



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 29 September 2021 at 5.00pm.

### **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 T Williams
Councillor A Crimmings	Councillor D Williams
Councillor G Davies	Councillor L De Vet
Councillor S Rees	Councillor J Elliott
Councillor S Evans	Councillor S Evans
Councillor S. Rees-Owen	Councillor M Forey
Councillor M Norris	Councillor E Webster
Councillor M Webber	Councillor M Griffiths
Councillor A Roberts	Councillor M Weaver
Councillor G Holmes	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 D Owen-Jones
Councillor S Morgans	Councillor E Stephens
Councillor W Lewis	Councillor G Jones
Councillor W Treeby	Councillor W Jones
Councillor L Jones	Councillor L Hooper
Councillor J Harries	Councillor D Grehan
Councillor H Fychan	Councillor J Williams
Councillor A Davies-Jones	Councillor J Davies
Councillor A Cox	Councillor A Chapman
Councillor E Griffiths	Councillor G Caple
Councillor J Edwards	Councillor J Barton

### **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  
Mr R Waters, Service Director, Frontline Services

## 50 Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors S Belzak, A Calvert, J Cullwick, A S Fox, E George, J James, K Jones, M Fidler Jones, W Owen, S Pickering, M Powell, S M Powell, M Tegg and R Turner.

## 51 Declaration of Interest

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

### **Agenda item 12A – Notice of Motion (public sector pay increases)**

- County Borough Councillor S Trask – “My wife is employed by the NHS Wales and took part in the ballot on the pay offer”.
- County Borough Councillor G Hughes – “My mother is employed by the Local Authority”
- County Borough Councillor R Yeo – “My wife is an employee of the NHS”
- County Borough Councillor M Weaver – “I am in receipt of an NHS Pension”
- County Borough Councillor R Lewis – “I have a close family member who works for the NHS”.
- County Borough Councillor S Evans – “I work for the NHS”.
- County Borough Councillor J Harries – “I have several family members who work for the NHS and my father works for the Local Authority”.
- County Borough Councillor K Morgan – “I am employed by the NHS”
- County Borough Councillor W Treeby – “I have two sons who are employed by the Local Authority and a nephew who works for the NHS”.
- County Borough Councillor S Morgans – “My daughter works for the NHS”
- County Borough Councillor G Caple – “My son is a doctor and works for the NHS”.
- County Borough Councillor A Roberts – “My son works for the Local Authority”
- County Borough Councillor L M Adams – “My wife is in receipt of an NHS Pension as a former midwife”.
- County Borough Councillor D R Bevan – “My daughter works for the Local Authority”.

- County Borough Councillor E Griffiths – “My brother works as a casual employee for the Local Authority”
- County Borough Councillor W Lewis – “My son works for the Local Authority”.
- County Borough Councillor J Williams – “I have a part time contract with the NHS”.
- County Borough Councillor L De Vet – “My two sons work for the Local Authority”.
- County Borough Councillor S A Bradwick – “I have a close family member who works for the NHS”.
- County Borough Councillor G Stacey – “I have a son, daughter and grandson who work for the Local Authority”.
- County Borough Councillor M Forey – “My daughter is a teacher and is employed by the Local Authority”.
- County Borough Councillor P Jarman – “My son works for the Local Authority”.
- County Borough Councillor T Williams – “My son works for the Local Authority”.

County Borough Councillor P Jarman also declared the following personal interest:  
in relation to the following agenda items:

Agenda item 6 –Rhondda Cynon Taf Statement of Accounts and External Audit Report

Agenda item 7 – Flood Alleviation Progress & Overview Report

Agenda item 8 – Medium Term Financial Plan Update

Agenda item 9 – Council Investment Priorities

““Dispensation to speak and vote on all matters for the duration and adoption of the 2021-22 Budget process in my capacity as Leader of the Opposition”

## 52

### **Announcements**

- County Borough Councillor R Lewis County Borough presented the Chairman with a petition on behalf of ward member Councillor E George and residents in respect of ‘Speed Reduction Measures for Abercynon Road, Abercynon Road’.
- County Borough Councillor J Elliott announced the great achievement of Tom Matthews from Aberdare who in his first Paralympics event which had been held in Tokyo, had won a Bronze medal in the table tennis event. He was welcomed home by everyone in the locality.

- County Borough Councillor P Jarman announced that Aberystwyth University had recently announced the appointment of 10 new honorary fellows, to include Rhuanedd Richards, Director of Content & Services for BBC Cymru Wales for her outstanding contribution to the field of Broadcasting. Rhuanedd lived in Cefnpennar and Cwmaman, and was educated through the medium of the Welsh language. She attended Aberystwyth University and is former President of NUS Wales and now resides in Pontypridd. Councillor Jarman also wished to send her condolences to a very close colleague of Rhuanedd, Magi Dodd, a DJ on Radio Cymru who had sadly died at the age of 44 years.
- County Borough Councillor E Griffiths wished to also pay tribute to Magi Dodd. Magi was born in Pontypridd and attended Ysgol Gyfun Rhydfele, a presenter and producer and who was passionate about Welsh Language music and championed many bands such as 'Breichiau Hir' who said she made them feel like "absolute rock stars". She was unique and managed to reach a young audience through Radio Cymru. She produced many radio programmes including that of Councillor S Rees-Owen. Councillor E Griffiths wished to extend her condolences to Magi's family.
- County Borough Councillor D Owen-Jones announced that Hayley Jacobs, Career Leader at Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School, who resides in the Tonyrefail East Ward, has won the prestigious UK wide Development Institute Career Leader of the Year for 2021. She has twice been shortlisted for the prize. Hayley has also been approached to write a National publication on Career Leadership. Councillor D Owen-Jones requested that a letter is written to Hayley from the relevant Cabinet Member or Director of Education & Inclusion Services acknowledging her achievement.

## 53 Minutes

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (5pm) and the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting subject to the duplication on page 9 under 'announcements' being deleted and subject to it being noted that the Conservative Group had left the meeting for consideration of the Notice of Motion (11B) (BEIS) 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

## 54 Statements

### Statement from the Leader of the Council:

The Leader of the Council extended his thanks to all social care staff across the Council and to the staff within the Independent sector for the volume of work they have undertaken throughout the pandemic. He added that staff are exhausted from working additional shifts to cover those who are having to self-isolate, and staff are also dealing with the loss of patients during the pandemic.

The Leader advised that four years ago, the Council moved all in-house staff to the living wage foundation, two years ago all independent sector domiciliary care staff moved onto the same wage and the soon-to-be published Cabinet report

will reference a move to the living wage for those within the independent sector, residential, supported living and direct payments sectors. The pressure on the care service in RCT at the moment is challenging.

As Leader of the WLGA, the Leader of the Council has since met with Ministers regarding the pressures within this sector and further meetings will be held to discuss the all-Wales situation, as a number of local authorities are facing difficulties maintaining a level of care. The Leader advised that RCT is still managing to maintain its levels of care in this service area as it works with the voluntary and independent sector. The Leader indicated that, in the view of the Directors of Social Services, the challenges ahead will be unprecedented this year.

In the coming months the local authority may need to take appropriate action to safeguard the most vulnerable individuals within the social care sector and this matter is being discussed across all local authorities. In conclusion, the Leader once again extended his thanks, on behalf of all members from all political groups, to those social care staff for working tirelessly to keep residents and loved ones as safe as possible.

## **55 Members' Questions**

**Members were advised that apologies of absence had been received from Councillor A. S. Fox and the Service Director Democratic Services & Communications confirmed that question 5 would not be put to the Cabinet Member.**

**Question from County Borough Councillor W. Treeby to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:**

“Can the Leader make a statement on community safety and local policing in Rhondda Cynon Taf?”

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

The Leader commented that Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership Board is the strategic leadership group for planning, commissioning and delivering community safety related activities and services. The Partnership Board includes: RCT and Merthyr Tydfil Councils, South Wales Police, National Probation Service, South Wales Fire & Rescue, CTM Health Board, and also non-statutory members.

The Leader advised that the Board deals with a number of matters relating to crime reduction and community safety in Cwm Taf, with a particular focus on areas such as Anti-Social Behaviour where the Council's Community Safety team work closely with SWP to ensure all perpetrators of ASB are dealt with appropriately. A strategic group meets monthly to discuss the most problematic areas, with actions plans in place to respond to identified issues.

Another area includes Offender Management working with the Probation Service, substance misuse working with the CTM Area Planning Board provides

regional framework for strong partnership working and strategic leadership to work toward WG Substance Misuse Strategy, Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, the Community Safety Team is in the process of re-launching “Ask Angela” campaign, and this will be rolled-out across licensed premises in the County for people feeling vulnerable or unsafe.

In addition, the Leader explained that the Safety Partnership Board also covers areas such as Community cohesion & Counter terrorism which demonstrates that there is a whole raft of services in place.

**Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor W. Treeby:**

“With investment over recent years in CCTV cameras in town centres, what impact has the investment had and has it been worthwhile?”

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

The Leader commented that moving to the digital cameras has been very worthwhile and added that he had recently attended the CCTV centre to see first-hand the investment. He advised that the quality of the pictures is much improved and assists the Police identify people easily and quickly and enables them to act on local intelligence with the backing of the CCTV footage and their feedback has been invaluable.

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

“Will the Leader outline this Council’s plans to develop an Integrated Transport Network across the County Borough?”

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

The Leader stated that while local authorities work on the South East Wales Transport Plan, put together by local authorities on a regional footprint, the biggest impact will be the Metro. He advised that the new rolling stock is being manufactured, some in Newport and others in Europe. The frequent service enhancements will increase the service to 4 trains per hour in each direction and have a huge impact on the frequency of trains from Merthyr, Aberdare and Treherbert through Pontypridd.

The Leader advised that the Council is investing in transport hubs, such as the new facility at Porth, bus stations and developing plans to increase the provision of walking and cycling routes to and from train stations to encourage residents away from their vehicles and away from the roads such as the congested A470. With these plans in place and funding from Welsh Government, the Leader commented on the step change in transport links being more in tune with the needs of residents within the next 3-4 years.

**Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor R. Williams:**

“Can you tell us about the investment in maintaining and improving the local transport links across the County over recent years?”

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

The Leader commented that a mixture of WG and Council funding has enabled investments to the footways, resurfacing of roads and transport links and core active travel funding from WG has enabled maintenance and improvements to a number of trails such as the Cynon and Taff trails. A number of the active travel routes are well used and are suffering with wear and tear after many years so with WG revenue funding improvements such as crash barriers and handrails. There is a lot of work being undertaken. In addition, the Leader also referred to the upgrading of existing infrastructure such as changing a zebra crossing to a puffin crossing which is safer for the pedestrian and better for traffic flow.

**Question from County Borough Councillor G. Jones to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:**

“Can the Council Leader provide an update on the Levelling-Up Fund bids submitted to the U.K. Government by this Council?”

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

The Leader advised that there had been no response to the Council’s bid since it has been submitted, despite writing to the then Minister R Jenrick as Leader of RCT and of the WLGA. A further letter has since been sent on behalf of the 22 Local Authorities to the new Minister M Gove requesting an update.

The Leader clarified that each bid is submitted per constituency area and an additional transport project can be submitted if the authority is the lead authority for transport. He provided an update on each individual bid as follows:

Pontypridd Constituency -Application submitted for the full redevelopment of the Muni Arts Centre

Rhondda Constituency -A contribution to the Porth Transport Hub for the regeneration works.

Cynon Valley -The former Mayhew Chicken Factory site for a mixed-use development for industry and transport.

Additional Transport Project -A4119 Dualling is integral to wider regional strategic highway network and is linked to the economic opportunities of the western areas of RCT and the Cardiff Capital Region.

**Supplementary question from County Borough Councillor G. Jones:**

“Can I have further information on the development of the Chicken Factory in Trecynon”

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

The Leader confirmed that there are no further updates on the bids but by the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2021 the bids may be announced at the same time of the comprehensive spending review.

The Leader elaborated on the Chicken Factory development which will look to become a Park and Share car park which could develop into a Park and Ride should the Hirwaun rail extension be approved. The Park and Ride will contain electric charging facilities and part of the development will contain a number of light industrial units, similar to those currently under construction in Robertstown.

**Question from County Borough Councillor G. R. Davies to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A. Morgan:**

A wnewch chi ddatganiad ar isadeiledd trafnidiaeth yn pen uchaf y Rhondda Fawr?

Will you make a statement on the transport network in the Upper Rhondda Fawr?

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

The Leader commented that his response would be similar to that provided to Councillor R Williams on the improvements to the electrification of the Core Valley Lines network north of Cardiff to Treherbert as part of the South East Wales Metro. This again includes new rolling stock, more frequent services and station improvements along with the feasibility work of extending railway line from Treherbert to Tynywedd and up to Blaenrhondda.

The Leader advised that there are proposals to extend and increase the capacity of the Park & Ride stations and either improving existing park and ride facilities or building new facilities. Station travel plans are being developed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists to ensure areas are well lit and safe for all and improve the access to active travel. Integrated ticketing will be a huge benefit, such as in the Porth Transport Hub. In conclusion, the Leader advised that a substantial and sustained investment in travel is required.

**Supplementary question from Councillor G. R. Davies:**

"I have often asked how the transport projects in the Rhondda Fawr are developing, the cycle lanes project, the project to extend the railway to Treherbert and Tynewydd and to overcome the congestion around Stagg Square. Can you commit that during the development of the LDP that you will at least support lots of different projects so that the opportunity to develop them in the future won't be lost"

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

The Leader responded that, in principle, they will be supported although the feasibility work ongoing on a number of these projects will be fed into the ongoing review of the LDP. If, however, there are fundamental issues where a project can't be developed, then it wouldn't make sense to protect a corridor route or location within the LDP as it has to be evidence based.

**Question from County Borough Councillor H. Boggis to the Cabinet**

**Member for Environment, Leisure and Heritage Services, County Borough Councillor A. Crimmings:**

“Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the Council’s investment in parks and confirm whether this remains a priority going forward?”

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

The Cabinet Member responded that all parks and play areas remain a key priority as they provide a range of health and wellbeing benefits for residents and visitors, and the importance of such areas has been highlighted by the pandemic and the restrictions on residents’ lives at various points.

The Cabinet Member advised that the ongoing commitment in this area has been highlighted by the decision of Cabinet to approve plans for land at the Cwm Clydach Countryside Park to be officially designated as a Country Park. Crucially, the Council can work with the recently established Strategic Board to apply for external funding to further enhance and develop the already popular site. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the new Gravity Family Bike Park has recently opened at the Dare Valley Country Park, while the children’s play area has recently been significantly improved as part of the £1.5m overall package of investment (a combination of £1 million of Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateway Funding and £500,000 of the Council’s own Capital investment).

Further Streetlighting upgrades and a full refurbishment of the main footways have also recently been completed at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park due to a combined investment from the Valleys Regional Park programme and the Council’s own funding. Further phase of work to commence shortly using significant Heritage Lottery Funding, and this will bring some of the original features back to the Grade II Listed Park – this work includes restoration of the bandstand and refurbishment of the sunken garden

In conclusion, the Cabinet Member commented that the country parks are also a key aspect of our tourism strategy, which Cabinet also recently approved. Aim to boost our local economy by increasing the number of visitors to RCT and the wider region – this will then assist with increasing footfall in our town centres.

**Supplementary question from Councillor H Boggis:**

“Please can you provide further information on the Gravity Bike Park?”

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

The Cabinet Member commented that the Gravity Family Bike Park includes different trails and the uplift, which is proving very popular, with all coaching sessions fully booked during the month of August. The Pedal-A-Bike-Away is working in partnership with council to deliver weekly sessions targeting women and girls, children aged 2-5 years and adults over 50. Events such as the Ladies only session can also help with residents’ health and wellbeing through socialising with a coffee afterwards.

In addition to the new facility, the Council has also focused on enhancing the visitor experience through investment into the refurbishment and extension of the shower block, including both family changing and changing places, the hotel accommodation and playground have also been upgraded.

## **56 Council Work Programme 2021/22**

The Service Director Democratic Services and Communications presented an update regarding the adopted and published Council Work Programme advising that a meeting of the Freedom of the Borough Working Group, chaired by the Mayor, would be held to consider the nominations and subsequently reported to Council at a later than planned date. At an appropriate time, a report outlining the recommendations and feedback regarding the Notices of Motions referred to Scrutiny will be presented to Council collectively and a further update in respect of the broadcasting of meetings and hybrid working arrangements will also be reported at the conclusion of the second phase of the rollout.

It was advised that two further updates would be reported to Council in October namely the Review of Regulation, Awareness and Enforcement of Flood and Water Legislation which was recently supported by Cabinet and the RLDP. In conclusion, the Service Director confirmed that Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board would present an update to Council in November.

## **57 Rhondda Cynon Taf Statement of Accounts and External Audit Report**

Mr M Jones, Audit Wales presented Members with the report on the Audit of financial statements 2020-21 for Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, commenting that the full report is attached at Appendix 2 and all identified misstatements have been amended and are set out at Appendix 3.

The Leader thanked Audit Wales for their unqualified sign-off of the financial statements for 2020/21 and commented on the good working relationship and level of trust between Audit Wales and RCT Officers He and also acknowledged the volume of work undertaken by the Director of Finance & Digital Services and his teams with regards to the issuing a number of support grants and free school meals payments during the year which have had to be properly accounted for in order to satisfy the auditors.

In response to a query raised, the Director of Finance & Digital Services confirmed that the Governance and Audit Committee had considered the draft accounts on 12th July 2021 and identified no issues, albeit the minutes were not explicit in this regard.

### **RESOLVED to–**

1. Approve and note the Statement of Accounts of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC (Appendix 1), and associated Letter of Representation (Appendix 2).
2. Approve and note the audited final out-turn position for the Council with regard to the financial year 2020/21 and the level of General Fund Balances (paragraph 8.4); and

3. Note the considerations and comments of the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Governance and Audit Committee meetings as required by the Local Government Measure (paragraphs 11.1 and 11.2).

## **58 Flood Alleviation Progress & Overview Report**

The Service Director presented the report of the Group Director Prosperity Development and Frontline Services which provided Members with an update on progress on Flood Alleviation measures and associated work on infrastructure since Storm Dennis.

The Service Director advised that a Power Point presentation would accompany the report which provided an overview of some of the many improvements undertaken since Storm Dennis such as over £3.5M spent in delivering maintenance works to coal spoil tips across RCT and on the emergency works to the slip at Tylorstown, over £4M was spent on repairing damage to structures and drainage networks and almost £2.3M was spent on new Flood Alleviation Schemes.

The Service Director commented that a report to Cabinet on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 had considered increasing resources towards flood awareness and enforcement and had recommended the adoption of the regulation, awareness and enforcement of flood and water legislation by the Council following Storm Dennis. He added that in parallel with this report a Members' briefing in respect of Flood Risk Management and Byelaws had been held and was well attended. He advised that, as alluded to by the Service Director Democratic Services & Communications, a report in respect of the byelaws will be presented to the October Council.

The Service Director Frontline Services delivered his Power Point presentation which showed the various schemes with the use of photographs including the emergency control room established in Ty Elai in the event of any emergency event.

Following the presentation Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and did so in relation to the following:

- Should the Council be responsible where its infrastructure failed because historically it had not been maintained in the run up to the floods? Do the pre flood records determine how fragile those infrastructures are?
- Are any of the insurance claims submitted on the basis of negligence on behalf of the Council?
- As set out in the report to Council, what is the final report relating to Campbell Terrace culvert and who was it reported to?
- Is there a third phase to be implemented in Bronallt Terrace in Abercwmboi?
- Is there an update on the works at the advanced works at the Glenboi pumping station?
- What is the latest from NRW regarding the review of river flooding in the ward?
- Self-help and local measures-Is there further information available

regarding which properties have and have not been offered flood gates as there seems to be inconsistency?

- Emergency Planning Community Response – what are the timescales for confirming the draft plan and list of potential premises?
- Is there a timetable confirming the remaining Section 19 Reports?
- The report states that further inspections are being commissioned for the wall along Berw Road, can you give us timescales for the inspections as although the wall has been repaired, there are still concerns that the wall is not working as a defence?

The Leader of the Council and Service Director Frontline Services provided the following responses:

The culvert at Bronallt Terrace in Abercwmboi are phase two works with phase three at the feasibility and design stage. There is no timescale in place as yet but depends on the make -up of the land and its suitability.

Members were advised that with regards to the flood gates, the list of properties who received WG/LA grant funding was cross referenced with WG and NRW records to create one comprehensive list from which all affected properties were contacted. Following the correspondence, approximately 50% of properties responded. A third follow-up letter has recently been circulated which will be followed up with a door-knocking exercise to those properties. In Pentre, despite a door-knocking exercise some properties did not sign up at all to the floodgates.

It was confirmed that the Emergency Plan has been updated and will be circulated to all members of the Council.

A number of the Section 19 reports are in the last stages of completion prior to publication over the next few weeks. Where the Local Authority is not the flood risk management authority, a consultation process with partners needs to be undertaken and lots of work is required for the Section 19 reports to be written and published.

The Service Director Frontline Services provided updates on the Glenboi pumping station and on Campbell Terrace as well as the NRW review of river flooding at Taffs Well and he advised that through the Flood Board the Local Authority meets regularly with NRW and Welsh Water. NRW has indicated that they have completed their surveys on the lower Taff up towards Pontypridd and have developed an updated Fluvial Flood Model for the river. They will now be considering the implications of the information they have gathered through surveys to the lower part of the Taff.

The Service Director commented that all Councils are facing similar issues with regards to liability and investment matters but advised that RCT has made considerable investment through the various initiatives as set out in the report. In terms of the infrastructure, the highway drainage is designed for a 1 in a 30-year storms and what was experienced was in excess of that.

Further questions were asked:

- Significant works were undertaken on the culverts in Cae Felin Park in Hirwaun although there is no mention of this or Hirwaun in the appendices, does this mean no repairs were required? Do we have a date for the Section 19 report for Hirwaun?
- Can there be an update for works in Heath Terrace in Ynyshir?
- The Local Authority's Section 19 Pentre report was critical of NRW and recommendations were subsequently published but NRW have refused to take responsibility for their part. Residents deserve to be compensated, who is responsible and who will compensate the residents in Pentre?
- The northern areas of the Rhondda Fawr have been badly affected, can you tell us what measures the council is introducing to mitigate the impact of the future weather events, in particular the area of road outside the old Llwynypia hospital site?
- The Trehafod scheme is not currently allocated to a particular funding stream, in view of it being pluvial flooding that caused the 43 properties in Trehafod to flood, can you advise of any other improvements in the area that may reduce future flooding while we wait for the discussions for the pumping station to be resolved?

Members were assured that there are other areas of work and other interventions being undertaken across the county borough albeit not contained within the current report to Council.

As the majority of flooding in Cae Felin Park, Hirwaun derived from the river, responsibility lays with NRW as the Risk Management Authority (RMA) with powers to manage flood risk from main rivers, therefore the final report for the Hirwaun area will be a flood investigation report with NRW and consulted as the FRMA.

The Leader of the Council and the Service Director responded to the questions individually.

With regards to the Section 19 report regarding Pentre, there had been a robust session including Mr Gareth O'Shea from NRW at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee recently. The Service Director Frontline Services advised that in terms of responsibility, the Council as lead local flood authority responsible for producing the S19 report, had recommended that NRW review their forest practices as the main source of flooding in the initial flood was due to a blockage by woody materials including brash, at the Pentre Road culvert inlet. He added that within this report, as the Local Flood Management Authority, the Council, proposes a number of actions to reduce the risk of an occurrence such as this happening again.

Further questions were raised in relation to:

- How are discussions developing with NRW on the works to the Treforest Industrial Estate?
- Does the local authority understand why residents are reluctant to take up the offer of flood gates, is it related to issues of liability?
- Do WG understand the scale to which they need to step up their support to local government in terms of flood alleviation schemes?

- Will the Brook Street wall in Britannia be progressed as soon as possible so as to assure residents that measure to control and reduce the risk of flooding will be reduced in Britannia?
- Are we targeting specific inlets with regards to the remote cameras?

All the questions were responded to by the Leader and Service Director Frontline Services such as with regards to the bids to Welsh Government, the Leader confirmed that nearly every bid submitted has been approved but the availability of contractors to deliver the work is proving problematic as the scale of the work is unprecedented. He assured Members that information regarding the flood gates and feedback from the door knocking exercise would be provided to Members at a later date as with information regarding Tuberville Road.

The Service Director Frontline Services acknowledged some work had been undertaken by NRW in Treforest Industrial Estate to repair and protect the flood protection measures alongside the river in the area and also de-shoaling the river. Following completion of the surveys, the lower Taff model is being developed to evaluate risk and to consider whether further measures will be identified to improve resilience to flooding in the area.

Members were reminded that any Members with further questions should email the Leader for a response.

Following discussions and questions put to the Leader and lead officer, it was **RESOLVED** to note the content of the report, the significant progress made to date and the extensive pipeline of alleviation, repair and enhancement work ahead.

## 59 Medium Term Financial Plan Update

The Director of Finance & Digital Services presented his update report to Members on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2021/22 to 2024/25, based on current modelling assumptions in advance of formulating the detailed budget strategy proposals for 2022/23 during the autumn.

Members were informed that the pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented demand and financial pressures across all the Council's services which has, in the main, been funded by Welsh Government's hardship fund. Nationally there will be a 3-year spending review which will be announced on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 which will be key in determining the level of funding available for devolved nations in the context of the wider economic and fiscal recovery.

The Director advised that, as set out in section 5 of the report, the Council's updated MTFP has been formulated against this backdrop and modelling assumptions. The outcome of the modelling is shown at figure 1 with a budget gap in all scenarios which amounts to a £26 million gap across the 3 years at a 4 % positive settlement to a £52 million gap across the 3 years at a 2% positive settlement.

The Director commented that in order to continue balancing the budget the Council will need to remain focussed and well prepared for a range of potential scenarios and the medium term financial and service planning arrangements will

continue to serve the council well in this regard.

In conclusion, the Director advised that the updated MTFP would be presented to the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee as part of the 2022/23 budget consultation process.

Following discussion and consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to note the current position modelled in respect of the 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25' and receive further updates in the autumn as part of the annual budget setting process.

## **60 Council Investment Priorities**

The Director of Finance and Digital Services presented his report which set out the position regarding the opportunity for the Council to further invest in its priority areas, aligned to the Corporate Plan, "Making a Difference" 2020 – 2024. In presenting his report, he sought Council's agreement of the additional investment and funding arrangements as set out in paragraph 4 which, if agreed, will be incorporated into the Council's Capital Programme.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** to agree the additional investment and funding arrangements as set out in paragraph 4 which will be incorporated into the Council's Capital Programme.

## **61 2023 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales - Boundary Commission for Wales' Initial Proposals**

The Director of Legal Services presented his report and associated appendices in relation to the publication of the initial proposals of the Boundary Commission for Wales, which were published on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021 in respect of the proposed new parliamentary constituencies in Wales.

The Director referred Members to the recommendations set out within the report to include the recommendation to refer the matter to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for its consideration. The Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee concurred with the proposal and advised that an invitation to all Members of the Council would be circulated to attend and contribute to the matter.

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

1. To refer consideration of the initial proposals of the Boundary Commission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and agree the feedback therefrom be presented to Council at its meeting to be held on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021, in order that a response can be made by the deadline of the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021; and
2. To invite all Members of the Council to attend the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and contribute to this matter.

## **62 Changes to Membership**

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communications presented his report to advise Members of the change to the Labour representation on the Governance & Audit Committee, Public Service Delivery, Communities and

Prosperity Scrutiny Committee and the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

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

1. County Borough Councillor J Barton is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor G Caple on the Governance and Audit Committee;
2. County Borough Councillor J Barton is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor J Harries on the Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee; and
3. County Borough Councillor J Barton is to be nominated in place of County Borough Councillor D Owen-Jones on the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee.

## 63 Notices of Motion

### 12A

The following Notice of Motion was received standing in the names of M. Griffiths, J. Barton, 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. Edwards, J. Elliott, S. Evans, 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 and R. Yeo.

Over the course of the last 18 months, frontline heroes across the public and private sectors have led the fight against COVID-19, putting themselves at risk and making huge personal sacrifices to protect the NHS, save lives and ensure that the U.K. continues to operate.

Their contributions have been widely recognised, with millions going to the doorstep to show their appreciation over various points throughout the pandemic. This appreciation has also extended to the rhetoric of the U.K. Government who have been quick to offer regular soundbites of empty appreciation for the frontline heroes.

However, in the one-year Comprehensive Spending Review last Autumn, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a public sector pay “pause” for this financial year, with only those earning under £24,000 and NHS staff being exempt. In March, the U.K. Government came under fire after proposals for a 1% pay increase for those exempt from the “pause” were floated, whilst its improved offer of 3% following a recommendation from the NHS Pay Review body runs the risk of triggering industrial action.

Frontline heroes across the public sector now face another real terms cut despite their tireless efforts in ensuring services were maintained and our communities kept safe over the last 18 months. Senior representatives from Police forces across England and Wales have already expressed their dismay and opposition to a 0% pay increase – which comes at a time when assaults on police officers exceeded 100-a-day (20% increase on the previous year). In addition, the thousands of staff employed by this Council have been offered a 1.75% increase, which will need to be wholly funded by the Council's own resources if it is accepted.

The Welsh Government's Education Minister, Jeremy Miles MS has recently confirmed that he is minded to accept the recommended 1.75% rise in pay for teachers, although if agreed, it is likely that the funding will also need to be found from within existing resources, as the Welsh Government did not receive any additional funding through the Barnett formula to provide for public sector wide pay awards in 2021-22. This is a decision of the UK Government's making but once again it has a direct consequence for Wales.

This Council therefore resolves for the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister to outline this Council's view that our frontline heroes deserve a real and fair pay increase, and that this must be funded by the U.K. Government to avoid transferring the burden of the cost on to the Welsh Government and Welsh Local Authorities.

At the meeting the Chair announced that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.4.1 the following amendment to the Notice of Motion had been received from County Borough Councillors P. Jarman, A. Cox, J. Williams, S. Rees Owen, M. Weaver, E. Griffiths, D. Grehan, H. Fychan MS, K. Morgan, L. Jones, E. Stephens, E. Webster, S. Evans, A. Chapman, G. Davies, J. Davies and J. Cullwick.

The amended motion read:

Over the course of the last 18 months, frontline heroes across the public and private sectors have led the fight against COVID-19, putting themselves at risk and making huge personal sacrifices to protect the NHS, save lives and ensure that the U.K. continues to operate.

Their contributions have been widely recognised, with millions going to the doorstep to show their appreciation over various points throughout the pandemic. This appreciation has also extended to the rhetoric of the U.K. Government who have been quick to offer regular soundbites of empty appreciation for the frontline heroes.

However, in the one-year Comprehensive Spending Review last Autumn, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a public sector pay "pause" for this financial year, with only those earning under £24,000 and NHS staff being exempt. In March, the U.K. Government came under fire after proposals for a 1% pay increase for those exempt from the "pause" were floated, whilst its improved offer of 3% following a recommendation from the NHS Pay Review body runs the risk of triggering industrial action.

Frontline heroes across the public sector now face another real terms cut despite their tireless efforts in ensuring services were maintained and our communities kept safe over the last 18 months. Senior representatives from

Police forces across England and Wales have already expressed their dismay and opposition to a 0% pay increase – which comes at a time when assaults on police officers exceeded 100-a-day (20% increase on the previous year). In addition, the thousands of staff employed by this Council have been offered a 1.75% increase, which will need to be wholly funded by the Council's own resources if it is accepted.

*Despite the above we welcome the Written Statement made on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021 by Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language confirming the 1.75% uplift in Teachers Pay, backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 and awarding a further £6.4 million towards the cost of the pay award in schools and 6<sup>th</sup> Forms in this financial year*

This Council therefore resolves for the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister to outline this Council's view that our frontline heroes deserve a real and fair pay increase, and that this must be funded by the U.K. Government to avoid transferring the burden of the cost on to the Welsh Government and Welsh Local Authorities.

In accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure 12.7, a vote was taken in respect of the amendment to the Notice of Motion and it was **RESOLVED** not to adopt the amendment.

Following discussion in respect of the substantive motion and in accordance with the Council Rules of Procedure 12.7, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the substantive motion.

## **12B**

The following Notice of Motion was received standing in the names of W. Lewis, S. Evans, 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, G. Jones, M. Fidler Jones, M. Forey, A. Fox, E. George, M. Griffiths, 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, 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.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council continues to stand against all forms of racism and discrimination and is committed to working with partner organisations to combat such abhorrent beliefs and actions.

One such form of racism and discrimination that has seen a rise in recent years is Islamophobia. The Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has highlighted how 70% of Muslims have experienced religious based prejudice within the last 12 months. Muslims face some of the worst outcomes in employment, health and education, and, as per Home Office data, have been the targets in over half of all religious based hate crime on record (2017-2019).

Following two years of consultation, on 27th November 2018, the APPG on British Muslims published a report titled "Islamophobia Defined: the inquiry into a

working definition of Islamophobia.”

This report contained the following definition:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

Contemporary examples of Islamophobia in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in encounters between religions and non-religions in the public sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, instigating or justifying the killing or harming of Muslims in the name of a racist/ fascist ideology, or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Muslims as such, or of Muslims as a collective group, such as, especially but not exclusively, conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or other societal institutions; the myth of Muslim identity having a unique propensity for terrorism, and claims of a demographic ‘threat’ posed by Muslims or of a ‘Muslim takeover’.
- Accusing Muslims as a group of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group of Muslim individuals, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims.
- Accusing Muslims as a group, or Muslim majority states, of inventing or exaggerating Islamophobia, ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated against Muslims.
- Accusing Muslim citizens of being more loyal to the ‘Ummah’ (transnational Muslim community) or to their countries of origin, or to the alleged priorities of Muslims worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying Muslim populations the right to self-determination e.g., by claiming that the existence of an independent Palestine or Kashmir is a terrorist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Muslims behaviours that are not expected or demanded of any other groups in society, eg loyalty tests.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Islamophobia (e.g. Muhammed being a paedophile, claims of Muslims spreading Islam by the sword or subjugating minority groups under their rule) to characterize Muslims as being ‘sex groomers’, inherently violent or incapable of living harmoniously in plural societies.
- Holding Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of any Muslim majority state, whether secular or constitutionally Islamic.

This Council resolves to formally adopt the above definition and pledges to do its utmost to tackle Islamophobia, support Muslim residents and communities who face the kind of discrimination described in the examples above, and build a

common understanding of its causes and consequences.

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

**(Note:** The Plaid Cymru Group present wished to have it recorded as voting in favour of the Notice of Motion: County Borough Councillors P Jarman, A Cox, G R Davies, S Evans, E Griffiths, S Rees-Owen, E Stephens, M Weaver, E Webster and J Williams).

**N.B**

- During the discussion Members **RESOLVED** to continue the meeting in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 8, to allow consideration of the remaining agenda items and continuation of Council business.

**This meeting closed at 8.00 pm**

**Cllr S Powderhill  
Chairman.**