

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2/3 - CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

CE Smith

HM Williams

D Patel

RE Young

Apologies for Absence

PJ White

Officers:

Gill Lewis	Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Kelly Watson	Head of Legal & Regulatory Services
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities
Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support

240. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor PJ White.

241. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

242. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet dated 17 July 2018 be approved as a true and accurate record.

243. PLAYING FIELDS, OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND PARKS PAVILIONS

The Corporate Director – Communities submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to seek Cabinet approval to undertake a consultation exercise on proposals to make the Council's provision of playing fields, outdoor sports facilities and parks pavilions more financially sustainable moving forward.

He explained that the Council is the main provider of outdoor sports facilities in the County Borough. Therefore, the provision of these facilities, for example sports pitches and playing fields, is recognised as playing an important contributory part in helping to achieve healthy lifestyles and better levels of physical and mental wellbeing for the County Borough's residents.

The Corporate Director – Communities added that, historically the Council has charged a fixed hire fee for any formal hire of its outdoor sports facilities. However, these fees did not go anywhere near covering the cost associated with providing and maintaining these facilities. Additionally, the quality of the facilities provided will vary to some extent based on factors such as league requirements, drainage facilities and frequency of use. The formal use of outdoor sports facilities is predominantly by boys and men and so there

are potentially equality issues in terms of the current distribution of Council financial support. For example, sports played predominantly by women and girls, such as netball, do not receive similar levels of subsidy.

A list of parks pavilions, playing fields and outdoor sports facilities currently provided by the Council was included at Appendix A to the report.

The next section of the report summarised current subsidy levels and the difficulty that will arise with facilities subject of the report deteriorating in terms of their condition, should no investment be committed to these in the future. He added that the Council had limited resources to maintain such facilities under its current MTFS. The Corporate Director – Communities therefore explained, that it had been recognised that a formal policy change, with a potentially significant increase in charges, likely to be a necessary as a catalyst to prompt a greater up take of Community Asset Transfer (CAT) opportunities. This was a move being made by other neighbouring authorities, due to similar financial restraints that they were also facing.

He then confirmed that a consultation exercise would be undertaken, outlining certain proposals and options to be incorporated in this exercise, with a view to informing future policy and strategy with regard to the provision of, and charging for, playing fields, outdoor sports facilities and parks pavilions, and seek ways in which provision can be sustained without such a financial reliance on the Authority.

Appendix B to the report contained the current charges for the use of different sports facilities for users, including details of the different subsidy levels, while paragraph 4.2 of the report gave details regarding a proposal to consider extending the current contract of the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Officer.

The next section of the report reminded Members, that there was a sum of £1m in the capital programme to support CAT of sports pavilions etc, as a way of investing in the buildings as part of any proposed transfer subject to business case.

Paragraph 4.5 of the report then outlined the observations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the current proposals.

The Corporate Director – Communities concluded his submission, by advising Cabinet of the report's financial implications.

The Cabinet Member – Communities, Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration and Leader each in turn, advised of the difficulty the Authority was having from a resource perspective in continuing to adequately maintain the above facilities, and therefore, of the need to go down the route of Community Asset Transfer for the adequate future required maintenance and continued operation of these.

The Deputy Leader added that the recommendations of the report reflected the reality and extent of financial challenges local authorities were facing, and that he hoped the consultation process would be proactive, and assist in taking things further forward along of the lines being proposed, as opposed to having to face shutting some facilities.

RESOLVED: (1) That Cabinet approved that a consultation exercise is undertaken on proposals to make the Council's provision of playing fields, outdoor sports pitches and parks pavilions more financially sustainable moving forward. That the consultation exercise also be extended to include key National Sports Governing bodies and regulators, such as

for example, the Football Association (FA) and the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU).

- (2) That a further report setting out the results of that consultation exercise and any proposals to change the way in which the Council charges for and manages its playing fields, outdoor sports pitches and parks pavilions will be brought to both the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in due course.
- (3) That Cabinet having approved recommendations 9.1 and 9.2 of the report, noted that a business case will be made for additional funding from the Change Management Fund for the Section 151 Officer to consider and Corporate Management Board to approve, to extend the current contract of the Community Asset Transfer Officer to ensure that adequate resource is available to respond to demand from sports clubs and other organisations to requests for Community Asset Transfer.

244. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF TENNIS COURT AT PENCOED RECREATION GROUND AND CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 123(2A) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

The Corporate – Director Communities submitted a report, which confirmed that the Council's Community Asset Transfer Steering Group approved the 35 year leasehold transfer of the Tennis Court at Pencoed Recreation Ground to Pencoed Town Council on 30 October 2017, and as the site comprises public open space, the Council advertised the community asset transfer in accordance with Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 and asked for any objections to be made in writing by no later than 13 July 2018.

He added that the report before Members, outlined the objections received and Cabinet was being asked to consider this report and decide whether or not the Council should complete the leasehold transfer of the Tennis Court to enable it to be transformed into a Skateboard Park, by Pencoed Town Council. He further added that Cabinet needed also to weigh up the proposal against a considerable number of objections that had been made against this.

The Corporate Director – Communities advised that the Tennis Court in question was located at Pencoed Recreation Ground, Felindre Road, Pencoed, as shown shaded green on the plan attached at Appendix A to the report.

The report gave some significant background information, following which the Corporate Director – Communities referred Members to Appendix B, which outlined current charges for the use of sports facilities for users of these, as well as further details regarding subsidy levels and income generated from the hiring of the facilities. This section of the report advised that the Skateboard Park would assist in promoting good health and provide an additional and increasingly popular activity for young persons to participate in. Pencoed Town Council had received some funding under the Town/Community Council Capital Grant Fund towards the cost of such a facility, approval for which had previously been given by Cabinet.

The next section of the report gave further details regarding objections received to the proposal, as shown in Appendices C and D of the report.

He referred Members to paragraph 4.11 of the report whereby it listed Pencoed Town Council's responses to the objections so received.

The Cabinet Member – Communities advised that the Tennis Court was under used and in a poor state of repair and there was insufficient funding available to upgrade this, whilst there was an avenue of funding under the Town and Community Council Capital Grant Fund 2018-19 for the provision of the proposed development for a Skateboard Park, assisted by further funding from the Pencoed Town Council. He had noted the reasons for objection to this as detailed in the report, and also the response of the Pencoed Town Council to these, and was happy to support the proposal in the report through a Community Asset Transfer arrangement, which would provide an alternative recreation facility based on its popularity with constituents from the particular area.

This was supported by the Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration, and he applauded the Pencoed Town Council for supporting the facility, which was based upon what was in demand for this location in terms of recreation and amenity.

The Leader asked if the Corporate Director – Communities could confirm if the provision of the Skateboard Park had the support of young people through consultation as part of the Pencoed Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.

The Corporate Director – Communities confirmed this to be the case.

The Leader concluded debate on this item, by confirming that the provision of the facility would not prejudice the provision of a tennis court at this or another location within Pencoed, should it be proven in the future that there is sufficient demand for this.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet, having considered the report and the objections received in response to the Notices published in accordance with Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, authorised the community asset transfer of the Tennis Court at Pencoed Recreation Ground to Pencoed Town Council so that it can be subject to development as a Skateboard Park.

245. RATIONALISATION OF SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES 2018/2019

The Corporate Director – Communities submitted a report, in order to update Cabinet on the impact of the subsidised bus reductions as identified in the Cabinet report of 15 May 2018, and to propose that Cabinet agree to a further consultation on a proposal to remove the remainder of bus subsidy as provided by the Council for the financial year 2019/20, as part of the proposed savings within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2019-20 to 2022-23.

Bridgend County Borough Council and Welsh Government support the provision of regional and local bus services by subsidising routes that are potentially not commercially viable. These services serve routes that enable residents who live along them to access employment, education, health care and social activities.

He explained that for the current financial year, BCBC's core budget for supported bus services for 2018/19 was now £180,000. This is supplemented by a Welsh Government allocation provided to BCBC through the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) of £386,825 in 2018/19, of which a target amount of £85,224 should be spent on funding community transport operations in the county borough.

A grant application was submitted by Bridgend Community Transport to Bridgend County Borough Council on 9 July 2018 for the sum of £84,934.32, leaving a balance of £301,890.68 to be spent on core strategic bus network in Bridgend, as per the Welsh Government BSSG guidance notes.

He referred Members to a Table in paragraph 3.6 of the report, which identified the bus routes which formed part of the agreed budget reduction for 2018/19. It was agreed to use £50,000 of the additional funding raised through increasing the Council Tax by 4.5% (instead of the original 4.2% proposed) to continue subsidizing three of the bus services shown at the top of the table (Service No's 51, 803 and 61) for the current financial year.

The Corporate Director – Communities added that in summary, the result of the subsidy removal had been very positive with five out of the six subsidized routes being commercially retained and provided albeit with modifications or reductions in frequencies as detailed in the sub-paragraphs of paragraph 4.2 of the report.

The next section of the report outlined future implications (for the service), with it additionally being noted that consideration would also need to be given to the content and implications of a letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure dated 02 May 2018 indicating that “from April 2019, each local authority’s allocation from BSSG will have to be at least match-funded by a commitment to expenditure from an authority’s own budget in support of bus and community transport networks in its area”. This position is still being properly assessed and clarification sought from Welsh Government on the exact implications. He added that the proposed consultation exercise in respect of the future of Supported Bus Services would be carried out as soon as possible.

He finalised this item by outlining the report’s financial implications.

The Cabinet Member – Communities advised that continuing to fund the above was continuing to be a struggle under the MTFs and they extra funding had been found in 2017/18 this was only for one year. It had been hoped that the Welsh Government would have assisted with funding in this service provision, though this had not subsequently proved to be the case.

He further added that subsidised bus services could not continue to be financially supported, and he encouraged the public to continue to use these services or they would be lost.

The Leader added that he encouraged those people who qualified for this, to purchase a discretionary bus ticket hence giving more support to the use of this form of transport, and that the Welsh Government through the South Wales Metro, needed to invest in bus transport as well as just concentrating on the provision of extra train links, to include more localised and rapid bus services.

RESOLVED:

- (1) Considered the content of the report and agreed that a public consultation is undertaken on the proposals following which a Full Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

- (2) Agreed to a further report outlining the results of the consultation, to be accompanied by a Full Equality Impact Assessment, to be presented at a future meeting of Cabinet in order that the proposals outlined in this report may be considered.

246. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE-UNIVERSITY SUPPORT PACKAGES FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report, so as to inform Cabinet (further to the report on 30th January 2018) of the methodology and findings from the consultation that has been conducted over a twelve week period in relation to financial support provided to care leavers.

The report also reminded Cabinet that this report was also written in light of Welsh Government's response to the 'Diamond Review' – a review of the student support and higher education funding in Wales that will begin to be implemented in the this academic year (2018/19).

Finally, the report sought approval from Cabinet to proceed in writing a policy pursuant to the preferred option 3, as referred to (together with other options) in the report.

She explained that as noted in the previous report of 30th January 2018, the Local Authority has, for many years, provided young care leavers with financial assistance to attend university and higher education courses. This financial support has enabled young people to meet the costs of term time and vacation accommodation, pay for tuition fees and receive weekly maintenance payments.

The next sections of the report, confirmed that there was an aim to look to increase the number of young people leaving care arrangements to go onto University or seek employment opportunities, hence now looking at the present policy that was in place and review this in accordance with the Diamond Review, some of the proposals of which, were outlined in this part of the report.

Turning to the present situation, the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing confirmed that a consultation regarding the proposals was conducted over a 12 week period from near the end of February to middle/end May 2018, and as part of this, 3 options were proposed upon which respondents were asked to give their comments on.

The headline figures in terms of the respondents to the consultation were outlined in paragraph 4.7 of the report, including the nature of these together with the respondents age and gender etc, as well as certain other data. The options in question were shown in full in paragraph 4.9 of the report.

Paragraph 4.28 of the report, then reflected how BCBC currently supports students in comparison to four other named neighbouring authorities, and following this, the reasons why Option 3 was the preferred option to pursue as far as the local authority were concerned.

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing concluded her submission, by outlining the implications of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as well as the report's financial implications.

The Deputy Leader applauded the Childrens Social Care Practitioners for their support in the number of young people leaving care and going into higher education, and the increase in the number of these.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration advised that Option 3 mirrored mostly what parents would provide, whilst the Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations supported the discretionary element of the preferred option, where there was less of a cost for students.

The Leader concluded debate on the item, by stating that Members should be proud as corporate parents on the reports proposals which were both fairer and consistent than what was presently in place. He felt that it was important to support the young students with 'start-up costs,' in order to allow them to purchase basic equipment such as an iron or a kettle etc, and that this be incorporated in the scheme.

He also felt it was important to review the scheme as it progressed in order to consider its impact, and that there is an increase in learners engaging with the scheme. This was a matter that could be discussed further at a future meeting of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting he concluded.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved Option 3 as described in the report, to enable implementation of the new appropriate policy.

247. NOMINATION TO VALLEYS TO COAST BOARD

The Chief Executive presented a report, in order to seek Cabinet's approval for the appointment of member representation on the Valleys to Coast (V2C) Board.

The report gave some background information, following which he advised that due to legislative changes, the composition of the above Board had been reviewed, resulting in the Authority having to reduce its elected membership on the Board from three nominated Members to one nomination.

In view of the above change, it was therefore proposed that one Member be appointed to the revised Board.

The Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations advised that the current Elected Members on the Board from BCBC were the Deputy Leader, Councillor S Baldwin and herself. In view of the fact that Councillor Baldwin had a professional background in Housing she therefore nominated that he remain on the V2C Board, (and that Cllr Williams and herself stand down from the Board). Cabinet agreed with this suggestion.

The Leader took the opportunity of thanking all three Members for their past commitment to the V2C Board, and that it was important that the strong connection and relationship with V2C continues as it provided 6,000 homes people in the County Borough. .

He added that both he and the Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations together with the Chief Executive and Head of Housing now held quarterly meetings with the Chair of the Board and Chief Executive and officers of V2C in order to both maintain and enhance future relations with this key organisation.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the appointment of Councillor Stuart Baldwin as the nominated representative on the V2C Board.

248. LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2018

The Head of Legal and Regulatory Services presented a report, the purpose of which was to share with Cabinet the 2018 Local Air Quality Management Annual Progress

Report (APR) for Bridgend County Borough Council. The report required Cabinet approval in order to submit a final version to Welsh Government.

Representatives from the Shared Regulatory Services were in attendance to present the report, and the Leader welcomed them to the meeting.

A member of the above team by way of background information, advised that the Local Air Quality Management process (LAQM), places a statutory obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas and to determine whether the air quality objectives to protect health are likely to be achieved. Where exceedances occur or are considered likely to occur, the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives.

The Annual Progress Report provides details on the ratified data for the air quality monitoring undertaken in 2017 within Bridgend County Borough Council.

It was confirmed by Officers that the Annual Progress Report confirmed that in general air quality within the BCB continued to meet the relevant air quality objectives as prescribed under the relevant Regulations, however, it was notable that Park Street, Bridgend was a specific area of concern, for the reasons specified in paragraphs 4.3 to 4.6 of the report.

In line with Welsh Government's Policy Guidance, following submission of the 2018 Annual Progress Report, the Council will make an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) Order for the Park Street Area. There would be a further report submitted to a future meeting of Cabinet which would be accompanied by an appropriate technical report, setting out the reasons why the Order is required. A Draft Air Quality Action Plan will also need to be implemented it was further confirmed.

An Officer from the Shared Regulatory Services further added that a Working Group had been established with key partners, in order to ascertain why the air quality in the above area did not meet the relevant objectives.

It was also confirmed that as of yet there were no financial implications arising from the report. However, there may be as a result of the investigation being fully undertaken.

The Leader advised that there was a planning application being considered by Council at tomorrow's meeting, and he would be interested to know if the extended works to be carried out there would have a negative impact on the air quality at this location.

An Officer replied by stating that this was something that would in all probability be monitored by Rockwool through looking at any increase with regard to movement of HGV's and emissions that may arise from this. He added that the Service could look at this area further as part of its Air Quality Review next year.

The Cabinet Member – Communities concluded debate by advising that it may be prudent to look at similar air quality readings at Walters Road, Bridgend, as there was a considerable number of queuing of vehicles at this location that could give rise to extra vehicle emissions.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet approved the 2018 Annual Progress Report on Local Air Quality Management for BCB (attached at Appendix 1 to the report), for submission as a final version to Welsh Government before 30 September 2018.

- (2) That Cabinet noted that it will receive a further report on the requirement for an Air Quality Management Area at Park Street, Bridgend.

249. INFORMATION REPORTS FOR NOTING

The Head of Legal and Regulatory Services submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to inform Cabinet of the Information Reports for Noting published since its last scheduled meeting, as follows:-

1. Annual Treasury Management Outturn 2017-18
2. Review of the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2018-19
3. Youth Justice Plan 2018-19

In respect of the first two items above, the Deputy Leader thanked Finance Officers for the prudent manner with which they were managing the Council's resources during what were continued challenging times.

The Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations confirmed that the report on the Youth Justice Plan was a very interesting read, and she was pleased to see that there was a reduction in young people entering the Youth Justice System, and that more work was being done in a bid to reduce re-offending. She took the opportunity also of thanking Caroline Dyer for all the hard work she had committed to the Youth Justice Plan and other relevant associated duties covered in this area, as she was soon due to retire.

The Leader added that there were fewer children being admitted to prison and entering the criminal justice system than was previously the case. He also echoed the words of the previous speaker with regard to Carolyn Dyer and wished her a happy retirement.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet acknowledged the publication of the documents listed in the report.

250. URGENT ITEMS

None.

The meeting closed at 16:00