

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH 2013 AT 3.00PM

Present:-

Councillor M Thomas - Mayor and Chairperson

Councillors

S Aspey
N Clarke
H J David
G Davies
G W Davies MBE
P A Davies
E Dodd
D K Edwards
E P Foley
C A Green
M Gregory

Councillors

D M Hughes
E M Hughes
C J James
P James
R D Jenkins
P John
C Jones
C L Jones
M Jones
D R W Lewis
J E Lewis

Councillors

J R McCarthy
H E Morgan
L C Morgan
M E J Nott OBE
D G Owen
G Phillips
C Rees
C L Reeves
M Reeves
D Sage
J C Spanswick

Councillors

G Thomas
R L Thomas
J H Tildesley MBE
H J Townsend
E Venables
D B F White
P J White
H M Williams
R Williams
M Winter
R E Young

Officers:

D Mepham - Chief Executive
S Brindle - Corporate Director - Wellbeing
P A Jolley - Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer
N Young - Assistant Chief Executive - Performance and Section 151 Officer
C Howell - Head of Street Scene
M A Galvin - Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
G P Jones - Head of Democratic Services (Electronic Back-up)

132 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader on behalf of Members, presented the Mayor with a bouquet of flowers to celebrate her 70 birthday (Monday 4 March 2013).

The Mayor thanked Members for this kind gesture.

133 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Council dated 29 January 2013, be approved as a true and accurate record.

134 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members/Officers:-

Councillor B Jones	-	Family bereavement
Councillor M W Butcher	-	Prior commitment
Councillor L Ellis	-	No reason given
Councillor K Watts	-	Holiday
Councillor A Owen	-	Work commitments
Councillor D Pugh	-	Work commitments
Mrs L Fradd	-	Other Council business

135 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8(i), Implementation of a Pay and Grading System, for the reasons detailed below. All the Members who declared left the meeting whilst this report was being considered:-

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| Councillor J C Spanswick | - | As his wife worked for the Authority |
| Councillor G Phillips | - | As he worked for the Authority |
| Councillor D White | - | As his wife worked for the Authority |
| Councillor G Davies | - | As his daughter worked for the Authority |
| Councillor P J White | - | As his sister worked for the Authority |
| Councillor C A Green | - | As her sister worked for the Authority |

136 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that she had quite a bit of good environmental news for those present today. She extended her thanks to constituents for their hard work and commitment to recycling. This meant, the Council were still above average for the rest of Wales according to latest figures. The Authority were the best Authority for reducing the amount of NON-recyclable waste meaning that less was being sent to landfill. She urged residents of the County Borough to continue this positive trend.

The Mayor hoped that Members and their constituents would also be joining the new green waste scheme which starts next month. It was £27 or £23 for pensioners to register. For this they would obtain two reusable sacks in which to place their garden waste which is then collected from the kerbside every fortnight on the same day as their black bags. The really great news was that all of the cuttings and clippings would then be recycled meaning people's gardens would be kept really green.

The Mayor was delighted to confirm that the County Borough recycled more real Christmas trees than ever this year, with nearly 500 collected through the Council's kerbside tree recycling scheme. As Members were aware, residents paid £3 to have their trees collected resulting in over £2,200 being raised for Macmillan Cancer Support and the Mayor's Charity Appeal. The trees have been chipped and composting, meaning they will also help the local environment. The Mayor thanked everyone who took part in this.

The Mayor confirmed that the rainbow flag was flying outside the Civic Offices this week. This was to mark the second annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Adoption and Fostering Week. People often think they could not foster or adopt because of their sexuality or marital status, but this was not the case. The Local Authority welcomed applications from anyone that wanted to provide a secure and loving home and family life to children and young people. She referred constituents to the Council's fostering and adoption pages on the website for more details.

The Mayor extended her thanks to Cefn Glas Infants school for achieving Investors in People Silver Standard and to Litchard Primary for earning the Investors in Family Award.

The Mayor advised that she had attended the parade in Cardiff on St. David's Day in the presence of Prince Charles and this had turned out to be an excellent event.

She was also in the process of undertaking a number of school visits, that included Maes-yr-Haul, (where they were celebrating National Book Week) Cefn Glas, the new Welsh school at Brackla and Bryntirion Infants School.

The Mayor thanked Councillors G Davies, P Davies, C A Green and E M Hughes for recently attending the Mayor's Charity lunch at the Great House restaurant in Laleston.

She gratefully asked Members (and Officers) if they would consider each contributing £5 this month to go toward her Charity.

Finally, the Mayor welcomed those present to accompany her to a concert that was being held at Nolton Street Church on Friday 19 March 2013, which was also being held in support of her Charity.

137 CABINET MEMBER ANNOUCEMENTS

(a) Cabinet Member - Resources

The Cabinet Member - Resources advised of the following up and coming Pre-Council Presentations, Training Sessions and Events:-

Pre-Council Presentations

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Venue</u>
3 April 2013	<u>Police Commissioner</u> To receive a presentation from Mr Alun Michael, Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales on his role and remit.	2.00pm Council Chamber
1 May 2013	<u>Communities First (TBC)</u>	2.00pm Council Chamber

Training Sessions

14 March 2013	<u>The Planning Process</u> (for non-Development Control Members) To help all new Members not on the Development Control Committee to understand the planning process and their roles in it. To also serve as a refresher for longer serving Members.	10.00am - 12 noon Committee Rooms 2/3
18 April 2013	<u>Waste Management Seminar</u> This Seminar will be used to inform Members of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on the waste strategy to date • Existing contractual arrangements • Key issues and risks • New initiatives • Future proposals 	10.00am - 12 noon Council Chamber

Events

Date to be confirmed	<p><u>WLGA Social Media Training</u></p> <p>This seminar will help Councillors to feel at ease with social media and use social networking in a responsible, lawful manner. The training needs 20 or more interested participants before a date can be agreed and hold the training in the Civic Offices rather than travelling to another authority. So far 16 “yes” responses had been received. If Members could let Ruth Roan know if they were interested in attending this as soon as possible, then the WLGA can be notified of this and Members’ calendars could be updated accordingly.</p>	
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(b) Cabinet Member – Children and Young People

The Cabinet Member Children and Young People advised that a new initiative aimed at helping families and children affected by parental substance misuse and domestic violence was launched last month. In partnership with Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Councils, as well as Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board we were delivering the Western Bay Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS) with Welsh Government investment. By helping over 100 families help themselves and stay together this would help keep vulnerable children safe.

As a result of the good progress of Bettws Primary School since its last inspection in July 2012, the Cabinet Member - Children and Young People confirmed that Estyn had now removed it from its category of local authority monitoring. With a temporary head teacher leading the school since the permanent head took up a post elsewhere, and the school suffering the major disruption of the fire he felt that all staff could be proud of the progress that has been made.

There was more good news about schools. As a result of the very good progress of Pencoed Comprehensive that was evident to Estyn on its recent follow up monitoring visit, it has been removed from its category of Estyn monitoring, so he extended his thanks to the staff and pupils at Pencoed. The number of pupils achieving 5 A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and mathematics in 2012, increased by 13% compared to 2011. The performance in mathematics placed the school in the top quarter when compared with similar schools.

The Welsh Government has confirmed that it will be investing over £650,000 in refurbishing Sarn nursery school to make it into a flying start centre for 0 – 3 year olds. Nursery children will in the future be taught at brand new early years unit that will be built at Bryncethin Primary School, thanks to investment by this Council and Section 106 contributions from developers.

Finally, advised the Cabinet Member - Children and Young People, the Minister for Education and Skills, had been to visit Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen. It was pleasing to be able to explain that young people in the Borough were already benefitting from the Project, whereby 12 apprentices had been given the chance to work on the site and develop their skills. In addition 14 people from the County Borough have worked as trainees. The biggest benefits were however yet to come, when the school is opened.

It was determined in its mission to not only have one of the best school buildings in Wales, but also to be one of the best schools buildings in the UK. The school will be implementing a whole range of teaching innovations to raise attainment, for example providing an iPod touch for all students to access information.

138 CHIEF EXECUTIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

139 ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE - LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER

The Assistant Chief Executive - Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer advised Council that Councillor J Lewis would fill the Labour group vacancies there were currently on the Community Safety and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

140 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader opened his report by formally congratulating Mark Shephard who this week was appointed new Interim Corporate Director – Communities. Mr Shephard as Members were aware, was currently Head of Service for Healthy Living and he would take over the above post from Louise Fradd on 18 March. Mrs Fradd was leaving the Authority later this month for her new role in Bath and North East Somerset Council. The Leader was sure that Members and Officers would all wish to join him in thanking her for her eight and a half years with Bridgend County Borough Council and the superb stewardship of the Communities Directorate in that time. On behalf of the Council he wished her well in her future career.

Councillors will be aware of the considerable publicity surrounding the issue of horse meat recently and this is something which the Council took extremely seriously. The Authority purchases food supplies alongside other councils as part of the Wales Purchasing Consortium and also use an external company to carry out regular food audits on suppliers. Whilst to date no health issues have been identified within Bridgend County Borough, the Authority had stopped using frozen mince beef provided by one supplier as a precautionary measure. It was of course, continuing to liaise closely with partners in the Wales Purchasing Consortium and the Food Standards Agency in this matter and would be carrying out further tests added the Leader. In the meantime, if Members or their constituents had any concerns or questions, more advice can be found at www.food.gov.uk/wales.

The Leader confirmed that the Trading Standards team has detected a number of email and phone scams circulating in the Borough at the moment, some of them claiming to offer tax refunds. Typically these emails or calls involve asking people for personal or security details which could leave them at risk. The message to residents was always to beware of anything that sounds too good to be true, as it probably is.

The Leader stated that he was delighted to join The Bridgend Business Forum for its very successful St. David's Day business breakfast event last week. 150 business people attended in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf Business Club and The Business Network and were treated to an insight into the success of two of the most inspirational people to come out of Wales in recent years – social entrepreneur and self-made multi-millionaire Kevin Green, and David Roberts, CBE the UK's greatest male paralympian. It was a pleasure to attend this event and to introduce two truly inspirational people. The Council could feel very proud to support the work of the Bridgend Business Forum, he added.

The Leader finally congratulated Bryncethin Primary for a superb Estyn report which found pupils achieving good standards and a very strong commitment from all staff for continuous improvement. Inspectors also noted that the innovative “Parents’ Council” has had a measurable impact on raising pupils’ standards and wellbeing. He was sure Members would join him in saying well done to children, staff, parents and governors there.

141 SUSPENSION OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULE 12, 13 AND 14 TO ALLOW FOR AN E-TENDERING PILOT

The Cabinet Member - Resources submitted a report, the purpose of which was to seek the approval of the Council to temporarily suspend a subset of the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules (CPR’s) to facilitate an e-tendering pilot.

The Assistant Chief Executive – Performance and Section 151 Officer, advised that the Council was an established user of the Xchange Wales suite of e-procurement products, support by Welsh Government (WG).

She explained that at present the programme included Purchase2Pay (procserve) and Tendering (Bravo Solutions) modules plus a Purchasing Card programme (RBOS). Bridgend uses P2P and p –card and was looking to pilot the use of e-tendering.

The Assistant Chief Executive – Performance and Section 151 Officer confirmed that the current Contract Procedure Rules did not allow the Authority to use the level of functionality delivered by the system.

She proceeded to explain, that the Bravo e-tender module was a Web based software application which allowed the Council to invite tenders, obtain bids and evaluate them through a secure portal managed and hosted by Bravo Solutions under the Welsh Government Xchange Wales Programme. This process gave emphasis on sending out tender invites and tenderers submitting quotes electronically, which improved efficiency when comparing this to tenders being processed in hard copy format both by the local authority and the would-be tenderer.

In order to facilitate the software and new process there was a requirement to suspend the above mentioned sections of the Contract Procedure Rules, to allow for the invitation of, return and evaluation of tenderers and these procedures and processes would be undertaken in accordance with the details specified in the tender documentation.

For the reasons outlined in Paragraph 4.4, the Assistant Chief Executive - Performance and Section 151 Officer explained that the pilot should last for a minimum of 12 months, with two tenders as detailed in the report being identified as suitable for trialling purposes by the Procurement Section, however, others could be added where suitable under the Council’s Scheme of Delegation.

The Assistant Chief Executive – Performance and Section 151 Officer concluded her submission by advising that there were no cost implications arising from the report.

RESOLVED: That Council approved the Suspension of Contract Procedure Rules 12,13 and 14 where appropriate, to allow for the e-tendering pilot to be undertaken, and that the outcome of the pilot is reported to Cabinet when concluded in 12 months time, from 6 March 2013.

142 ACHIEVING THE WELSH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (WLGA) CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

The Democratic Services Committee submitted a report to Council seeking approval of its recommendations on the Authority pursuing the achievement of the WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development at the standard level in 2013, with the intention of making a further submission for Advanced Charter in 2014 (conditional upon the successful achievement of the Standard Charter Award).

The report gave some background information, and explained that elected Members faced increasing challenges through their ever developing roles under the modernisation agenda with their expectations ranging from that of community leader to their special responsibilities undertaken within their Authority.

The Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer explained that the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) were guiding and working with Members across authorities to help them develop in their position, and to support this they had introduced a Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.

He proceeded to advise that there were three levels of Award within the Charter, with each level normally requiring to be achieved before progressing to the next level. These levels were:

1. (Standard) Charter Award
2. Advanced Charter Award
3. The Good Practice and Innovation Award

The Charter was awarded for a period of three years after which an authority is able to relinquish, maintain or improve its charter status.

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced legislative requirements for corporate governance and Member support and development. In 2012 the Charter Criteria were further developed to enhance and enable these legal requirements.

Paragraph 3.4 then explained the assessment criteria for each of the three levels of Award, as referred to above.

The Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer advised that the Authority's Standard Charter status was due for renewal this year.

Paragraph 4.4.1 then confirmed the full criteria methods for the achievement of the WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development at Standard and Advanced level (Appendix 1 of the report referred) with a traffic light assessment having been undertaken for each of the main criteria that form the award. These were reflected in this paragraph to the report.

Paragraph 4.4.2 of the report then reflected in table format, the initial assessment of the implications of achieving the Charter at Standard and Advanced level, and the Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer expanded upon these for Members information.

The next section of the report, then gave certain options and implications regarding the WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development that had been considered, and these were as follows:-

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| Option 1 | Do Nothing and let the Charter Award lapse; |
| Option 2 | Re-apply for Standard Level Charter Status in 2013 followed by Advanced Level Charter in 2016; |

- Option 3 Apply for Advanced Level Charter Status in 2013;
Option 4 Re-apply for (Standard) Charter in 2013 with the intention of making a further submission for Advanced Charter in 2014.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer explained that Option 4 of the above options be pursued in respect of the achievement of the WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development.

The Chairperson of Democratic Services Committee commended the report to Council.

RESOLVED: That Council considered and approved the recommendation of the Democratic Services Committee and having considered the information contained in the report, determined that Option 4 be the most appropriate option to pursue for achieving the WLGA Charter for Members Support and Development.

143 IMPLEMENTATION OF A PAY AND GRADING SYSTEM

The Section 151 Officer presented a report that advised Council of the outcome of the second ballot in respect of the proposals for the new pay and grading system, and to confirm the financial implications associated with this.

The report gave some background information, and confirmed that the first trade union ballot conducted in October 2012 in relation to the Job Evaluation review of pay and grading structure resulted in a “yes” vote from UNISON and GMB and a “no” vote from UNITE.

The Section 151 Officer confirmed that since then the Council had been in further consultation with the trade unions to identify any potential changes that could be introduced to improve the package of proposals published in July 2012.

Paragraph 3.3 then outlined the improved proposals introduced as a result of these consultations.

The Section 151 Officer then confirmed that a second trade union ballot took place, with the three trade unions returning a vote in acceptance of the proposals.

Arrangements were now being made to sign off the collective agreement as soon as was reasonably practicable.

The Section 151 Officer confirmed that the final package of proposals would result in an estimated annual recurring budget requirement of £4.5m in addition to the current annual pay bill. This increase had been accounted for in the budget for future years. The Section 151 Officer added that this provision did not include the potential impact of any successful appeals, which could not be quantified at this time but may run into the hundreds. The estimated additional recurring budget requirement for future years would be factored into the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and kept under review, she added. This meant that additional budget reduction in 2014-15 and 2015-16 may be required to compensate any additional cost to this end.

The Section 151 Officer advised that non-recurring pay protection costs for posts that suffered a loss would be in the region of £3m and pay protection would be from the estimated implementation date of 1 September 2013. The pay protection would operate for 12 months for those staff who suffer detriment of 10% or less, with pay protection being 18 months for those members of staff who’s salary is reduced by more than 10%.

The Section 151 Officer concluded her submission by confirming that the additional costs of all the changes to the original 2011 proposals had been factored into the MTFS,

and these were estimated to be £395k in 2013-14, rising to £595k in 2014-15 and £900k in 2015-16 when full implementation would be achieved.

The Cabinet Member – Resources thanked the Section 151 Officer and her officers for the hard work they had put in in order to reach an agreement with trade unions on the way forward. He added that proposals that had initially been put on the table, had subsequently changed on several occasions through successful negotiation.

A Member asked when members of staff were likely to be officially informed of the new pay proposal as it affected them.

The Section 151 Officer said that this was scheduled for end of May 2013.

The Deputy Leader advised that it was important to note that the Council had reached a Collective Agreement regarding implementation of a new pay and grading system, and despite this regrettably involving some painful negotiations, not all authorities in Wales had successfully achieved this.

RESOLVED: That Council noted the report.

144 INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOTING

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report that informed Council of any information reports presented for noting since its last ordinary meeting.

These were contained in Paragraph 4.1 of the report.

RESOLVED: That Council noted the publication of the report contained in Paragraph 4.1 of the covering report.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm