

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 3.00 PM

Present

Councillor RD Jenkins – Chairperson

S Aspey	N Clarke	HJ David	G Davies
GW Davies MBE	PA Davies	E Dodd	DK Edwards
L Ellis	N Farr	EP Foley	CA Green
M Gregory	EM Hughes	CJ James	RM James
PN John	CL Jones	M Jones	RC Jones
DRW Lewis	JE Lewis	JR McCarthy	HE Morgan
LC Morgan	AD Owen	DG Owen	D Patel
G Phillips	DR Pugh	CL Reeves	M Reeves
CE Smith	JC Spanswick	G Thomas	M Thomas
RL Thomas	HJ Townsend	E Venables	KJ Watts
C Westwood	DBF White	HM Williams	R Williams
M Winter	RE Young		

Officers:

Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Randal Hemingway	Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Gary Jones	Head of Democratic Services
Deborah McMillan	Corporate Director Education & Family Support
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities
Claire Williams	Health & Safety Manager

673. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:-

Councillor D Sage
Councillor MEJ Nott OBE
Councillor PJ White
Councillor P James
Councillor JH Tildesley
Councillor MW Butcher
Councillor B Jones

674. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 9, due to the fact that they were born in the 1950's. These Members left the meeting whilst this item was being considered:-

Councillor N Clarke
Councillor CA Green

Councillor JE Lewis
Councillor RC Jones
Councillor N Farr

675. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of Council dated 5 October 2016, be approved as a true and accurate record.

676. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

Mayor

The Mayor announced that in honour of Halloween and to help raise funds, he and his Consort were happy to support the Black Cat Awareness day and fete at the Bridgend Cats Protection Adoption Centre. He felt that it was lovely to see so many people supporting this worthwhile cause, and enjoying all the attractions. Tempting though it was they did manage to come away without adding to their animal family he added.

They also had the pleasure of visiting the photographic exhibition which was recently held in Carnegie House celebrating Bridgend's past. This retrospective photographic exhibition was extremely interesting, and it was a joy to see the images of the town through the years and compare how Bridgend looks today.

On a more solemn note, the Mayor confirmed that it was an honour to represent the Borough at the 50th Commemorative Anniversary of the Aberfan disaster in Merthyr Tydfil. This was a moving and reflective service and he felt was an important and fitting memorial.

The Mayor confirmed that it was that time of year again and he was pleased to announce that Monday 7th November will see the opening of the annual Mayor's citizenship awards. The awards are open to people who live in the County Borough, as well as local groups and businesses based locally. More information could be found on the Mayoral webpages where a nomination form could be downloaded. The deadline for nominations is Friday 27 January and the winners would be honoured at an event in March.

Finally, the Mayor announced that tickets were now available for his Mayoral Charity event.

Cabinet Member Communities

The Cabinet Member Communities refreshed Members with the fact that Bridgend County Borough Council had been supporting an initiative from The Nappy Gurus which is offering parents a 50 per cent discount on 'real nappy' starter kits.

She recently received an update on the scheme, and was happy to report that as a direct result of the promotion, almost 140,000 nappies will be diverted from being disposed of as landfill waste over the next two and a half years.

As the average child goes through 5,520 nappies, huge numbers end up in landfill. The scheme offered a clean, convenient alternative that is far more environmentally friendly, and delivers huge savings for parents too.

She hoped Members would urge their constituents to find out more about the scheme. Details were available on the Council's website, and the nappy Gurus could be found on Facebook too.

The Cabinet Member Communities stated finally, that Carolyn Harris MP was spearheading a campaign for Council's to waive child burial payments which she was happy to support. The current situation was that the Crematorium Joint Board had decided that there would not be any charges for 16 year olds and under, for cremations. With the burials service there was also a free child service, but this was for ages 0 – 11 years.

Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities advised that National Safeguarding Week will take place between Monday 14 and Friday 18 November, and together with Western Bay partners the Authority will be marking the week by highlighting the work that we do in looking after and protecting vulnerable adults and children.

Here in Bridgend, holding learning events would be held on topics ranging from Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking, and an information stand would be placed in the Customer Service Centre featuring safeguarding information from the Police, Fire service, Carers, Trading Standards and Barnardo's, amongst others.

South Wales Police will be touring the area with a mobile display focusing on hate crime, whilst schools will be delivering lessons about safeguarding and bullying to pupils, with a safeguarding quiz being distributed to all Social Work Team Managers, so that they could share it with staff and test their knowledge about issues surrounding child sexual exploitation.

We would also be promoting White Ribbon Day and the Western Bay Safeguarding Boards' Annual Conference at the Liberty Stadium in Swansea, which will bring together up to 400 professionals from Children and Adult Safeguarding. Both of these events would take place on 25 November.

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities, was sure that Members would show their support for National Safeguarding Week.

Cabinet Member Resources

The Cabinet Member Resources advised that a number of pre-Council briefings have been arranged between now and the New Year. On 30 November, a Corporate Parenting update will take place. There will be a presentation on Dementia Friendly Communities on 11th January, and one on Sustrans for 1 February.

He added that several member development sessions would also take place later this month. There will be Annual Safeguarding refresher training on the 8th and 13th of November, and a budget workshop on 30th November. The workshop will follow the same format as the Council's public sessions, and will be an interactive event aimed at gathering member's views on a range of financial options and proposals.

Finally, the Cabinet Member Resources mentioned a good cause that Councillors DBF White, C Smith and D Owen are involved with.

If Members seen any of them sporting luxurious 'Freddy Mercury' or 'Magnum PI' moustaches later this month, it's because they were taking part in Movember, an annual campaign that aims to raise awareness about men's health issues.

It highlights a very serious issue as statistics suggest that men die four years younger than women in the UK. One in four people in the UK will experience a mental health problem every year, and more than 10,500 male deaths in 2017 will be due to prostate cancer.

So as he was sure Members would appreciate, this was a very worthwhile cause, and he hoped that they would give Owen their full support to the above Councillors.

More could be find out more about the Movember campaign by visiting www.uk.movember.com the Cabinet Member Resources concluded.

Cabinet Member Regeneration and Economic Development

The Cabinet Member Regeneration and Economic Development stated that he was extremely pleased to confirm to Members that the all-new Rhiw Multi-Storey Car Park was gearing up for an imminent opening. The car park has been handed over to the Council, and Officers had been giving it a thorough check. He had been informed that it was looking fantastic, and once BT had connected power to the new lift and payment system, it would be opened immediately.

Advertising and publicity was ready to go on this once an opening date had been confirmed, and the Authority would be marking the occasion by offering free weekend car parking for all visitors in the run-up to the festive trading season.

This will be available at the Rhiw every Saturday and Sunday between now and New Year's Eve, as a thank-you to local businesses and shoppers for their patience and co-operation during the construction of the new car park.

Elsewhere in the County Borough, he confirmed that free car parking had also been arranged to help support traders during the festive shopping season. It will be available on Saturdays and Sundays after 10am at council-run pay and display car parks between 3 – 31 December 2016.

The new car park is the first phase of the Vibrant and Viable Places project to be completed at the Rhiw. It will be followed in Spring 2017 by a new commercial unit and 28 modern apartments, that aimed to establish a community of residents who will live at the heart of the town centre and support local trade.

This was the first completed phase of what promises to be a major new landmark development in Bridgend town centre.

The Cabinet Member Regeneration and Economic Development, thanked Coastal Housing and Kier Construction for ensuring that this fantastic new facility had been delivered in time for the festive trading season, and acknowledged the essential funding that has been contributed by Welsh Government.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive advised that he had two announcements to make.

Digital Transformation Programme aimed to make the Council's services more accessible online, so that with the click of a few buttons, residents can use our website to pay for Council products and report any local issues.

The Authority already have the facility for Council Tax to be paid online, while some school meals could also be paid for electronically, but this list was going to expand considerably in the next few years.

At the moment the Council were focusing on the creation of something called 'My Account'. This is a new feature that will make it possible for each resident to log in securely and carry out any transactions they require.

It was anticipated that 'My Account' will be up and running by spring 2017, and that residents will be able to use it for Council Tax payments and Housing Benefit. By winter next year, it will become possible for them to log in to report problems such as fly-tipping.

Further online services will continue to be added in a phased approach, and this will enable residents to manage the ways in which they interact with the Council to suit their own lifestyle. Part of this work involves a complete redesign of the Council website.

Another element of the digital programme is being looked at by the Members ICT group working with the Head of Democratic Services, on proposals to bring a full digital approach to Members allowing for paperless Council meetings. This is proposed to be introduced for the New term of office in May next year.

