

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 2017 AT 3.00 PM**

Present

Councillor PA Davies – Chairperson

SE Baldwin	TH Beedle	JPD Blundell	NA Burnett
MC Clarke	N Clarke	RJ Collins	HJ David
P Davies	SK Dendy	DK Edwards	J Gebbie
RM Granville	CA Green	DG Howells	A Hussain
B Jones	M Jones	MJ Kearn	DRW Lewis
JE Lewis	DG Owen	D Patel	RL Penhale-Thomas
AA Pucella	B Sedgebeer	SG Smith	JC Spanswick
RME Stirman	G Thomas	T Thomas	E Venables
MC Voisey	LM Walters	KJ Watts	CA Webster
DBF White	A Williams	AJ Williams	HM Williams
JE Williams	RE Young		

Officers:

Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Randal Hemingway	Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Andrew Jolley	Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services
Gary Jones	Head of Democratic Services
Laura Kinsey	Head of Children's Social Care
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr CE Smith  
Cllr P White  
Cllr S Vidal  
Cllr T Giffard  
Cllr J Radcliffe  
Cllr JR McCarthy  
Cllr R Shaw  
Cllr JH Tildesley  
Cllr S Aspey  
Cllr K Rowlands  
Cllr RM James

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations were made by Members:-

Cllr David White – Personal Interest in Item 8 as a family member is employed by the Council  
Cllr Spanswick – Personal Interest in item 8 as a family member is employed by the Council  
Cllr B Jones – Personal Interest in item 8 as a family member is employed by the Council.

## COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 28 JUNE 2017

The Corporate Director Operations and Partnership Services declared an interest on behalf of all officers in the chamber in item 8 and stated that all would leave the chamber while this item was discussed.

### 26. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Council on 17 May and 31 May 2017 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting

### 27. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

#### The Mayor

The Mayor announced that after a short break with her consort she had returned to a busy couple of weeks and with the warmer weather they had a lovely time at various community events and openings. On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June they attended the Brackla Funday and flower show and it was great to have seen so many people there enjoying the attractions and supporting their local community.

The Mayor stated that anyone who knew her, knew what a great animal lover she was and on Sunday therefore, she was pleased to be asked to open the Dogs Trust Bridgend funday in the grounds of Pencoed College. This was the biggest event in the re-homing centre's calendar and drew thousands to watch the dog show. She and her consort were honoured to be asked to judge the first class in this event, although choosing was always going to be difficult for her as she thought that they all deserved to win.

The first event in support of her charity fundraising was held last week and she wished to thank all who attended and showed their support. Events would be happening throughout the year and dates would be put into calendars so that Members were aware of the dates. Details of her charities were still being finalised and she advised she would let Members know as soon as they were confirmed.

The Mayor recently attended an event with the Lord Lieutenant to present an MBE award to Mr. Dennis Jones. Mr. Jones is 91 and for the last 25 years has been a volunteer with the Citizens Advice Bureau. His dedication and hard work is truly inspiring and it was great to celebrate his achievements with his colleagues, friends and family.

On a more sombre note, the Mayor referred to the dreadful events in Kensington where people lost their lives and scores of families lost their homes and in the Grenfell fire. She stated that all our thoughts were obviously with those affected and our gratitude with the emergency services particularly the fire service who risked their own lives in saving others. In remembrance of all the people who were affected by the shocking event she asked all present to observe one minute's silence.

A one minutes silence was observed by all present.

#### The Deputy Leader

The Deputy Leader announced that hundreds of local high street retailers could benefit from reduced rates bills as part of the Welsh Government's High Street Rates Relief Scheme. Eligible retailers will receive up to £1,500 off their non-domestic rates bill if they have a rateable value of £50,000 or less in the 2017-18 financial year. In Bridgend County Borough, it is estimated that 449 ratepayers fit the criteria and could potentially benefit from the scheme, which he added, will also be offered in conjunction with the Small Business Rates Relief and Transitional Relief initiatives.

Members will be aware that many businesses have expressed concern about increases in non-domestic rates as a result of the Valuation Office Agency's recent revaluation, and this scheme was announced by the Welsh Government earlier this year to support affected small and medium sized businesses. He added that whilst the council does not have discretion over any elements of the scheme, we are pleased to be able to adopt and implement it in order to support local traders.

The Deputy Leader also mentioned a number of new developments that were about to come to fruition in the county borough, all of which had been set up with support from the council. In Porthcawl, the Jennings Building was gearing up for its grand opening, and he believed the first of the businesses to locate there – Coffi Co – had already opened ahead of schedule. The landmark building had been brought back into using funding that included townscape heritage funding, and was sure to be a big success.

THI funding had also played a prominent role in the complete refurbishment of the Victoria Inn. The former Bridgend town centre pub in Adare Street was set to reopen in July as the Corvo Lounge, a family friendly café bar.

The adjoining property at 7 Adare Street had also been restored along with two of the former Elder Street cottages using grant funding.

These latest developments will mean that over the last 10 years, more than £1.5 million has been invested in restoring town centre buildings to their former glory and bringing them back into use. Together with new ventures that range from a food store to a dessert bar, this is excellent news for the town centre, and a sure sign of how the THI scheme is continuing to benefit local communities.

#### The Cabinet Member Communities

The Cabinet Member Communities was very pleased to confirm that two hours of free car parking was set to be offered at the Rhiw multi-storey later in the summer as part of a pilot scheme that will test the effect of free parking on the town centre. The scheme was being funded using money set aside by the Welsh Government for the current financial year, and was available up until spring 2018. He added that the pilot scheme will enable local authorities to trial different forms of free parking arrangements in order to see how much of an impact they may have in attracting shoppers back onto our high streets. With its modern 'pay on foot' facilities, it will be relatively straight-forward to make the necessary changes for the pilot scheme to go ahead, and I am sure that members will all be eagerly watching the results.

The Cabinet Member Communities advised members that as part of Community Energy Fortnight, a new information session and exhibition had been arranged on the Caerau Minewater Heat Project. He advised that it would take place between 12.30pm-3pm on Tuesday 11 July at St Cynfelyn's Church Hall on Cymmer Road and would give people a chance to find out what progress has been made on the scheme and ask further questions about how it could benefit local communities.

Heat networks were believed to have the potential to supply heat for between 14 per cent and 43 per cent of all UK buildings by 2050, and the council is also exploring two further potential heat network schemes, this time in the Bridgend town centre area. He stated that he would bring members more details as it develops further.

#### The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations stated that she was sure that members will have noted the recent report from the Care and Social Services

Inspectorate Wales which confirmed that the Authority takes prompt action to keep children safe from harm. She stated that Bridgend was one of the first authorities to be inspected under the new framework, and the inspection coincided with the Council's efforts to implement the requirements of the Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014.

She added that it helped to identify ways in which we can improve the quality of our assessments, threshold screening and care and support planning. With a significant improvement programme already underway, the inspectors were pleased to note that senior managers are committed towards achieving further improvements in the provision of help and protection for children and families. They also found that the directorate is working hard to transform services, and that senior managers have already taken steps to look at the impact of services on reducing need and risk.

She informed Members that an improvement action plan has been produced to take account of the report's recommendations, and she was really pleased to see that inspectors have highlighted the council's high performance in safeguarding children.

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations wished to thank everyone who helped make Carers Week 2017 such a success and who helped organise the various events and information stalls that visited different parts of the county borough.

She added that according to the last census, almost 18,000 local residents act as unpaid carers for relatives, friends, partners or neighbours within the area, and the week was marked with a call to establish more carer-friendly communities.

She informed Members that this is where employers and local service providers can work together to remove some of the obstacles that carers might face in their daily lives. The daily pressures that a carer can face often remain hidden from public view, so by raising awareness of carers' issues, signposting people towards the most appropriate support and information, and encouraging the establishment of carer-friendly communities, we can help take some of that pressure away, and make their lives a little easier.

#### Chief Executive Announcements

The Chief Executive announced that at the last meeting of Council he advised members that the UK Government had set the national threat level at 'severe'. He explained that this generally meant that further incidents are highly likely, and that we should all remain alert and vigilant. He added that the cautionary measures that were added to the council's existing procedures remained in place and, as before, staff and members were advised to report anything that caused concern or raised suspicion to a line manager and South Wales Police by calling 101 or 999 in an emergency. He advised that at the same time, we were sending the message that we should get on with the business at hand while remaining alert in and around council premises.

The Chief Executive stated that Members who enjoyed using social media may be interested to know that the council's first Instagram account was launched recently. It gave residents a new, visual option for keeping in touch with the council, and for being up-to-date with the latest council news, developments and events. To date, the Council's Twitter and Facebook accounts have around 17,000 followers and this number was growing every day, and the Instagram account would support this while specifically helping the authority to engage with younger people and visitors to the county borough. He advised Members that if they would like to follow the council on Instagram, they could find us under the name 'Bridgend CBC'.

Finally, he stated that members may be interested to know that the Urdd Eisteddfod at Bridgend College's Pencoed Campus was a big success. This was a massive event which called for the laying of 60 miles of cables, 2,500 trackways and a five-week construction period requiring more than 150 workers. Not far off 90,000 people visited the Urdd throughout the week, and organisers revealed that 15,000 competed in the various competitions, including more than 4,000 children who took part in sporting activities alone. He added that the council exhibited at the event alongside Halo and Awen, and were able to showcase the county borough to scores of visitors. The Chief Executive stated that he also volunteered at the event, so he saw for himself the reaction of visitors and all in all we received some excellent feedback, and the event provided some highly positive for the county borough.

#### Corporate Director Operation and Partnership Services

The Corporate Director Operation and Partnership Services announced a change in membership on Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 in that Councillor K Watts would come off the membership and Councillor K Williams would go on.

#### 28. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader stated that plans to improve the local network of walking and cycle routes will move up a gear this summer. The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 requires local authorities to develop a 15-year vision for an active travel network so that residents can rely less on their cars for short everyday journeys, such as travelling to work or school or to access shops and services. Following an initial public consultation in 2015 to find out which routes were being used, the council has launched a new consultation and wants residents to comment on our proposals. These include links between Newton and Porthcawl town centre, Cornelly to Pyle railway station, Bridgend town centre to the Bridgend Designer Outlet, Broadlands to Bryntirion Comprehensive School, and more besides.

He informed Members that the proposals focus upon shorter urban routes in the first instance due to the greater potential number of people who would make use of them, but other longer-term schemes have also been earmarked, such as Pyle to Porthcawl, Bridgend to Porthcawl and Pencoed to Bridgend. He added that Members would no doubt want to encourage people to have their say. He informed Members they could do this by visiting the consultation pages of the council website before the closing date of 1 September.

Porthcawl was set to host the Seniors Open for the second time at the end of next month, and he stated that this is a major coup which would showcase the county borough to a global audience.

He added that when the town first hosted the event back in 2014, players praised the excellent course conditions, more than 43,000 spectators lined the fairways, and visitors poured into the area to provide a welcome boost for local trade. This year features a world-class line-up of golfing legends, including former Ryder Cup captains Bernhard Langer and Colin Montgomerie, and he was sure that it will be an even greater success.

The Leader stated that Members would be aware that Bridgend County Borough Council actively promotes participation in sport, and a 'youth ticket' scheme has been made available. He added that this lets 17-24 year-olds watch all the action for just £16, while anyone aged 16 or under who is accompanied by an adult will be admitted free of charge. He stated that residents could find out more by visiting the senior open championship website.

29. **FIRE SAFETY BRIEFING BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND FIRE SERVICE**

The Chief Executive welcomed Chris Hadfield from South Wales Fire and Rescue and David Todd-Jones, Development and Building Control Officer for the Authority.

The Chief Executive gave condolences to families involved in incident and thanked colleagues in South Wales Fire and Rescue Service that were providing ongoing support to colleagues in London in dealing with the aftermath of incident.

The Chief Executive gave a Fire Safety Briefing to Members with the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. They explained to members the facts about the Grenfell Tower fire, where it started and how it had spread throughout the tower. They advised that although the cladding was not the only contributing factor to the spread of the fire. The Chief Executive informed Members that the Authority had received lots of information and advice from the National Fire Chiefs Council so we could learn and resource accordingly.

The Chief Executive advised Members that we do not have any high rise accommodation in Bridgend County and where external insulating materials have been added to housing by V2C it was not rain screen cladding as used at Grenfell Tower, the insulation improvement work was undertaken in compliance with building regulations.

The Head of Fire Safety was responsible for Fire Safety legislation and that their focus at this time was on high rise premises in South Wales, and they were looking at premises over 6 storeys, of which there were 109 in Wales, which had all been inspected within the last 7 years and that a number of them had gone under gone refurbishment with cladding. The Fire and Rescue Services and relevant Local Authorities were working closely with the owners and landlords of these properties to re-evaluate their fire assessments and to reassure the public that high rise living was safe. South Wales Fire and Rescue were focussing their efforts on life risk, and would be taking a steer from public inquest of the fire in Grenfell Tower. They would be visiting all 109 premises over a period of time and have been reassured we can lean on other colleagues for assistance.

A Member stated that whilst buildings were being checked to ensure they complied with Fire Safety regulations she was concerned that unsafe electrical equipment was being used in the properties. She asked if like the Commercial Sector has PAT Testing for equipment, could a similar approach be taken forward in private properties where there were Houses in multiple occupations.

The representative from South Wales Fire and Rescue stated that this would not possible to implement as these were peoples private homes, and they were unable to regulate against that. But, they do offer free home safety fire checks so if members of the public were concerned they could contact them to carry out these checks but they could not enforce them. The free checks involved local fire crews going out from local fire stations to give advice on electrical items, and smoke tests and alarms. The Chief Executive added that housing association also test sprinklers and smoke alarms but they need permission from tenants to be able to carry these out.

A Member asked for clarification on fire risk assessments in all schools, and if they have all had new ones recently and if there were sprinklers in older schools. The Chief Executive stated that the Authority have existing fire safety assessments in all schools, which may identify improvements, such as new fire doors and that the assessments were a continual ongoing process and not just an annual check that was in place. The Corporate Director Education added that all new school buildings all have auto escape

routes, evacuation procedures, sprinkler systems and auto alarm monitoring systems. Fire risk assessments were in place and all safety checks carried out in every school and these were in place before the recent incident at Grenfell and were continually monitored and updated accordingly. The Chief Executive added that this applied to all other buildings managed by the Authority including temporary accommodation

A Member thanked the officer and his colleagues from the Fire and Rescue service for the job they do and had great admiration for them as everyday they put their lives at risk for others. She asked the Building Control Officer present about the Bottlebank building in Porthcawl, and asked how soon BCBC would have feedback from Redrow to establish the building was safe as it was fitted with external cladding.

The Building Control Officer replied that the architects would be providing the information as soon as possible as they were currently reviewing viewing all past applications; he advised that he would forward all responses on to the relevant ward Members so they were able to share with their constituents. He reassured the Member that he had already had a look at the plans for this particular building and that he could not foresee any major issue coming from it but would provide further detail as soon as it was received by the Authority. He further advised Members that the new Rhiw development was not a concern and fully complies with building safety regulations.

A Member paid gratitude to the London Fire Brigade and stated how very brave and courageous they were working in such dangerous conditions at great height to save the lives of others. He stated that there was a lot of concern for high rise buildings but he was also concerned with the new builds within the borough, particularly new steel framed schools with cladding, he had received a number of questions and concerns from parents on the construction of Maesteg School. He asked if flammable material was used in the construction of this school and if so what the Council's policy was if this type of material had been used.

The Chief Executive replied that the Authority were looking at the Councils estate and were prioritising based on the nature of construction. He added that they were currently collating this information and would share with Members at the earliest opportunity. He added that he understood the concerns around the cladding but there were a number of factors that contributed to the fire at Grenfell Tower. He reassured members that the Authority would ensure that schools have correct measures in place according to their building and provided a commitment to find out what we were dealing with and not panic with knee jerk reactions. If improvements were needed the Authority would act accordingly.

A Member sought assurance from the Chief Executive that BCBC were adequately resourced as needed, to support residents if such an incident were to happen within the Borough

The Chief Executive responded that BCBC would never be fully resourced as we would want to be, but we do need to be prepared to react to any kind of situation. He advised that BCBC have mutual arrangements in place with neighbouring authorities so that if such a major incident were to occur they would support us as needed, as we would do if a major incident occurred in their area. He added that the Authority were constantly looking at how prepared we are and aspire to test aspects of the plan should a major incident happen in BCBC. Senior Managers have had training on emergency procedures and how to react in the cases of a major road traffic accident, or large evacuations were needed. He also stated that multiple tiers of Government in Wales was also a factor to consider and some aspects of how an incident would be escalated, i.e to Welsh Government or Parliament would not be known until such time of the incident occurring.

The Leader added that the Authority does have a civil emergency plan in place which he can share with members, the plan includes emergency accommodation planning which is reviewed regularly, he welcomed members input to these plans if they so wished.

A Member asked if there was a generic register for all properties built in the Borough. The Building Control Officer stated that everything has to go through building control and a record was kept on all properties. Any changes to properties such as electrical installations would need to go through all the necessary checks and approval via building control for search purposes when it comes to buying and selling the property on.

A Member asked if we were confident the Authority had a complete and accurate picture with regard to all buildings that we own or operate and if not when would we have a complete and accurate picture for all schools in the Borough.

The Chief Executive stated that the Authority were close, and were waiting on a PO5 in Maesteg. He added that due to the sensitivity and public interest around schools these were immediate concerns for the Authority and would be the first that they would share with Members.

A Member was concerned that there seemed to be a lack of knowledge in general in Social housing of what to do if a fire were to occur, he had visited residents that had received nothing in welcome packs and information sheets not displayed in the correct places. He asked if we could work closely with our Social Landlords to ensure that this work was up to date and complete

The representative from South Wales Fire and Rescue stated that they work closely with Social Landlords and that fire safety legislation is shared with them. He added that there was a mechanism in place for those that fail to comply. He added that they have over 70,000 Social Housing properties south wales, he added that there is a fear factor in high rise living but stated that if common means of escape in the buildings are kept clear then they are safe buildings.

Members thanked all officers and colleagues from the South Wales Fire Service for their contributions to meeting and asked for a letter to be sent from Members to the London Fire Service paying gratitude for their commitment and bravery during the recent incident at Grenfell Tower.

30. CIVIL PARKING MOBILE ENFORCEMENT VEHICLE

The Corporate Director Communities submitted a report to Council to seek approval from the Council to make a change to the Capital Programme to include a budget of £68,000 for the purchase of a Civil Parking Mobile Enforcement Vehicle.

He stated that on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013, Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) was given the powers to undertake civil parking enforcement (CPE) under the legislative powers of the Traffic Management Act 2004, to deliver effective parking enforcement. Drivers who park their vehicles in areas such as on school 'keep clear' markings, bus stops and where a loading ban is in place, are a danger to road users and pedestrians, especially children, as well as causing traffic congestion. Road safety outside of schools is vitally important, and concerns in this regard have been expressed by schools, parents and local members representing the communities.

He advised Members that the Authority currently employs 12 Civil Enforcement Officers, exclusively operating within the County Borough of Bridgend to provide parking



enforcement, both on-street and off-street across the Authority. They currently issue in the region of 10,000 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) per annum. While enforcement resources were appropriate for the majority of parking infringements, it was of concern that it had been suggested that enforcement consistently fails to meet expectations in the areas of schools, bus stops and other locations where short-term parking is prohibited i.e. zig-zags associated with pedestrian crossing facilities, no loading/unloading restrictions, double yellow lines with kerb markings. (Note: these are not areas where blue badge holders would be exempt from penalty charge notices being applied). He added that whilst officers are regularly deployed to these areas their physical presence prevents parking only whilst they are there. Once officers leave the area, inappropriate parking reoccurs.

The Cabinet Member Communities stated that the vehicle would be targeting improving road safety in the borough and inappropriate parking. When parking enforcement officers were visible, parking and driving was generally fine but when they aren't visible the inappropriate behaviours returned causing chaos. Therefore, he endorsed the purchase of the Civil Enforcement Vehicle and equipment as a good investment stating that it would be a deterrent as it is mobile, therefore, holds back inappropriate behaviour. He added that this decision had come from requests from schools, residents and some members. He advised that it would be strictly controlled and not to be used outside areas identified in the report and the vehicle is bright yellow to ensure its visibility.

Several Members welcomed the initiative around schools, as they had seen many occurrences of inconsiderate and dangerous parking with PCSO's on duty getting verbal abuse on a regular basis. They welcomed the vehicle as a deterrent and as a good initiative to reduce putting our children in danger.

One Member added that as the dangerous and inconsiderate parking and driving did not only occur at the beginning and end of the school day but also during the middle of the day when younger nursery children were being dropped off and collected and asked for the timing of the traffic orders to be looked into as some were only in force for an hour each side of the school day. The Corporate Director Communities agreed that he would review the traffic orders in place and feedback to Members.

A member who was fully supportive for the funding of the vehicle asked if there was a possibility that rather than additional staff be employed to run this scheme that the Authority utilise existing staff for a more efficient enforcement scheme and utilise the additional funding for other road safety initiatives.

The Corporate Director Communities stated that he undertook an assessment for this scheme and for it to work effectively extra resource would need to be employed. The Cabinet Member Communities confirmed that although the foot patrols covered the Vale under the Shared Regulatory Service, this scheme only covered Bridgend and because it is our initiative, it was for BCBC to recruit the extra officers needed for the scheme to run effectively. It is necessary to recruit extra officers.

A Member asked if there would be a programme of introduction of the vehicle and if it could be made known in the press and via various social media channels when the programme starts.

The Corporate Director Operations stated that the first step was to procure the vehicle then it would be deployed and agreed upon in detail. He added that due to reports from head teachers and Members of the public they knew where the most problematic areas were so they would be prioritising these areas first and foremost. He added that the vehicle will also be able to take pictures on the move.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved that the Capital Programme be amended to include funding for to the purchase of a Civil Parking mobile enforcement vehicle, at an estimated cost of circa £68,000. The scheme will be funded from existing earmarked reserves.

31. **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18**

All Officers present at the meeting left the meeting during the consideration of the Pay policy Statement 2017/18

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services submitted a report to Council on the updated Pay Policy Statement for Council's consideration for the year 2017/18 is attached as Appendix A.

He advised that the Pay Policy Statement is fully compliant with the Localism Act 2011. Agreement was reached previously in respect of a two year pay negotiations for:

- The Chief Executives who received a 1% rise as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and who will receive a further 1% rise as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017
- Chief Officers who received a 1% rise as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and who will receive a further 1% rise as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017

He added that similarly a two year deal was agreed for those employed under Soulbury and JNC Youth & Community terms and conditions. In line with their national terms and conditions the effective date of their pay rise for 2016 was 1<sup>st</sup> September in that year and the effective date of their 2017 pay rise will be payable as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the updated Pay Policy Statement as attached as Appendix A to the report

32. **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services submitted a report to Council which provided details of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee Structure, Terms of Reference and its processes.

He advised Members that the new Overview and Scrutiny Structure would be kept under review and any issues and outcomes would be identified in the Scrutiny Annual Report 2018. The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services explained to Members the new membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and that it would continue to reflect the political balance of the Authority, the Forward Work planning procedures and annual Budget Consultation Process and how the Call in and pre-decision Scrutiny would work for the new Overview and Scrutiny Structure.

A Member referred to para 4.18 of the report where it stated that Overview and Scrutiny could call-in a total of 6 decisions per year and was concerned that although we were a relatively low call-in authority that this procedure left little flexibility to call in further items if required and stated that there could be a year in which more than the allocated 6 decisions may need to be called in.

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services stated that the Authority had never had this amount of call-ins previously and stated that this would be quite extraordinary to receive this number. He added there needs to be a limit, to allow the Authority to operate effectively. He added that if this level is found to be too low then this could be reviewed at such time.

A Member referred to Appendix B of the report where it stated that the term of office for Councillors was every 4 years, he stated that this should read every 5 years.

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services stated that this appendix was included in the report to demonstrate the changes needed to the constitution as a result of the restructure of Overview and Scrutiny, he advised that this would also be updated as required.

A Member welcomed the report with caution adding that Bridgend is one of the best in wales for Scrutiny but supported the changes provided that changes could be made if required when the structure is reviewed in due course. He also urged all members to fully engage in the scrutiny process and to fully take part of scrutiny process in Bridgend

A Member referred to page 68 of the report para 4.12.1 where it stated that there was also an opportunity for Corporate Directors to propose items for the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme and advise on their appropriate timing, he was concerned that this would be deemed to be an officer led process. The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services stated that Corporate Directors are able to add value to the Scrutiny process Situation by suggesting items as they are in the unique position where they are aware of what is planned for the future and changes to legislation for example – This would allow Corporate Directors to highlight to Scrutiny Members items for them to consider if they wish too, it would still be for Scrutiny to decide if they wish to consider the item proposed. A Member endorsed the report and welcomed Corporate Directors being able to feed into the Scrutiny process whilst being member led as Corporate Directors know what is coming up.

**RESOLVED:** That Council

- Noted the revised Overview and Scrutiny Structure and processes;
- Approved the amendments to the Constitution as set out in Appendix B which includes the Terms of Reference, associated functions and remits of the new Scrutiny Committees;
- Approved the updated calendar of Scrutiny meetings for 2017/2018 attached at Appendix C.

33. **TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES**

**Question from Councillor J Williams to the Cabinet Member for Communities**

*“In view of the continuing and overwhelming number of complaints being received by Councillors regarding the poor standard of service currently provided by Kier, what action is the Cabinet Member for Communities taking to address mounting public anger and genuine frustration at this totally unacceptable situation in which we now find ourselves?”*

**Response:**

‘Obviously, the service Kier have provided over recent weeks has fallen short of what the Council expects and what local residents deserve, and this position is totally unacceptable to this Council. I completely understand the frustration and anger of some of those residents that have experienced problems and received a poor service.

Since the last Council meeting on May 31<sup>st</sup> officers have continued to be in regular contact with senior Kier managers every day, including most weekends, and Kier are in absolutely no doubt about how disappointed we are about the underperformance issues and their failure to resolve some of them quickly enough. Senior officers also meet

regularly with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet colleagues about this matter and the Leader has escalated our concerns to the highest level within Kier, writing a very strongly worded letter to the overall Kier Chief Executive last week demanding immediate action.

Additionally the Leader and Corporate Director Communities insisted last week that the Managing Director of Kier Environmental Services, Mr Julian Tranter, attend an urgent meeting in Bridgend to address our most immediate concerns, particularly with regard to a build-up of missed collections throughout the County Borough. This resulted in a number of short term actions to clear waste from the streets including;

1. a short term arrangement to allow in some cases the 'mixing' of waste to allow collection rounds to be completed more quickly in view of the exceptionally hot temperatures experienced last week.
2. the induction and employment of over 20 additional staff [ including 5 drivers ] to provide greater resilience and allow all available resources to be deployed and targeted appropriately
3. additional rounds arranged to collect recycling from Monday June 26<sup>th</sup>, so that there are now 18 rounds 'manned' by a driver plus 2 operatives to collect the significantly increased amount of recycling material that is being generated.
4. an additional vehicle deployed to collect AHP waste
5. a 'courier' type company engaged to accelerate the delivery of outstanding recycling container and bag deliveries and remove the backlog. These have again been much more than originally envisaged as each household in theory should have already had a food caddy, but there have been many thousands of requests for new ones.

All of these actions are at no additional cost to the Council.

In addition, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities, together with the Head of Neighbourhood Services, visited the Kier Depot in Tondy this week to meet local managers and look at and discuss the current operation. It is very clear that the contract is now much better resourced than previously and that finally Kier are being much more proactive in seeking to resolve the issues of concern. Kier report that their most significant challenge has been the substantial increase in the amount of recycling collected on the streets, which in these early weeks of the new arrangements has averaged well above what was originally envisaged and modelled. This is good news in that demonstrates that the Council's scheme will be successful and allow us to meet statutory Welsh Government recycling targets but the implementation and execution of the scheme by Kier thus far has not been good enough in some areas.

All Cabinet members have made it clear that in the main the locally based staff and operatives have been performing well and working incredibly hard but in our opinion have been let down by some of the initial resourcing and management of the contract at a regional and UK level.

Kier are confident that now they have substantially increased the resourcing of the contract that the most significant problems will not reoccur. The Council will of course rigorously pursue them on this. The vast majority of waste was cleared by the end of the weekend just gone as planned but there are still a couple of areas where streets were missed and additionally there remain isolated properties that have been missed throughout the County Borough. Clearly everything will not be as specified immediately

and some level of missed collections is unfortunately 'normal' in the early days of any new waste contract of this magnitude, the reported national norm is about a 4% 'failure' rate in the early stages. Kier in the main are managing to collect at around about this level but there have been some days where they have slipped substantially below this figure, of course the Council does not condone any failure to provide the specified levels of service.

As a result of the actions that have been implemented and I have outlined above I will now expect to see a rapid improvement in overall contract performance

A Member asked what the rationale was for proposing to rollout the new service to residents in June, rather than in September when the vehicles were ready. The Corporate Director Communities explained that during negotiations with Kier, the original date proposed was April 1<sup>st</sup> but it soon became apparent that due to delays in signing the contract they would not be ready in time. BCBC did not want to defer any longer than necessary or there would be risk of not meeting recycling performance targets

A Member asked what action the Authority were going to take against Kier for the severe disruption caused at the start of the contract due to missed collections, delays in delivering recycling materials to residents and lack of communication with residents on their poor service.

The Deputy Leader stated that Kier had no doubt let the Authority down. He thanked Kier Bridgend, as their staff had been fantastic in responding to the chaos with limited resource. He assured members that the Authority were in constant contact with Kier UK and they were in no doubt about the anger we are facing as an Authority because of their miscalculations. The Authority Insisted they increase their resource which they have done so, they now have 13 staff answering calls and have an extra 6 rounds of collections in force. He reaffirmed that their actions are unacceptable and assured members that the extra resources were being funded by Kier UK and not the Authority.

A Member asked if BCBC were following Welsh Government policy and guidance regarding the recycling of materials and separating them into different boxes and bags before collections. The Corporate Director Communities confirmed that the Welsh Government Blue Print Strategy encourages separating recycling as there is less contamination, greater value and is more cost effective. However, he added that it was difficult to know if they would continue to encourage this in the future and could be reviewed moving forward. He explained that BCBC's methodology was currently showing much higher recycling than anticipated and we are already close to achieving recycling targets in Wales due to the recent changes that had been implemented. He added that the current contract with Kier was awarded to Kier UK through a competitive tender process and they had previously provided this service to BCBC with successful results including the lowest waste collection costs in Wales for the last 7 years, a Citizens panel with 86% happy with the service that Kier had provided and low member of referrals. He added however that he did not condone their actions now but the reality was they were best placed to deliver contract and when they get it right it will work very well.

**Question from Councillor T Thomas to the Cabinet Member for Communities**

*"What KPI's are specially attached to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Kier recycling and refuse contract?"*

**Response:**

'The Contract with Kier includes a comprehensive performance framework schedule which sets out the required performance standards, the performance deductions for failure to meet those performance standards and the monitoring and reporting arrangements on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis. The details of this are part of the commercial contract with Kier.

In terms of KPI's the only indicators that need to be reported publically relate to the statutory national requirement to meet and report on the percentage of recycling achieved for waste collected. The new waste contract was designed to ensure that the Council moves from its 2016/17 percentage of just over 58 % to the required level of 64 % by 2019, and moves towards the statutory target of 70 % that is set for 2024. Early indications are that the restriction on residual waste of two bags per fortnight for most households and the increased recycling options available, will allow the Council to achieve the next statutory target of 64% within the term of this 7 year contract and indeed move towards the top of Welsh Local Authorities in terms of recycling percentage achieved. It is however still early days in term of the new arrangements and we will be better able to accurately predict what Bridgend is likely to achieve in a few months' time'.

A Member stated that they still did not know what KPIs were attached to the Kier UK contract and suggested that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee look at this further Recycling improvements reassurance. Need public good will on our side.

Members hoped that performance indicators would include resident satisfaction levels as these had been less than satisfactory from the start. And asked if these would be in the public domain to allow to be scrutinised.

The Corporate Director Communities stated that the Council takes seriously the needs of residents. He added that the contract needs time to bed in before scrutiny can look at this to give Kier a chance to improve their service. He stated that evidence has shown this week that the level of missed collections has fallen, call centres are answering all calls and the public are able to leave messages. Whilst all this was progress he stated that they now needed to ensure improvements are sustained and continued. He informed Members that the Citizen Panel will be asked to provide feedback but that it was sensible to bed in first. He stated that before the contract was in place residents were concerned about being able to comply with the two bag waste rule but this has already demonstrated by high compliance that the speculation is different to reality.

A Member referred to missed collections, particularly those that included collections with AHP and was concerned that some of public were having their dignity affected by these missed collections and this was unnecessarily prolonging their embarrassment. She asked if Cabinet Members had looked into changing this process.

The Deputy Leader stated that this could be looked at in the scrutiny process and during the three month bedding in process. He added that Kier had recently doubled the AHP collections to enable them to catch up on missed collections and that these collections were considered a priority in clearing rubbish away from the streets.

34. **TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTION FOR THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES & EARLY HELP**

**Question from Councillor C Webster to the Cabinet Member Social Services & Early Help**

*'Following publication of the CSSIW report Inspecting Children's Social Services June 2017, can the Cabinet Member for Social Services tell this Council what he is doing to implement the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) Act 2014?'*

**Response from the Cabinet Member Social Services & Early Help to Councillor C Webster**

A project team was recruited for a 6 month period, made up of professional lead managers from children and adult social care, a training and development officer and a strategic development project manager.

The scope of the project was developed to review and identify gaps in policies and practice and ensure the directorate was able to work and align practice to the requirements of the Act. The team developed a work schedule and plan outlining the requirements with timescales, itemising the work necessary with managers, teams, partners, service users and members across adults and children's services, including the work with welsh government and western bay over the 6 month period to the full implementation of the Act.

A project milestone action plan developed identified 68 key milestones necessary to the implementation and imbedding of the Act into practice. The team engaged with the Western Bay Regional Implementation Team, and also represented Bridgend at the national working groups looking at common approaches to implementation of specific areas of work across Wales (eg. information, advice and assistance).

Progress was reported, monitored and reviewed by a management board made up of the Director Sue Cooper, Head of Adult Services Jackie Davies and Head of Safeguarding and Assessment for Children's services Laura Kinsey, with representation from legal and workforce development colleagues. The tight timescale for this work required monthly meetings to evaluate progress. A final report outlining all the work undertaken was produced in May 2016. A number of further reports have been written for members, and for western bay reporting purposes in relation to embedding the changes required by the Act into our practice. As Cabinet Member for Social Services I have been kept informed throughout.

Implementation of the Act is now an ongoing piece of work and the focus is now to embed new ways of working into everyday practice.

Member's induction about the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate is scheduled for the afternoon of 20<sup>th</sup> July and following this meeting the CSSIW Children's Services Inspection report will be presented to Scrutiny by the lead inspector. In addition to this the Director of Social Services and Wellbeing will be presenting her annual report to full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> July. There will be an opportunity at these meetings for there to be a greater debate about both the implementation of the SS&WB Act and the recent CSSIW inspection

A Member asked what involvement the Council has had with local partnership agencies affecting the need of vulnerable children

The Leader advised Members that partner agencies are involved in decisions for vulnerable young people and Looked After Children and stated that it did depend on circumstances of child. Many partnership agencies were involved in the decision making process including that of Health workers and the police service where necessary and they would be present when decisions are being made. Child Protection would

also be part of decision making process under current law and regulations. And would always be consulted when changes are being proposed around care of child or adult.

A member was concerned that having spoken to some parents and carers that she had met; some partner agencies are not attending meetings as they should be. The Leader advised that we do have some difficulty with some partner agencies not engaging fully in the process and these issues will be raised with Chief Executive of those organisations. He added that the Health Service and the Police have a crucial role in the decisions of vulnerable people and should be in attendance.

The Head of Childrens Social Care advised that meetings held for Looked After Children and children in need were not quorate then they should not go ahead. Children in need have detailed support and care plans and if the chairperson of meetings were concerned then they should escalate those concerns.

A Member stated that the report was produced in May 2016, however this report was in June this year adding that most of this report does not tell us what happened this year and that Members have not been given the correct information to understand the outcomes and asked what has been done to inform members of outcomes.

The Leader stated that a report would be going to the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee which will include an action plan on the recommendations to CSSIW, there would also be regular review meetings throughout the year. The Head of Childrens Social Care stated that the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales 2014 Act report went to project group to establish that we were ready to implement the Act and this further went onto Cabinet and the Adult Social Services Committee She advised that a further report on the delivery of an action plan regarding the outcomes of the report would be presented to Scrutiny in July. The Chief Executive stated that there was a requirement on the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing to complete an Annual report and present to Council and this would be presented in July

A Member referred to the recruitment and retention of staff in the Social Services Directorate and asked what the Authority's position was on this

The Leader stated that they have had difficulty in recruitment and retention in the past but was pleased to report that the "grow your own policy" had been successful, with Social Workers becoming senior Social Workers and Senior Social Workers becoming managers. He added that frontline social workers carry out work in a highly pressurised environment and worked long hours so it was therefore difficult for them to find time for training, however they were looking at ways to improve this.

The Head of Childrens Social Services stated that this was the recruitment and retention of Social Workers was a priority and there were few vacancies at the moment she explained their focus was on retaining staff to develop a mature workforce. She added that they were undertaking exit interviews, staff surveys to understand why staff leave to try and address this issue in the future

35. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 5.10 pm