

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 17 JUNE 2015 AT 3.00 PM

Present

Councillor RE Young – Chairperson

N Clarke	HJ David	G Davies	GW Davies MBE
PA Davies	E Dodd	DK Edwards	EP Foley
CA Green	EM Hughes	CJ James	P James
RM James	B Jones	CL Jones	M Jones
RC Jones	DRW Lewis	JE Lewis	JR McCarthy
MEJ Nott OBE	AD Owen	DG Owen	G Phillips
DR Pugh	CL Reeves	M Reeves	C Westwood
DBF White	PJ White	HM Williams	R Williams
M Winter			

Officers:

Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Andrew Jolley	Assistant Chief Executive Legal & Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer
Susan Jones	
Deborah McMillan	Corporate Director - Education & Transformation
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Jonathan Parsons	Development and Building Control Manager
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities

493. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members – Officer for the reasons so stated:

Councillor S Aspey	- Work Commitments
Councillor M Butcher	- Attending a funeral
Councillor N Farr	- Work Commitments
Councillor M Gregory	- Attending a funeral
Councillor DM Hughes	- Family Commitment
Councillor P John	- Unwell
Councillor RD Jenkins	- Attending a funeral
Councillor HE Morgan	- Unwell
Councillor LC Morgan	- Attending a funeral
Councillor D Sage	- Unwell
Councillor CE Smith	- Holiday
Councillor KJ Watts	- Holiday
Ness Young	– Corporate Director Resources & Monitoring Officer – Other Council Business.

494. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- RESOLVED:
- (1) That the minutes of the meeting of Council of 8 April 2015 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to an amendment being made to the 3rd paragraph of minute no. 475 that the words “of the” be replaced with the word “and” prior to the words ‘Council Tax implications’.
- (2) That the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council of 13 May 2015 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the inclusion of Councillor E Venables in the list of Members present.

495. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

496. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed Members to his first meeting of Council since his inauguration. He informed Members that he had a busy time during the past few weeks and he thanked Ruth Ronan and Merete Bang and everybody in the Democratic Services team for the excellent support he had received. The Mayor hoped to be able to announce the names of the charities that he would be supporting shortly, and he had been putting forward a number of suggestions for new types of event that will help raise funds for these good causes, which he would inform Members of in due course.

The Mayor informed Council that he was delighted to open an information market for carers at the Princess of Wales Hospital recently as part of this year’s Carers Week activities. The event was extremely well attended and brought home to the sheer number of local people who provide unpaid care for sick, elderly or disabled relatives, neighbours and friends within the County Borough which numbered almost 18,000 people, from all ages and backgrounds. He stated that the information market was just one of several events designed to raise awareness about the wide range of support that is available for carers, and as part of this he was really impressed to see the development of new E-Training modules for Council staff and the launch of a new private Facebook support group for employees who also act as carers. A wealth of information about available support could be found online and at the Bridgend Carers

Centre website which would be useful for local constituents, and the Mayor urged Members to take a closer look and find out more.

The Mayor informed Members of news that the Council has marked this year's Foster Care Fortnight with a drive to encourage applications from people in the County Borough. Called 'Get Connected', the event was the most successful one yet and drew a great deal of publicity, including almost 64,000 people who saw it on Facebook alone, which resulted in enquiries from 35 potential new foster carers. He congratulated everyone on making the event a success.

The Mayor reminded Members that raising the flag for Armed Forces Day would be taking place at 10.15am on Monday 22 June outside the Civic Offices. The event will mark the beginning of Armed Forces Week which will culminate with a parade at 11.30am led by the South Wales Police Band and a short service in front of the war memorial in Dunraven Place. He stated that these events are always well supported within the County Borough, and all are very welcome to come and show your support.

The Mayor also congratulated to Rhydian Jenkins on coming first in the both the Cerdd Dant Solo and the Boy's Solo in last week's Urdd Eisteddfod and also congratulated Aelwyd Porthcawl on coming third in the folk choirs competition.

CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Deputy Leader

The Deputy Leader announced the inaugural 'Art Challenge Wales' event was held in Porthcawl recently which was a huge success, and he congratulated 15-year-old Porthcawl Comprehensive pupil Alice Webber on winning the junior competition with a watercolour painting of Newton Beach. Almost 70 artists took part in the event with some travelling from Bristol and Pembrokeshire. Their work could be seen at the Art Challenge Wales website and is also previewed in the current edition of Bridge Members. The organisers were now seeking to double the numbers for Art Challenge Wales 2016 and artists from Saint Sebastien Sur Loire, Porthcawl's twin town in France, were also considering taking part. The non-profit event was supported by Bridgend County Borough Council with funding from the Welsh Government's Town Centre Partnership, with it becoming a much anticipated local fixture.

The Deputy Leader informed Council that Ysgol Cynwyd Sant had been identified as a best practice case study in Estyn's latest thematic report, Best Practice In Teaching And Learning In The Creative Arts At Key Stage Two, which looks at standards and provision

in art and design, music, dance and drama within schools. Ysgol Cynwyd Sant had been featured in a short film which illustrated best practice strategies for teaching and learning across the creative arts in primary schools, and another local school, Llangewydd Juniors was also featured in the Estyn report.

The Deputy Leader announced that Cefn Glas Infants have achieved Investors in Families award. This is an award scheme that enables schools to demonstrate their commitment to engaging families and is based on evidence that children's' attainment at school improves when their learning is supported and reinforced at home. To gain the award, the school submitted a portfolio detailing activities undertaken to involve families in their child's learning and the wider school environment.

The Deputy Leader also announced that Richard Bailey that Ysgol Bryn Castell has now officially moved to the redeveloped former Ogmere Comprehensive site, which has been renamed the Bryncethin Campus, and that Richard Bailey has been appointed Head Teacher of Bryncethin Primary and Helen Jones, appointed the Deputy Head Teacher at Maesteg Comprehensive School.

Cabinet Member Communities

The Cabinet Member Communities that the repair works at the A473 inner bypass bridge in Bridgend town centre are progressing well, work moved above deck at the start of June and a series of contra-flow arrangements have been introduced. The above-deck works are being carried out in two six-week phases, the first of which is currently underway and focuses on the northbound carriageway heading towards Maesteg. He stated that this is a big project and while some inconvenience was unavoidable, he was pleased at the way in which it is being carried out with an absolute minimum of disruption. The project is expected to be completed in early September and Members may want to advise their constituents that a useful series of FAQs are available on the Council's website.

The Cabinet Member Communities announced that next Sunday marks the start of Recycle Week 2015, so it was appropriate to note that Bridgend County Borough is in the top ten per cent of UK areas who have reduced carbon emissions by recycling 57 per cent of all weekly waste. He stated that landfill sites generate methane gas, and cutting down on the amount of rubbish that is disposed of in this way makes perfect sense. He thanked all residents as it is their recycling efforts that have led to this achievement. Recycle Week 2015 was being marked by continuing to encourage

householders to recycle items from every room in the house, whether it was shampoo and shower gel bottles from the bathroom or magazines and old newspapers from the living room. Details of 'Full House' campaign and recycling in general could be found by visiting the corporate website.

Cabinet Member Adult Social Care & Wellbeing

The Deputy Leader announced on behalf of the Cabinet Member Adult Social Care & Wellbeing that a new competition was attracting a lot of attention, called 'Hash Tag My Green Space', it aimed to find Bridgend County Borough's most popular outdoor area and is encouraging people to get out and about and live healthier lifestyles. He stated the competition will run over the summer and a top ten list will be compiled which people will then be able to vote upon to find the number one spot. The scheme is encouraging local residents to enjoy the great outdoors, highlight what it means to them, and suggest ideas for making local beauty spots more accessible. More details were available on the Council's website, and people can submit their favourite places by using Twitter or emailing biodiversity@bridgend.gov.uk.

The Deputy Leader also announced this year's Love2Walk Festival starts on Saturday and will invite walkers of all ages and abilities to enjoy some historic tales as they clock up the miles. Many of this year's walks centre on the Bridgend Nature Keepers, a series of interactive sculptures that can be found in some of the county borough's best-loved parks and beauty spots. Other festival highlights include a four-mile history walk around Coity Castle, an evening bat walk at Bryngarw Country Park and a Gruffalo story walk for children on Saturday 27 June and further details can be found by visiting www.love2walk.co.uk.

The Deputy Leader announced that an awards event will take place next Thursday which will celebrate the achievements of young people from schools and communities who have helped develop active and healthy lifestyles. He stated that the leadership pathway that Bridgend County Borough Council is operating through the Active Young People Department showcases the leadership qualities that local young people are developing in building better lives within their communities.

Supported by organisations including the Welsh Government, Sport Wales and Disability Sport Wales, it had been described as being 'sector leading' by Estyn inspectors. He stated that the awards have been planned by the young people themselves and will focus on issues such as youth leadership, innovation and creativity, disability and disadvantage. The event will showcase many of the good things that are taking place

and highlight how the investments that we are making into the young people of today will help create the community leaders of the future.

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Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities advised Members that the Welsh Government's Flying Start programme is expanding further and that a newly-built centre has been opened in Lewistown. Based on Blackmill Road, the centre is offering local eligible families access to services such as free childcare for two to three-year-olds, parenting support, an enhanced health visitor service, help with early language development and more. The new centre meant that more than a quarter of pre-school children across the county borough are now able to access Flying Start services, and the Lewistown centre joins similar facilities that have already been established in Cornelly, Wildmill, Brackla, Cefn Glas, Maesteg, Sarn, Bettws and Blackmill. The Lewistown centre will be staging an open day on Thursday 25 June to demonstrate how it can help local families, more information is available from the Flying Start team.

Cabinet Member Resources

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities announced on behalf of the Cabinet Member Resources Member Development details of which were to be found in today's edition of Bridge Members. She announced that all annual reports will need to be submitted by the first week of August so that they can be published at the corporate website by the end of the month. The Democratic Services team have emailed Members a report template incorporating links to committee attendance data which may be useful when compiling the reports. The reports can be submitted to the Member's BCBC email address where they will be checked and formatted prior to publication. Secondly, Members have an opportunity to undertake personal development reviews, or PDRs, which are completed as part of a peer review process with both the appraiser and appraisee allocated and co-ordinated by political groups. Completed PDRs can be copied to the Head of Democratic Services so that training needs can be assessed and included in the member development programme. It was hoped that all PDRs will be completed by 1st September.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Monitoring Officer announced changes to the meetings of the Partnerships & Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee from 9 September 2015 to 16 September 2015 the Corporate Resources & Improvement Overview and Scrutiny

Committee from 21 January 2016 to 11 January 2016 in order to better align the meetings to the timescales of the budget process.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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The Chief Executive made a presentation on the review of his personal objectives and performance which had been undertaken by a panel comprising of Members. The panel had reviewed his progress against targets set in the previous year and had been positive about his achievements, namely, the delivery of the corporate plan to budget, the response to the Williams Commission; the establishment of a new management team; the change programme and the response to the Estyn inspection.

The Chief Executive informed Council that his priorities set by the Panel for this year are:

- To work with the Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board to refocus the Council's priorities, corporate plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy to take account of significant anticipated reductions in funding in excess of 30% over the next 3-4 years.
- To lead the Council's response to anticipated legislation affecting the organisation and roles of local government.

The Chief Executive informed Council that the Panel had requested that he have a personal involvement in:

- refocusing and refining of Council business support services;
- the development of the Cardiff Capital City Region and relationships with the other member authorities;
- the strategic review and rationalisation of the curriculum and estate provision of Bridgend schools;
- the integration and development of unified adult and children's social care concentrating on specific threats to the authority (looked after children and child sexual exploitation).

The Chief Executive informed Council that corporately there would be a strategic approach with a continued focus on sickness resulting in a reduction in sickness absence. Efforts would also be concentrated on the successful implementation of the Bridgend permanency and placement strategy and intervention strategy for older people.

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497. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader advised Members that Bridgend County Borough Council was recently named the most deaf-friendly organisation in Wales by Action on Hearing Loss Cymru. The charity, which was formerly known as the RNID, presented the council with their top honour, a Gold award at their inaugural Excellence Wales ceremony. The awards recognise organisations that are going the extra mile to ensure that they are accessible to the one-in-six people who are deaf or have hearing loss. Judges commended the Council for its regular staff deaf awareness training, excellent engagement with local British Sign Language users and proactive approach to the use of technology such as hearing loops. The award follows previous successes such as the Action On hearing loss campaign's 'Louder Than Words' accreditation which we have held for the past three years, and an award from the British Deaf Association for our progress towards achieving full British Sign Language charter status. He stated the Council had beaten the National Assembly for Wales and Western Power Distribution into second and third place, which is a remarkable achievement, and he thanked staff on their achievement.

The Leader announced that the Council's Active Young People's Department has also had some good news recently with the announcement that they have successfully beaten off competition from Singapore and Scotland to become 'International Partner of the Year' in a sports leadership programme organised by Create Development. Designed to recognise innovation in training and learning, the award was presented to the AYPD team for empowering young people to develop skills in communication, coaching and leadership that will benefit them in further studies, employment and adult life. The team was described by Create Development as being 'one of their most forward thinking and joined-up partners', and he congratulated everyone who helped make this a reality.

The Leader referred to the excellent BBC and newspaper coverage of the recent launch of the all-new £6.7m Community Care Information Solution. He stated that the

Deputy Leader had described it at the time as being a 'game changer', which was very apt. The Leader was proud that Bridgend County Borough Council has been chosen as the lead local authority for the project, which will seek to improve health and social care services across Wales by bringing together vital information and essential details from a variety of different stand-alone systems. These details will be integrated into one new national system that will make it possible for information to be shared instantly, confidentially on a need-to-know basis between different health and social care providers to ensure that people are provided with all the care and support they need. The new system has massive potential for ensuring that health and social care services work together in a far more effective manner all across Wales, especially in situations where people need to use emergency or out-of-hours services, and he looked forward to seeing how the system develops.

498. REVISED CORPORATE PRIORITIES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report together with a presentation which sought formal agreement of the revised corporate priorities (strategic themes) and areas of focus that have been identified for each priority for public consultation. He stated that the Authority was facing unprecedented financial challenge with a funding shortfall of £49m between 2016/17 and 2018/19 and that it would need to change in response to increasing demand and more complex needs to shape a sustainable and significantly smaller Authority (70% of its current size).

The Chief Executive highlighted the six improvement priorities from the Corporate Plan for the next four years and that the Medium Term Financial Strategy had identified the resources to support the delivery of the improvement priorities as well as those required supporting the Council's usual activities. He added that Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board had identified the need to revise and more tightly focus on the corporate priorities to design and shape a significantly smaller authority. A number of principles had been developed to guide the selection of priorities and resourcing choices, the principles and revised priorities will be known as strategic themes, three strategic themes had been developed which will be the Council's priority for the next 4 years, they are:

1. Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the County a good place to do business and ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all young people in the county.
2. Helping people to be more self-reliant – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
3. Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible;

and supporting the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver its vision.

He outlined the key outcomes that can be expected from these themes.

He explained that as the Authority changes it will have particular regard to the following:

- Safeguarding our most vulnerable people
- Equality and Diversity
- Financial accountability and value for money
- Management of risk, including the health and safety of employees and service users

The Chief Executive informed Council that consultation on the revised corporate priorities will take place between July and September 2015.

A member of Council referred to the funding shortfall facing the Council and questioned how the agenda for training young people between the ages of 16-24 could be delivered when schools are reducing the number of sixth form courses. The Corporate Director Education and Transformation informed Council that there would be a focus on Key Stage 4 outcomes and there would be a continued drive to deliver improvements. She stated that a number of students have to travel outside the County Borough to attend some courses and she highlighted the need to have courses being provided locally, e.g. computer programming in order to support employers recruiting in that field.

A member of Council referred to the emphasis being placed on the third sector and Town and Community Councils and questioned their ability to deliver when they were also faced with diminishing resources. The Chief Executive informed Council that a number of Town and Community Councils and organisations in the third sector are able to support the Council in its activities; however he was aware that smaller Community Councils would not be able to provide that support.

A member of Council asked whether APSE could be engaged in supporting the Council in the transformation of and outsourcing of services as the Council moved towards the commissioning of services through social enterprises. The Chief Executive informed Council that it operated its services through a mixed economy and there was a need for the Council to be smarter in the use of its resources. He stated that it was not always the case that services could be better delivered through a partner and he highlighted the example of the Council's Architectural Services Team which had applied smarter commercial principles in the way it worked to improve its performance. The Chief Executive informed Members that the Council is a member of APSE but it had not yet had the opportunity of working with that body but had worked with an organisation called iEasy where it had traded skills. He stated that the transformation of services was not about moving services to social enterprises. A member of Council expressed concern regarding the possibility of de-regulation of services as it could lead to a lack of democratic accountability. The Chief Executive informed Council that the transformation of services would not result in a lack of control and accountability.

A member of Council stated that APSE had experience in economic development and links with APSE should be explored particularly as the Communities Directorate had experienced severe budget cuts. The Chief Executive informed Council that the organisational structure was irrelevant and that there was only one pot of money available to the Council.

A member of Council also questioned whether the feasibility of a collaboration of HR, ICT and Finance services with other local authorities could be revisited. The Chief Executive informed the Council that there had been an attempt at collaborating HR and

Finance services with other local authorities, but it had folded, however the potential for a collaboration of those services could be explored.

A member of Council asked whether each of the three themes could form a series of separate reports for consideration by Council to enhance transparency and public scrutiny given the funding shortfall. The Chief Executive informed Council that there would be further engagement with Members on the three themes. There was a need to consult staff on the revised priorities and themes prior to public consultation.

RESOLVED: That Council:

1. Approved the Council's Vision;
2. Approved the revised priorities and supporting actions for staff and public consultation.

499. **SAFEGUARDING EMPLOYMENT SITES SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG 21)**

The Group Manager Development sought approval to adopt Safeguarding Employment Sites – SPG21 as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the adopted Local Development Plan. He stated that the Development Control Committee on 16 October 2014 had resolved to approve the Draft SPG 21 as a basis for public consultation; authorised officers to make appropriate for public consultation and to await a further report on the outcome of the consultation process.

He reported that at the end of the period, 6 individuals and external organisations had submitted comments on the draft SPG and in response to those representations; a consultation report had been prepared. He stated that the comments arising from the consultation were mostly of a non-specific and general nature drawing to the attention of the Council good practice and requirements to properly consider and consult with appropriate bodies, in particular with respect to environmental risk and impact on heritage assets and landscape.

The Group Manager Development informed Council that the Development Control Committee on 2 April 2015 considered each of the representations received, endorsed the suggested reasoned responses, approved the decisions and actions (not to amend the document as a result of the consultation) and recommended that Council adopts the document for publication.

RESOLVED: That Council adopted SPG 21 – Safeguarding Employment Sites as Supplementary Guidance to the adopted Bridgend Local Development Plan.

500. **THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS**

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Standards Committee had received a report on proposals made by the Ombudsman to revise the Guidance on the Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members. He stated that the Ombudsman had proposed a further public interest test be considered when deciding whether to investigate a complaint or whether to continue an investigation of a breach of the Code to the stage of referring the matter to the Adjudication Panel for Wales.

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Ombudsman had issued a new test which had changed as a result of complaints received from Monitoring Officers in Wales. He stated that in determining whether to investigate a complaint or whether to continue an investigation of a breach of the Code a two stage test will be applied. At the first stage, the Ombudsman will aim to establish whether there is direct evidence that a breach actually took place and if the evidential test was met, at the second stage, consideration would be given as to whether an investigation or a referral to a Standards Committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales is required in the public interest.

The Monitoring Officer highlighted some of the public interest factors that the Ombudsman will consider which were set out in the new Code of Conduct. He stated that the Ombudsman had determined that if it was felt a case did not warrant a sanction, the case would not be referred to the Monitoring Officer.

A Member of Council questioned whether Members who are also members of Town and Community Councils can take part in meetings of the Development Control Committee. The Monitoring Officer informed Council that Members need to be careful in expressing their views on planning applications and it would be prudent for them to declare personal interests at Development Control Committee if they are also Town and Community Councillors.

RESOLVED: That Council noted the new Code of Conduct Guidance.

501. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

The meeting closed at 4.55 pm