The Member element was a critical part of the Digital Transformation programme, and we are asking residents and staff to adopt new approaches. It is important that Elected Members and Senior Managers can demonstrate that we are all taking a lead in this change to the way we do business.

The Chief Executive confirmed that he would bring Members further details about this ambitious initiative as it developed over the coming months.

He also had a few developments on the City Deal to update Members with. He felt that it would be timely to have a fuller update to Council in due course, but wanted to share some key developments in the mean time.

As part of the City Deal, the ten Councils appointed a growth and competitiveness commission chaired by economist professor Greg Clerk. This commission is charged with developing an evidence based economic strategy for the region and a regional investment strategy.

The commission's work is coming to an end in the next few weeks, and both he and the Cabinet Member Regeneration and Economic Development, attended an interim update from the commissioners yesterday.

Early indications are that there is a clear evidence base to support the City Deal focusing on skills development, connectivity and housing.

About a third of our gap in GVA compared with the rest of the ULK was attributable to low employment, and two thirds was due to lower productivity than elsewhere in the UK.

The commission was formulating some specific recommendations but from what he had seen yesterday, they will be a great help in focussing the efforts of the partnership and

maximising the investment of the City Deal fund in order to create sustainable job growth, increased productivity and generate private sector investment.

With regards to joint working, a joint transport authority in shadow had already been established, which was chaired by the Leader of the Council and which had now had its first meeting.

Leaders have discussed the need to adopt similar regional approaches to strategic land use planning, housing and inward investment in order to advance the deal and work will be underway to explore that further.

A considerable amount of work behind the scenes had been carried out, in order to tie up the necessary legal agreements to allow the money to flow to us.

All Councils were seeking to approve the formal creation of the joint Cabinet that currently exist in shadow form and it was anticipated this being presented to Cabinet and/or Council in January 2017.

677. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader reported to Council that Councillor HM Williams had been appointed as Deputy Leader of the Council. He advised that Councillor Williams was a very experienced Member and he would be personally looking forward to working closely with him over the coming months. He added that he would be making an announcement about Cabinet Members portfolios in due course.

New laws on renting out houses in Wales were due to begin very soon as part of the Housing Act (Wales) 2014, and landlords and agents have until 23 November to register with Rent Smart Wales. Those who fail to do so could be fined or even prosecuted, so he hoped that all Members will help to make their constituents aware of this. Applications could be made online at www.rentsmart.gov.wales or by calling the Rent Smart Wales helpline on 03000 133344.

The Lead Association for Catering in Education Wales Awards, had allocated the title of Frontline Catering Team of the Year to kitchen staff at Brynteg Comprehensive. The team won the award in recognition of the way in which they had worked closely with pupils to cook up a range of healthy meal options such as burritos, pulled pork pasta sauce and a new fruit and salad bar. Whilst all of BCBC's schools met the WLGA's Healthy Eating in Schools regulations, this was a fantastic achievement, and congratulated the team at Brynteg for their hard work and success.

Members would be aware the Leader announced, that the Council works hard to ensure that pupils with disabilities or additional learning needs are educated in their local community. Seven-year-old Trelales Primary pupil Leo Burgess was the latest to benefit from this as he has become the first pupil in Wales to use a high-tech Cosmo Electronic Braille that the local authority had provided to the school. Such technology is invaluable in making learning more accessible, and he was looking forward to seeing more of it introduced to classrooms throughout the County Borough. He further added, that the Education Department had also funded the latest amplification technology on school classrooms, that gave increasing support to children with hearing loss or impairment.

Finally, the Leader advised that Members may be aware of incidents at Swansea University and Gower College that had occurred over the last few days. Reports had included references to unstable chemicals such as Dinitrophenylhydrazine; buildings evacuations and controlled explosions.

He therefore asked the Council's Health and Safety Manager, to explain the details of the actions carried out by the Authority to address this situation in Bridgend.

Health and Safety Manager's announcement

The Health and Safety stated that Elected Members may be aware of incidents at Swansea University and Gower College that had occurred over the last few days. Reports had included references to unstable chemicals, buildings evacuations and controlled explosions.

The UK wide incidents have been linked to the storage and use of 2,4 DNP (2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine) which is commonly used in the syllabus for A level chemistry, and is perfectly safe if stored correctly. However, if stored incorrectly, there is a potential for it to become explosive.

CLEAPPS provides advice and guidance on all aspects of practical work in science, technology and art. As a result of the incidents above CLEAPSS issued a briefing document about 2,4 DNP to all higher education establishments on 28th October 2016.

The advice circulated by came to the attention of the Corporate Health and Safety Unit (CHSU) on the morning of Tuesday 01/11/2016 from a partner organisation Bridgend College. As part of a considered response to this urgent matter, an immediate desk top audit of the 9 schools in the Borough was undertaken by Officers based within CHSU. This was achieved by contacting the school by telephone and speaking with the Head of Science or Chemistry Technician to obtain the necessary information.

The key element of the briefing note related to the storage requirements of the chemical. If the chemical had not historically been stored in the right manner then it would need to be treated as potentially explosive and disposed of properly. The only safe disposal route was for the bomb squad (EOD) to deal with the chemical as there are NO safe methods for school staff to carry out.

Initially, four schools identified that the chemical was being stored correctly. It turned out though, that five however were not.

Of the five schools not storing the chemical properly, one was using the chemical to prepare for an experiment at the time of the audit call. Further advice was sought in relation to this matter and the advice provided by CLEAPSS was that the school implement the appropriate storage requirements from this point forward to keep the chemical stable.

Three schools contacted OED on 999 on the 1st November 2016, and each had a controlled explosion on school sites during the last night. One school has since updated the initial audit information provided and advised that, contrary to information provided at the time, they have assured that the chemical has been stored in line with approved guidance at all times.

The Health and Safety Manager concluded her submission, by advising that a further pro-active audit would be undertaken by CHSU with support and assistance from Senior Management in Education and Family Support, to gain assurances that the storage and management of chemicals in schools were managed appropriately.

A Member stated that he was aware that there were rocks in the vicinity of Cynffig Comprehensive School that were contaminated with a radioactive substance, and that these had been there in the region of 25 to 30 years. He asked if these were intended to be included in the health and safety audit.

The Leader confirmed that this school would be audited as part of the overall audit of all schools.

A Member asked what arrangements were available in schools and colleges to ensure that chemicals were not easily made available to pupils and students.

The Health and Safety Manager advised that all schools had in place health and safety arrangements based upon the local authorities or their own Health and Safety Policy. Also, each school maintained records of their chemicals stored for safeguarding and monitoring purposes, and these records also included details regarding their usage.

A Member that there had recently been a fire in Gower College, and he asked if this had resulted from a chemical source.

The Health and Safety Manager confirmed that this had taken place on the Ty Coch site and had been an accident resulting from an electrical fault, and was therefore not chemically related.

678. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION FOR THE LEADER/MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Question from Councillor RC Jones to the Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Economic Development:-

“It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to be tattooed. However, the LGA are warning that illegal tattooists, known as ‘scratchers’, are offering services to children using cheap equipment bought on-line. They warn that these unlicensed tattooists are taking dangerous shortcuts with Health and Safety and often work from home in kitchens or garden sheds and advertise their services on social media. It is illegal to work as a tattooist without registering with the Local Council, so what steps are BCBC taking to identify whether there is a problem in the Borough and prosecuting, where necessary, these unlicensed tattooists so we can help protect the health and safety of our youngsters?”

Response from the Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Economic Development to Councillor RC Jones:-

Shared Regulatory Services uses a range of approaches to identify illegal tattooists but taking enforcement action against illegal tattooists is difficult because of the nature of the illicit activity and the reliance on intelligence including witnesses to enable effective investigation and prosecution. The service will investigate fully any complaints and information supplied to close down illegal tattooing operations. A regional seminar was held in October to raise awareness of the consequences of having tattoos done in unsafe environments and we hope that this will encourage reporting of illegal activity in the borough.

In due course, the Council will also adopt the Model Bylaws for Tattooists and Body Piercers, these Bylaws have already been adopted in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and place stricter infection control requirements on business operators.

The Shared Regulatory Service is currently in the process of unifying the policy across the three authorities.

Supplementary question from Councillor RC Jones:-

It is noted that the Shared Regulatory Services investigate any complaints received relating to illegal tattooists. However, a good and reliable source in terms of any such complaints being made, are often from sources such as local residents and retailers situated within the area of the premises. Do the Shared Regulatory Service invite complaints from sources such as these through an appropriate advertising campaign or making readily available, a Contact telephone number/email address through which any such complaints could be lodged

Response from the Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services/Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Economic Development:-

As mentioned above, the relevant policy would hopefully soon be unified between the three participating authorities that make up the Public Protection collaboration, and this would allow for greater control over business operators, particularly those that were operating illegally. The regional seminar also referred to in the original response, was more intended to raise awareness for the trade on unregistered tattooists as opposed to the public at large. The policy would look at specific issues that needed to be targeted in respect of Tattooing and Body Piercing, particularly with regard to both educating, and by doing so, hopefully protecting the younger generation, who were interested in or even fixated by tattoos etc. The policy would be subject of the approval of Cabinet in due course he concluded.

As Members were aware, the Shared Regulatory Service involved the local authorities of Cardiff City, Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend County Borough. The targeting of illegal tattooists had been more active in Cardiff than the other two areas to date, as there were more tattooist and body piercing establishments there, and therefore, this came with a greater risk of some of these illegally operating. Tattoos and body piercing was seen as a fashion accessory by young people, and it was therefore important from a health and safety perspective, to put a stop to any illegal operators.

Second supplementary question from Councillor D Patel:-

What does the definition of tattooing cover?

Response from the Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Economic Development:-

The use of needles and other similar type instruments that are covered by health (and Safety) regulations.

679. **HALF YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2016-17**

The Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which was to comply with the requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2011 Edition (the Code) to report as part of a mid-year review an overview of treasury activities. The item also reported on the projected Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for 2016-17, and finally, informed Council of the proposed changes to the Investment Strategy 2016-17, included in the Treasury Management Strategy.

The report commenced with some background information, following which in paragraph 4.1.1, it detailed the treasury position for 1 April to 30 September 2016, which the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gave a resume upon. He confirmed that the Authority were not involved in any long term borrowing, and he anticipated that this situation was

not expected to change during the next 6 months. The Council had however he added, taken on some short term borrowing initiatives.

Paragraph 4.4 then gave the Investment Outturn for 1 April to 30 September 2016, and the second table in paragraph 4.4.2 of the report, confirmed that favourable cash flows have provided positive cash balances for investments with the balance for these at 30 September last, being £47.1m.

The remainder of the report, gave information on the Review of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2016-17; Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2016-17, with Appendix A to the report detailing the estimate for 2016-17 set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, and also the projected indicators for 2016-17.

The Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer then referred to the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, confirming that this will have significant capital expenditure and treasury management implications in terms of a financial commitment from the Council.

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) Approved the Council's treasury management activities for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016.

Approved the projected Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for 2016-17.

680. INFORMATION REPORTS FOR NOTING

The Monitoring Officer presented a report, the purpose of which, was to inform Council of any Information Reports for Noting since its last ordinary meeting.

The Information Report detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report related to the Final Statement of Accounts 2015-16.

RESOLVED: That Council noted the content of the report, and in particular, the Information Report contained in paragraph 4.1.

681. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING NOTICE OF MOTION (PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR PJ WHITE)

"Make fair transitional state pension arrangements for 1950's women"

'Hundreds of thousands of women had significant pension changes imposed on them by the Pensions Acts of 1995 and 2011 with little or no personal notification of the changes. Some women had only two years notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age.

Many women born in the 1950's are living in hardship. Retirement plans have been shattered with devastating consequences. Many of these women are already out of the labour market, caring for elderly relatives, providing childcare for grandchildren, or suffer discrimination in the workplace so struggle to find employment.

Women born in this decade are suffering financially. These women have worked hard, raised families and paid their tax and national insurance with the expectation that they would be financially secure when reaching 60. It is not the pension age itself that is in dispute, it is widely accepted that women and men should retire at the same time.

The issue is that the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and has happened without sufficient notice being given to the women affected, leaving women with no time to make alternative arrangements.

This Council resolves to write to the relevant UK Government Minister to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements. This Council will also seek to engage the support of local Members of Parliament to highlight this injustice and support this campaign at a parliamentary level.'

RESOLVED: That Members unanimously agreed with the above Notice of Motion and, in particular, to the proposal recommended in the paragraph immediately above.

682. URGENT ITEMS

None

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm