it has eroded. It is such an important defence, what assurances can this Council give to residents that this wall is safe and will you work with NRW to undertake a condition survey of the wall in its entirety?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

“Councillor Morgan advised that NRW do not class this wall as a flood defence. The Council is carrying out extensive surveys to all council owned river walls where there has been scour and undertaking any necessary works. The section of land where there is a sink hole isn’t in anyone’s ownership at present and is unregistered land and NRW state that the sinkhole does not cause a risk, and is not a river flood asset so it is riparian ownership in which case it is for the residents to discuss with their own insurance companies to see if there is a risk to their properties and gardens. The Leader added that miles of river walls within RCT are in private ownership and the Council’s responsibility is to use emergency powers or to serve notices on adjacent landowners to take action. In conclusion, the Leader gave a commitment that he would discuss this particular wall with NRW in further detail”

Question from County Borough Councillor K Morgan to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:

“Will the Member make a statement on the Highways Infrastructure in the village of Hirwaun please”.

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

“The Leader advised the following schemes and spending on highways infrastructure as follows:

Almost a £1m on infrastructure over the past 10 years, £150,000 on footways, £400,000 on structures, 21 Capital schemes completed to date such as Station Road Bridge refurbishment and footway repairs and a number of street lighting upgrades over the years.”

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor K Morgan:

“Councillor K Morgan stated that previous requests for a traffic management review and a scheme to address the issues that residents experience have been met with the funding needed for review design, prioritisation of funding, review

design, the start of the Heads of the Valleys dualling works has further exacerbated the existing road safety issues including very large freight vehicles using our streets as a rat run to avoid the queues on the Heads of the Valley plus the inevitable official diversions. Councillor Morgan had hoped for a proactive approach to mitigate the effects on the village such as weight limits similar to Llwydcoed.

What steps will the council take over the next few years to ensure Hirwaun will have some of the gain not all of the pain?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

"Councillor Morgan advised that it is the responsibility of the highway developers to look at the mitigation measures, but he assured the Member that he would raise the issues with the Highway Officers to liaise with the development company taking forward the A465 dualling to highlight some of the concerns raised and see if further discussions are needed with Welsh Government and the A465 delivery partners."

Question from County Borough Councillor M. Griffiths to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:

"Has the Leader, through this Council or the WLGA, received any update on the implementation of the U.K. Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, which is supposed to be replacing EU Structural Funds?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

"Councillor Morgan advised that through the WLGA and as individual local authorities lobbying has been undertaken to ensure that the benefits of the European Revenue and Capital funding are maintained. The Community Renewal Fund is available, and a number of bids have been submitted (totalling £40m). The Leader added that he, along with other Leaders had provided evidence to the Welsh Affairs Committee about the Levelling Up Fund where a consistent message had been relayed that although the funding is welcome, a rapid increase in the quantum over the coming years would be necessary. The Leader advised that the message from UK Government regarding the involvement of Welsh Government had been unclear. The Leader stressed the importance of local communities benefitting from the funding"

Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor M Griffiths:

"Is the levelling up fund no more than a 'slush fund' for the Tory MP's who benefitted from it a few months ago?"

Response from County Borough Councillor A Morgan:

“The Leader of the Council confirmed that he had a positive meeting with Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, about the importance of areas like RCT securing the Levelling Up funding. He hoped the quantum of funding would be increased”

44 The Council Work Programme- For Members' Information

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communications provided an update in respect of the adopted and published Council Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2021/22. He advised that the Freedom of the Borough report had been deferred to allow for discussions in respect of the nominations by the Freedom of the Borough Working Group to be confirmed.

In respect of the reported outcomes of the Notices of Motions to Scrutiny such as the Motor Neurone Disease, Autism and the Development of the Rail Infrastructure, these would be reported to Council in the near future collectively. There would be an update on the Broadcasting of Meetings to Council following the hybrid meeting of the Cabinet and further familiarisation meetings over the next few weeks.

45 Annual Treasury Management Review 2020/21

In accordance with the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, the Director of Finance and Digital Services provided Members with information on:-

- The Council's Treasury Management activity during 2020/21; and
- The actual Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2020/21.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the content of the report.

46 Chief Officer VER & Redundancy Packages

Following a recommendation from the Council's Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Panel the Director of Human Resources sought Members' approval of the Chief Officer severance package (as detailed in the report) in accordance with the Council's approved 2021/22 Pay Policy statement.

The Director of Human Resources advised that the 'strain' or capitalised cost on the pension fund is a payment that the Council is required to make pursuant to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations 2013 (30(7) and 68(2)) into the pension fund itself and any further explanation would be provided to the individual Member as appropriate.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve a Chief Officer severance package (as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report) in accordance with the Council's approved 2021/22 Pay Policy statement.

47 Review of the Council's Pay and Grading Structure

The Director of Human Resources presented his report which sought Council's approval in respect of a review of the Council's Pay and Grading Structure.

The Director of Human Resources provided clarification at point 7.1 of the report which should refer to the current grading structure not to the 'amendments to the Council's senior management structure'. In response to a query regarding whether there is a Welsh Language evaluation process for the 1-18 grades, the Director advised that each job and person specification has a particular level of Welsh proficiency requirement attached to it.

Following responses to queries and further consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to agree an extension to the current pay and grading system of Grades 1 to 15, so as to now incorporate an expanded pay and grading system of Grades 16, 17 and 18 (as is detailed in the report), in relation to all staff employed under NJC for Local Government terms and conditions.

(**Note:** As referenced within minute No.39 County Borough Councillor D R Bevan left the meeting when the matter was discussed and voted upon).

48 TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12 and 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

49 The Council's Senior Management Structure

The Director of Human Resources provided Members with an overview of his report which contained exempt information.

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

To note that:

1. Cabinet approved the revised directorate structures shown at Appendices 2(i), 2(ii) and 2 (iii) will be implemented from the 1st August 2021 and structure at 2(iv) be implemented from the 1st October 2021. Furthermore, the structure shown at Appendix 3(i), will be implemented from the 1st May 2022. This will provide an overall estimated reduction in annual management costs at the Senior and Associated Management grade levels of £250,000 (inclusive of on-costs).
2. Emanating from the revised directorate structures outlined in 2.1.1, Cabinet authorised the amendment of the following posts:
 - i) the amendment of the post Director – Corporate Estates (Director Level 2) to Director – Corporate Estates (Director Level 1);
 - ii) the amendment of the post of Head of Corporate & Management Accounting (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Corporate & Management Accounting (Service Director Level 2);
 - iii) the amendment of the post of Head of Education & Financial Reporting

- (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Education & Financial Reporting (Service Director Level 2);
- iv) the amendment of the post of Head of Community & Children's Services Finance (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Community & Children's Services Finance (Service Director Level 2);
 - v) the amendment of the post of Head of Organisational Development (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Organisational Development (Service Director Level 2);
 - vi) the amendment of the post of Head of Employee Relations (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Employee Relations (Head of Service Level 1);
 - vii) the amendment of the post of Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services (Service Director Level 2) to Service Director – Pensions, Procurement & Transactional Services (Service Director Level 1);
 - viii) the amendment of the post of Head of Revenues & Benefits (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Revenues & Benefits (Head of Service Level 1);
 - ix) the amendment of the post of Head of Accommodation Services (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Accommodation Services (Head of Service Level 1);
 - x) the amendment of the post of Director – Education & Inclusion Services (Director Level 2) to Director – Education & Inclusion Services (Director Level 1);
 - xi) the amendment of the post of Head of 21st Century Schools (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director- 21st Century Schools & Transformation Services (Service Director Level 1);
 - xii) the amendment of the post of Head of Transformation & Education Information (Head of Service Level 2) to Head of Transformation, Admissions and Governance (Head of Service Level 1);
 - xiii) the amendment of the post of Head of Achievement Secondary (0.5) (soulbury grade) to Head of Secondary Achievement & Wellbeing (soulbury grade);
 - xiv) the amendment of the post of Head of School Advisory Support (soulbury grade) to Head of Primary Achievement (soulbury grade);
 - xv) the amendment of the post of Service Director – Frontline Services (Service Director L1) to Director – Frontline Services (Director L1);
 - xvi) the amendment of the post of Head of Strategic Investments (Head of Service Level 1) to Service Director – Transportation, Enforcement & Strategic Investments (Service Director Level 2);
 - xvii) the amendment of the post title of the Head of Operational Property

Services (Head of Service - Level 2) to Head of Energy and Carbon Reduction (Head of Service - Level 2).

3. Emanating from the revised directorate structures outlined in 2.1.1, Cabinet authorised the creation of the following posts:
 - i) the creation of the post of Head of Technology (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - ii) the creation of the post of Head of Digital Transformation (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - iii) the creation of the post of Head of ICT Operations (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - iv) the creation of the post of Head of Data, IM & Systems (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - v) the creation of the post of Head of Learning Disability & Mental Health (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - vi) the creation of the post of Head of Community & Welsh Language Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - vii) the creation of the post of Head of Arts, Culture & Library Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - viii) the creation of the post of Head of Leisure, Sports & Parks Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - ix) the creation of the post of Head of Public Protection & Regulatory Services (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - x) the creation of the post of Head of Community Protection & Housing Services (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - xi) the creation of the post of Head of Planning (Head of Service – Level 1);
 - xii) the creation of the post of Head of Major Developments & Investments (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - xiii) the creation of the post of Head of Housing Strategy & Investments (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - xiv) the creation of the post of Head of Infrastructure Asset Management (Head of Service – Level 2);
 - xv) the creation of the post of Head of Flood Risk Management and Strategic Projects (Head of Service – Level 2).
4. To agree to the amendment to the post of Group Director – Community & Children’s Services (Group Director grade) to Deputy Chief Executive & Group Director – Community & Children’s Services (Group Director grade) as recommended by Cabinet;
5. To note that Cabinet agreed to transfer:

- i) Facilities Cleaning from Frontline Services to Corporate Estates;
 - ii) Countryside Services from Public Health, Protection & Community Services to Frontline Services.
6. To endorse the following recommendations made by the Appointments Committee at its meeting held on 7th July 2021:
7. In accordance with the Council's change management process, due to the strong contractual claim in place, Mr. David Powell be assigned to the post of Director of Corporate Estates (Director Level 1) effective from 1st August 2021;
8. In accordance with the Council's change management process, due to the strong contractual claim in place, Mrs. Gaynor Davies be assigned to the post of Director of Education & Inclusion Services (Director Level 1) effective from 1st August 2021;
9. In accordance with the Council's change management process, due to the strong contractual claim in place, Mr. Roger Waters be assigned to the post of Director of Frontline Services (Director Level 1) effective from 1st October 2021
10. That Mr. Paul Mee be formally placed into the role of Deputy Chief Executive & Group Director – Community & Children's Services (Group Director grade) effective from 1st August 2021;
11. To give the Director of Legal Services delegated authority to make the consequential changes that are required to be made to the Council's Constitution as a result of implementation of the above initiatives.

(Note: As referenced within minute No.39 County Borough Councillor D R Bevan and Chief Offices in attendance left the meeting when the matter was discussed and voted upon, except the Chief Executive and Director, Human Resources who remained in the meeting to present the report to Members).

This meeting closed at 6.30 pm

**Cllr S Powderhill
Chairman.**