

COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 11 JANUARY 2017

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 11 JANUARY 2017 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
EP Foley	CA Green	M Gregory	EM Hughes
CJ James	RM James	PN John	B Jones
CL Jones	M Jones	RC Jones	DRW Lewis
JE Lewis	JR McCarthy	HE Morgan	MEJ Nott OBE
AD Owen	DG Owen	D Patel	G Phillips
DR Pugh	CL Reeves	M Reeves	CE Smith
JC Spanswick	G Thomas	M Thomas	RL Thomas
JH Tildesley MBE	E Venables	KJ Watts	C Westwood
DBF White	PJ White	HM Williams	R Williams
M Winter			

Apologies for Absence

M Butcher, N Farr, P James, LC Morgan, D Sage, HJ Townsend and RE Young

Officers:

Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Randal Hemingway	Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Andrew Jolley	Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services
Darren Mepham	Chief Executive
Andrew Rees	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities

692. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:-

Councillors RM James - Prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 due to having close relatives in receipt of Council Tax Reduction and Prejudicial interest in Agenda item 7 due to the individual nominated for appointment being a close personal friend.

Councillors DBF White, PJ White and CL Jones – Prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 due to having close relatives in receipt of a Council Tax Reduction.

693. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of a meeting of Council

694. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

695. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader advised that National Holocaust Memorial Day would be marked in Bridgend County Borough on Friday 20 January with the annual event at Bridgend College's Sony Theatre. This year, it would focus on the Holocaust and genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur and would ask "How Can Life Go On?" To help answer that question would be Antoinette Mushimi-yim-ana, a survivor of the 1994 Rwandan genocide where approximately one million Tutsus and Hutus were murdered in just 100 days. Antoinette was now an active advocate of reconciliation and justice, and worked to create peaceful environments in every society. For the first time Members of the public were being invited to attend the event and could pre-book a space, contact details were available from the Democratic Services team.

Members will have seen the rare "double excellent" judgement made by Estyn in its inspection report on Bryntirion Comprehensive shortly before Christmas. This was in recognition of both the school's current performance, and its prospects for improvement which were deemed to be of the highest possible standard. No pupil had left the school without a qualification in the last two years, and the inspectors found that the school's motto of "We learn how to live" was very well embedded among pupils and staff alike. The double excellent report had been achieved thanks to a combination of strong leadership, good teaching and exceptional care, support and guidance and he was certain that members would join him in congratulating the school for its inspirational success.

Demolition work recently began as part of the plans to construct a modern new Pencoed Primary School on a single site. Redundant buildings across the road from the main school comprising of the former kitchen and canteen, classroom block and gymnasium would be demolished by the works, which were expected to last approximately eight weeks. A letter had been issued to residents living near the school explaining the timescales and advising where they could get additional information.

696. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

The Head of Finance and S151 Officer presented a report, the purpose of which was to provide Council with information regarding the implementation of the 2017-18 Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR) (to be adopted by 31 January 2017), together with the funding implications.

He confirmed that on 20 January 2016, the Council adopted the CTR for 2016-17 in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013, with this scheme ending on 31 March 2017.

There were currently 14,251 households receiving CTR, 8,616 of these were working age and 5,635 were of pensionable age. Of the 14,251 households receiving CRE, 10,848 were entitled to a full CTR reduction.

The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 had now been laid. These regulations updated the financial figures used in the CTR schemes and made amendments to:

- Explicate how a local authority should calculate an applicant's weekly income (i.e. to consider income that the person expects to receive as well as income that has been received).
- Ensure consistency with other inter-related social security legislation by taking tax reliefs into account when determining net earnings, and with

regards the treatment of the Universal Credit carer's element in determining the applicable amount.

- Correct inconsistencies between the Welsh and English language versions of the 2016 Regulations.

The new regulations did not contain any significant changes from the claimants' perspective to the current scheme, and the maximum level of support that eligible claimants could receive remained at 100%.

The Head of Finance and S151 Officer explained the limited discretion given to the Council, to apply discretionary elements that were more generous than the national scheme. These discretionary elements were contained in the report.

The last consultation on the three discretionary elements was undertaken in 2013, and therefore a new consultation exercise was undertaken between 31 October 2016 and 18 December 2015 for the 2017-18 scheme. A total of 681 responses were received, with the minority of respondents (16.6%) indicating that they were currently in the receipt of CTR.

The total estimated cost to the Council for the most supported options was £22k, and it was therefore proposed, that the discretionary elements be as follows:-

- The extended payment period is maintained at the minimum standard of 4 weeks.
- War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions are fully disregarded when calculating entitlement to CTR. The estimated cost of this proposal is £22,000.
- Backdating was reduced to the minimum standard of 3 months.

Members raised concerns that on occasions there were extenuating circumstances for late applications and 6 months rather than 3 months should be allowed.

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services confirmed that there was already discretion to backdate claims in extreme circumstances.

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- (a) Noted the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013, and the 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 amendment regulations.
- (b) Noted the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken by the Council on the discretionary elements of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

Adopted the scheme, details of which were given in paragraphs 4.24 to 4.29 of the report.

697. **APPOINTMENT OF REGISTERED REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and Council approve the appointment of Mr Tim Thomas as the Primary School Parent Governor Representative to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for a term of four years.

698. **AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS**

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services presented a report to seek approval for a series of amendments which had been made to the Scheme of Delegation of Functions.

The titles and portfolios of the Cabinet Members had been revised, and the functions allocated to each Cabinet Member required some amendments to be made in particular to Scheme A, to reflect the changes to their responsibilities accordingly.

A desktop review had been undertaken, to ensure that the Scheme was up-to-date and fit for purpose. Some revisions were also required and these together with the other changes were summarised in paragraph(s) 4.2 and Appendix A to the report.

To meet operational requirements it was proposed that a new paragraph be added to Scheme B1 for the Chief Executive. An amendment was made to the list of Consultee(s) where additional expenditure from within the capital programme for new or existing schemes, subject to a maximum limit of £100,000 and funding availability, which for reasons of urgency could not await the next meeting of Council. The Leader or in his absence, the Deputy Leader were added to the list of consultees.

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) Approved the Scheme of Delegations in relation to its functions as attached at Appendix A to the report, subject to the addition of the Leader and Deputy Leader as consultees to Scheme B1 in the absence of the Chief Executive.

Authorised the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services and Monitoring Officer to make minor textual changes and amendments to the Scheme of Delegations to take account of changes in legislation and changes to Officer and Member titles and responsibilities

699. **REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE - CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services presented a report advising Council of the outcome of a review of the political balance of the Authority resulting from changes to the membership of the Labour Group. The report also sought approval of the revised political balance, listed nominations and appointed the necessary members to Committees to reflect the changes in the political balance.

Following the review the membership of the committees had been updated to reflect the composition of the Council accordingly and was shown at Appendix 1 to the report. 3 committee seats had been allocated to each of the Independent Members to ensure that all members were able to engage in the Council's decision making process.

RESOLVED That Council

- (a) Noted the change to the political composition of the Council
- (b) Approved the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (c) Sought nominations as shown in paragraph 4.3 to be removed from or to be appointed to serve on each of the Committees, Panels and other bodies;

Appointed the nominations named at the meeting to their respective committees (attached to the Minutes).

700. INFORMATION REPORTS FOR NOTING

RESOLVED: That the report of the Monitoring Officer advising of the Information Report considered since the last ordinary meeting of Council, as detailed in Paragraph 4.1 of the report, be noted.

701. URGENT ITEMS

None.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm