

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 21 MAY 2019 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

PJ White

HM Williams

D Patel

RE Young

Apologies for Absence

Officers:

Gill Lewis	Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Kelly Watson	Head of Legal & Regulatory Services
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Andrew Thomas	Group Manager Sports & Physical Activity

360. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor CE Smith and the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing, due to other Council business.

361. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor HM Williams declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7. As his grandchildren were pupils at the School subject of the report.

362. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet dated 16 April 2019, be approved as a true and accurate record.

363. LOCAL TOILET STRATEGY

The Chief Executive presented a report, in order to seek Cabinet approval to publish a Local Toilet Strategy in line with Part 8 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017: Provision of Toilets.

He advised that Council maintained public conveniences have undergone substantial budgetary cuts in the past few years.

In order to accommodate these savings, facilities have been closed or transferred to allow them to be retained in some format. In order to achieve financial savings however, the Council carried out public consultations in 2007, 2015 and 2018, which assessed the public's views on toilet provision.

The Council's 'Comfort Scheme' was re-introduced in 2015 to counteract the effects of public convenience closures but has not been widely utilised by local businesses.

He proceeded, by confirming, that in 2018, Welsh Government published The Provision of Toilets in Wales: Local Toilets Strategies, which placed a duty on Local Authorities to publish a local toilets strategy for its area by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019. The duty did not in itself require a local authority to provide and maintain public toilets themselves, but they are required to take a strategic view across their area on how these facilities can be

provided and accessed by their local population. This is intended to help address the current challenges regarding the provision of public toilet facilities within communities, which have often relied upon traditional stand-alone facilities that have been in decline in recent years, due to Local Authority financial pressures.

The Chief Executive added that a draft document was circulated to all partners and businesses who currently make their toilets available for public use and their facility details were provided to Welsh Government in March 2019.

Attached to the report at Appendix A, was the final Local Toilet Strategy, that included information on collaborating partners and facilities. A map also attached to the report, indicated the distribution of these public toilets and the information in table format showed what amenities are available and the opening hours of these.

The Cabinet Member – Communities advised that some public toilets were being supported by BCB's Town/Community Councils and/or through other related partnership or collaboration methods and that the Strategy was more about informing the public what arrangements were in place throughout the County Borough in terms of public toilet facilities, as opposed to advising what facilities are provided by BCBC. He was pleased to note the support with regard to toilet facilities being provided and made available in places visited frequently by the public by partner organisations, for example at Bryngarw House (by Arwen), the Bridgend Life Centre (Halo), Bridgend Railway Station (Network Rail), amongst others.

The Leader echoed these views and wished to place on record his thanks to the four principal Town Councils of Bridgend, Pencoed, Porthcawl and Maesteg in particular, giving independent support to the keeping open of public toilet facilities, where that provided in Pencoed was an award winning facility

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet approved:

- (1) The Local Toilet Strategy in line with the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017: Provision of Toilets.
- (2) Regular reviews as detailed within the report.

364. **PENCOED RECREATION GROUND PAVILION**

The Chief Executive presented a report, the purpose of which, was to seek Cabinet approval to allocate funds from the £1 million capital fund established to support community asset transfers, so that essential repairs can be undertaken upon the Pavilion at the Pencoed Recreation Ground prior to a lease being granted to Pencoed Town Council.

The report gave the history of the building and the Chief Executive confirmed that it was well used by service users, with regular hirers of this facility being Pencoed Rugby Football Club, Pencoed Athletic Football Club, the Pavilion Playgroup, Mid Glamorgan Dolls House and Miniaturist Group and Halo Leisure.

The Chief Executive then referred to paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 of the report, where it confirmed that the Pavilion had initially badly damaged due to a storm when the changing rooms then had to be closed to sports users, with the remaining rooms at the facility remaining in use. Subsequently however, upon further inspection, the whole of the building was closed, on health and safety grounds.

A Condition Survey was then carried out on the Pavilion and this identified, that over the next 10 years £260k needed to be spent on the building, of which £196k needed to be

spent in the first 5 years, of which 115k needed to be spent in the first 2 years. Appendix B illustrated the type of works that needed to be carried out to this structure.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council had previously set aside capital funding of around £1m some 5 years ago for works to Parks and Pavilions for the purpose of Community Asset Transfer (CAT), and he explained that since then the scope for this funding had been expanded under the Council's MTFS, including to a wider range of community facilities. However, only 2 projects to date had been allocated funding from this source.

The next section of the report confirmed that Pencoed Town Council has submitted an expression for the Community Asset Transfer of the Pavilion, in order for the building to be re-opened under a lease arrangement with the ability to extend this lease. Information regarding the works required to the building and other terms, including those of both a financial and maintenance nature were outlined in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 of the report.

The Chief Executive concluded his submission, by giving Members a resume of the report's financial implications.

The Cabinet Member – Communities confirmed this was a good news story.

BCBC due to savings it was required to find under its Medium Term Financial Strategy, could not continue to provide the level of services it used to including for the maintenance of Sports Pavilions and Community Centres, etc. He added that it was important to keep this facility open for a number of very justifiable reasons, including the fact that Pencoed RFC had a number of teams playing on the fields the Pavilion served, ranging from age 7 up to senior level. The continued use of the Pavilion would support the well-being of future generations, he added.

The above comments were echoed in turn by the Leader and Deputy Leader, with the Leader adding his thanks to Pencoed Town Council for their support in the re-opening of the Pavilion.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet approved that the Council will be responsible for all essential repairs required upon the Pencoed Recreation Ground Pavilion to ensure that the building can be handed over to Pencoed Town Council in a compliant condition to enable a lease to be granted under the community asset transfer programme. It is proposed that building works will be funded as follows:-

<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Town & Community Council Capital Grant Scheme 2019/20 (approved by Cabinet on 16 April 2019)	£20k
Financial contribution from Pencoed Town Council	£20k
Balance of funding CAT Fund	£75k

**365. RATIONALISATION OF SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES 2019/20**

The Chief Executive submitted a report, that advised Cabinet of the outcome of a public consultation exercise with regard to a proposal to reduce the amount of Council subsidy

for bus services by a sum of £148,000 as agreed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Welsh Government support the provision of regional and local bus services by subsidising routes that are not commercially viable. These services serve routes that enable residents who live along them to access employment, education, healthcare and social activities.

He advised that BCBC's core budget for supported bus services was £202,600 in 2018/19. This included a one-off subsidy agreed as part of the 2018/19 public consultation on subsidised buses where it was agreed three popular local bus routes would be supported throughout 2018/19.

The allocation provided to BCBC by the Welsh Government, through the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG) was £386,825 in 2018/19, out of which £84,394 was awarded to Bridgend Community Transport with the remainder, £302,431, to be spent on the region's core strategic bus network and associated services.

Reduction in base funding and continued financial austerity has meant the Council has had to review the services it delivers against its declared priorities. The Council's subsidy for bus services makes a significant contribution to ensuring some bus services that are not commercially viable can run. Nevertheless, this area of expenditure has been identified as one that is not a statutory function to deliver and a savings target of £148,000 was identified in the MTFS for the 2019/20 financial year. This would leave no Council budget for subsidising local bus services in 2019/20.

A report was submitted to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018 setting out proposals for the rationalisation for supporting bus services across the county borough to meet the proposed removal of the budget. Cabinet approved that a public consultation should be carried out together with a full Equality Impact Assessment before a further report be made to Cabinet outlining the results of the consultation and before the proposals outlined in the report were considered and a final decision made on the proposals.

In the past, when subsidy cuts had been implemented, some operators had used it as an opportunity to revise the financial profile of the routes and operated previously subsidised services on a commercial basis. For example, as a result of the 2018/19 MTFS saving, five of the six previously subsidised routes were commercially retained with modifications or reductions in frequencies. As in the past, until the proposed subsidy withdrawal has been implemented, it is unclear whether operators will respond in a similar manner this year.

Paragraph 3.8 of the report, identified the bus routes which formed part of the consultation.

The Chief Executive proceeded, by advising that a consultation on the proposed service removal was implemented to gather views and opinions on the potential impact of the reductions in order to meet a proposed budget removal of £148,000 in 2019/20, as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The full details of the consultation was appended to the report, with some of the key points of the feedback contained in paragraph 4.3 of the covering report.

He stressed that Community transport services offer an alternative form of transport for the elderly and disabled residents in areas where bus services have been withdrawn. The local community transport operator (Bridgend Community Transport) provides a range of services to suit varied circumstances but it is currently operating at capacity and therefore its ability to respond in the short term to the subsidy withdrawal has to be recognised.

The Cabinet Member – Communities explained that no Councillor wished to have to make this kind of decision, though this was the reality after 10 years of national austerity and huge cuts affecting Council's funding.

Far from removing buses or bus routes, he wished to make it clear that this was about ceasing funding that the Council has been paying to private, profit-making companies, so they will run services that might otherwise not be possible due to low passenger numbers using such services.

He added that of the six services that have already had their subsidy removed, five are continuing to be operated entirely by the bus company providers, so there was strong evidence to suggest that not all services would cease to operate as soon as the Council stopped subsidising these.

The Cabinet Member – Communities confirmed that this was something that will be discussed with bus operators further, as part of a monitoring exercise going forward.

He encouraged residents of the County Borough to continue using bus services, as the income generated from this would greatly assist in services remaining in place, as opposed to them being cut.

The Deputy Leader advised that the rationalising of bus services was part of budget reduction proposals aligned to the Council's MTFS. He added that only 10 paying passengers were required on a service to keep this viable.

The Leader concluded debate on this item by stating that a considerable amount of savings required by the Council for the next financial year were as yet unaccounted for. He hoped that whilst the Metro proposals aligned to a project of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal that was presently concentrating in its current phase on train links, would be expanded in future phases to include increased bus link operations.

The Interim Head of Finance confirmed that the savings referred to above, were in the region of £10m for 2020/21 and £8m for 2021/22, which was a considerable sum and which would inevitably have some effect on services presently provided to the public.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (1) Considered the content of the consultation report and Equality Impact Assessment.
- (2) Determined that the budget for supported local bus services is removed to the routes identified in the table in paragraph 3.8 of the report.

- (3) That Supported Bus Services be monitored going forward.
366. PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) ESTABLISHING A LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC) FOR PUPILS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD) AT YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG CALON Y CYMOEDD (FORMALLY KNOWN AS YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG CWM GARW) OUTCOME OF THE PUBLIC NOTICE

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the public notice on the proposal to establish a LRC for pupils with ASD at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon Y Cymoedd (formally known as Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Cwm Garw).

He confirmed that in December 2011, Cabinet received an update on the review of support and provision for the inclusion of children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). The review identified a need for Welsh-medium support.

In conjunction with this proposal, an ASD LRC was opened at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd in March 2018.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support, added that the Council supports the principles that, when possible, children should be educated in a mainstream school environment and as near to their home as possible. The proposal to open a further ASD LRC, at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon Y Cymoedd would afford those children with ASD who are currently taught through the medium of Welsh to continue their education in their local area.

The statutory public notice was issued on 15 March 2019 and the closing date for objections was 11 April 2019. There were no objections received during the statutory notice period. Cabinet was, therefore, now able to determine the implementation of the proposal.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support then concluded his submission, by outlining the report's financial implications, as contained in paragraphs 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 of the report.

The Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations, advised that the facility subject of the report, was the first LRC in the County Borough supporting the education of young pupils with autism in the medium of Welsh and she was happy to see this forming part of the Council's School Modernisation proposals.

The Leader echoed this, adding that this facility would also support pupils in their transition from primary into secondary education in Llangynwyd. He added that the proposal also had the utmost support from all stakeholders that had been consulted as part of the consultation process

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:-

- (1) Noted that no objections were received during the public notice period, and as a consequence,
- (2) Approved the implementation of the proposal contained in the report.
367. PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN): CHANGES TO BETWS PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support presented a report, the purpose of which, was to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the public notice on the proposal to cease the local authority nurture provision at Betws Primary School.

He advised that in December 2011, Cabinet received an update on the review of support and provision for the inclusion of children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). All learning resource centres (LRCs) were reviewed. At this stage, the particular focus was upon the LRCs with pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

As a result of a further subsequent review of nurture provision, a recommendation was made to close this provision at Betws Primary School, and to introduce a foundation phase provision at The Bridge Alternative Provision (The Bridge), with nurturing principles continuing to be developed within every primary school. Welsh Government subsequently approved the introduction of foundation phase provision at The Bridge.

The next section of the report confirmed that, the statutory public notice was issued on 15 March 2019 and the closing date for objections was 11 April 2019. The public notice sets out the details of a proposal to allow the public to provide any comments or objections they may have. The statutory notice is open for a period of 28 days. Any objections made within this period must be submitted in writing to the Council. The Council must then publish an objections report summarising the statutory objections together with the Council's response to those objections.

There were no objections received during the statutory notice period and Cabinet was, therefore, now able to determine the implementation of the proposal.

In terms of the report's financial implications, the Corporate Director – Education and Family Support advised that from the schools' delegated budget, full-year savings of £51,378 have been identified from the closure of the local authority nurture provision at Betws Primary School. The pro rata element for the 2019-20 financial year has been re-allocated within the schools' Individual Schools Budget (ISB).

From the Education and Family Support Directorate budget, and as a further consequence of the proposed closure, the funding for the Senior Support Officer at Betws Primary School Nurture Provision can be utilised to support the introduction of foundation phase at The Bridge. There were no redundancy costs associated with this proposal, he added.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help advised that the Bridge was a perfect alternative (to Betws Primary) within which to continue this provision, adding further, that he supported the continued principal of nurturing provision across all Primary schools.

The Leader wished to point out, that the proposals of the report would allow a saving that would remain in the schools budget and be committed elsewhere (ie towards improvement at other schools in the BCB area).

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

1. Noted that no objections were received during the public notice period, and as a consequence,
2. Approved the implementation of the proposal contained in the report.

368. **WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS 2017-18**

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing presented a report, the purpose of which, was to present to Cabinet the Council’s performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) sixth framework for the period 2017-18.

He advised that, the provision of public library services in the United Kingdom was made a statutory service for local government as a result of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The legislation requires local authorities to provide a “comprehensive and efficient library service for persons desiring to make use thereof”.

In order to assist in discharging this responsibility, in 2002 the Welsh Government established a framework of standards for the management of local authority library services, by local authorities, the WLGA and other relevant bodies. As part of this framework, new targets relating to library provision and performance are reviewed and set every three years. One of the overall objectives of the standards is that libraries offer all the services and facilities listed as core entitlements within the framework with quality also being measured via a range of performance indicators and impact measures.

On an annual basis, Bridgend Council, as the public library authority is required to submit an annual Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) return for consideration by assessors. A report is issued in turn by the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division (MALD) of the Welsh government, who have responsibility for administering the framework. The report produced represents the considered view of the assessors on the Council’s performance for the given year.

Attached at Appendix 1 to the report, was the 2017-18 report from MALD in response to the library self-assessment return against the sixth framework of Welsh Public Library Standards (2017-20).

The 2017-18 report highlighted that the service has continued to perform well noting the effectiveness of service points and the contribution of the service to wellbeing, an increase in formal and informal training, growth in attendance at events and also increases in membership and active borrowers.

The MALD report explains that the library service in Bridgend now meets 11 of the 12 core citizen entitlements in full and one in part. During 2017-18 the public accountability measures for libraries in Wales had changed from estimated library visits to levels of achievement in relation to 10 quality indicators with quantifiable targets.

The evaluation by MALD identifies that Bridgend has achieved 7 quality indicators in full, 1 in part and failed to achieve 2 of the indicators. A comparison as to how Bridgend has compared to other local authorities was provided at Appendix 2 to the report.

The quality indicators not met relate to acquisitions per capita or materials spend per capita (QI9) and also the amount of material budget or spend on Welsh language resources per capita (QI10).

Although Welsh Government utilises data to formulate its assessment the case studies that Awen have provided are of equal importance and include the summer reading challenge to maintain children’s literacy during school holidays, supporting employability, dementia supportive activities in leisure facilities and “live and loud” cultural events in library settings funded by Arts Council Wales.

The Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing concluded his submission, by advising of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications on the report and the financial implications, which confirmed that there were additional savings of £150k



required (impacting upon Library Services) between 2019 and 2021, which may impact upon the overall service.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing advised that to counteract any shortfall of books in library facilities, people were accessing books more on-line and a lot of this was out of personal choice in any event.

The Deputy Leader added that Bridgend had an effective model in place in the support of its library provision, notwithstanding the recent dip in the spend on books. He was aware that there was a public demand for books written in Welsh in libraries, however this was not the trend in Bridgend.

The Leader concluded debate on this item by stating that he was pleased to note that BCBC was meeting more standards than most other neighbouring authorities were and that the few we weren't meeting, had largely been due to budget cuts the Authority have had to make.

He was also pleased to see that our main libraries were now more akin to Community Centres, in that they provided other services over and above the provision of books, for example IT facilities to allow young people to have the opportunity to continue their learning, within school holidays; assisting individuals by having access to employment opportunities, and dementia supporting activities.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet considered and noted the content of the report and Appendices, recognising a positive year of progress against the Welsh Public Library Standards.

369. **REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, that sought Cabinet approval for the appointment of Members to Joint Committees and Outside Bodies.

A list of these was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that it was proposed that Members appointments are for a term of one year, except where earlier revocation of appointment is appropriate.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet appointed the requisite number of Members to the Joint Committees and other Outside Bodies as listed in Appendix 1 to the report, with it further being noted, that representation on the organisation of Business in Focus will be in the form of an Officer of BCBC (as opposed to political representation), due to this not being a Strategic Decision Making body.

370. **CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Head of Legal and Regulatory Services presented a report, the purpose of which, was to seek Cabinet approval for items to be included on the Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the period 1 July 2019 to 31 October 2019.

In accordance with a provision of the Council's Constitution, the FWP will cover a period of four months, and contain matters which the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Council are likely to consider, in the way of plans, policies or strategies that form part of the Authority's Policy Framework.

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Paragraph 4.1 of the report, outlined the FWP for Cabinet (Appendix 1 of the report), the FWP for Council for the same period (Appendix 2 of the report), and finally the Overview and Scrutiny FWP (shown at Appendix 3 to the report).

The Leader pointed out that the Overview and Scrutiny FWP was carefully constructed by its Committees and led on by the Chairpersons in consultation with Cabinet and CMB, with the view of ensuring that topical and meaningful items find their way onto the agendas of future Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings. He reminded those present, that the Scrutiny process also made both Cabinet and Council accountable in terms of its decision making.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That Cabinet approved the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the period 1 July 2019 to 31 October 2019, as shown at Appendix 1 to the report, and
  - (2) Noted the Council and Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes as shown at Appendix 2 and 3 to the report, respectively.

371. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 15:40