



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday, 28  
February 2022 at 5.00 pm.

**County Borough Councillors - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members in attendance:-**

Councillor M Adams (Chair)

Councillor W Lewis    Councillor J Brencher  
Councillor A Cox    Councillor M Griffiths  
Councillor G Hughes    Councillor P Jarman  
Councillor D Owen-Jones    Councillor W Jones  
Councillor S Rees

**Officers in attendance:-**

Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication  
Roger Waters, Director of Frontline Services  
Andrew Stone, Head of Flood Risk Management and Strategic Projects,  
Melanie Warburton, Diversity & Inclusion Manager,  
Richard Evans, Director of HR

**Also in attendance:**

Mr Michael Evans, Head of Operations South Wales Central NRW  
Mr Steve Wilson, Managing Director- Wastewater Service, Business Customers & Energy, Welsh  
Water

**26 Apologies**

An apology of absence was received from County Borough Councillors J James MS, S Morgans, E Stephens and W Treeby.

**27 Declaration of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, there were no declarations made pertaining to the agenda.

**28 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

**29 Consultation Links**

Members **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the information provided through the consultation links in respect of open consultations, Welsh Government consultations and those matters being consulted upon by the local authority.

## 30 ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2020-21

Members were presented with the Annual Equality Report 2020/2021 by the Diversity and Inclusion Manager for the purpose of undertaking pre-scrutiny and providing feedback and comments in advance of Cabinet's consideration of the report.

Members were advised that the Annual Equality Report has been developed to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties. Members were asked to consider whether the report has captured the relevant information required to fulfil the Council's legal duties and obligations to report on how it has met the General Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Members welcomed the Annual Equality Report and commented that it had successfully captured a wide range of issues and actions that had and were currently being undertaken, despite the high level of demands on the service area, which demonstrated the Council's commitment to the principles of equality and diversity.

Members were pleased to see that their comments from last year had been incorporated into the report to include the emerging issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement as part of the future work.

Following consideration of the report it was **RESOLVED** that the following comments and observations be reported to Cabinet, at its meeting to be held on the 21st March 2022:

Referring to section 7 of the report, Equality Impact Assessments, it was proposed that in future policy be updated to include a 'Children & Young People's Rights Scheme' which would ensure that all children are consulted on all aspects of the Council's services and reflect the 5 key principles of policy development for local authorities by the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

Members considered that the following areas within the report required strengthening to improve equality and diversity:

- Special Education needs provided through the medium of the Welsh Language;
- The barriers of closing the gender gap (specifically to remove the word "**whether** barriers exist") and;
- Equal access to Services.

Members were pleased that "the Council continues to be recognised as an inclusive employer by ranking in [Stonewall's Top 100](#) employers in 2020" , demonstrating its commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusivity and applauded the "Women in Leadership Programme" which they considered to be critical in developing positive role models across the local authority.

The Committee spoke of the difficulties faced by some residents with disabilities manoeuvring around the county borough and was pleased to hear that the Disability Forum (which is looking to be regionalised) does consider highways issues such as dropped kerbs and is encouraging residents to voice their concerns with regards to these issues.

In conclusion, Committee requested that future work also includes reference to the Ukraine crisis and the potential impact the threat of war is having on children and the level of support they are receiving in schools. Committee also sought to include a table of compliments to balance the 'complaints and service improvements' table which would also support future service improvements.

## 31 SECTION 19 FLOOD INVESTIGATION REPORTS

The Service Director Democratic Services & Communication advised Members that the purpose of the report was to provide members with the opportunity to scrutinise the group of recently published Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports (Flood Investigation Area RCT 12-Treforest, RCT 14-Glyntaff & Hawthorn, RCT 17-Taffs Well, RCT 01-Hirwaun, RCT 11-Pontypridd, RCT 16 Upper Boat & Nantgarw, RCT10 Cilfynydd and RCT 27 Treherbert. The Service Director also commented that Members had the opportunity to comment on quarterly performance information relating to the actions contained in the review of the Council's response to Storm Dennis [Cabinet Report 18 December 2020](#).

The Council's Director of Frontline Services, and Head of Flood Risk Management and Strategic Projects presented the reports through a Power Point presentation with contributions from the Head of Operations South Wales Central Natural Resources Wales and the Managing Director, Wastewater Service, Business Customers & Energy, Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water.

Members also considered previously requested additional information namely, legal advice on the role of scrutiny in holding Natural Resources Wales liable for the flooding to properties in Pentre caused by Storm Dennis and correspondence associated with the WLGA Leaders' Meeting on the 28th May 2021 and any associated responses from the Local Authority, both of which were produced. The legal advice being consistent with that provided by the Service Director Democratic Services & Communication at the meeting.

In conclusion and following discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Acknowledge the Section 19 Flood Investigation reports collectively and the quarterly performance information relating to the actions contained in the review of the Council's response to Storm Dennis [Cabinet Report 18 December 2020](#);
2. Acknowledge the additional information as previously requested by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
3. Propose that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the next Council, determine its focus upon this matter, as part of its work programming for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

## **32 Chair's Review and Close**

The Chair announced that this would be the last meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee before the Local Government Elections 2022. He acknowledged those Members who may not be standing and extended his best wishes to all Members in the forthcoming election

The Chair thanked Members and Officers for attending and summarised the actions to be taken forward. The pre scrutiny comments and observations regarding the Equality Annual Report 2020/21 would be reported to Cabinet at its meeting in March 2022 and he highlighted the recommendations to have arisen from the Action Plans and Scrutiny's consideration of the remaining Section 19 reports at Agenda item 5.

**This meeting closed at 7.15 pm**

**CLLR M. ADAMS  
CHAIR.**