

CABINET - TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2020

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

CE Smith

PJ White

D Patel

Apologies for Absence

HM Williams and RE Young

Officers:

Gill Lewis	Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Andrew Rees	Democratic Services Manager
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Jackie Davies	Head of Adult Social Care
Zak Shell	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Mark Lewis	Group Manager - Integrated Working
Guy Smith	Community Asset Transfer Officer
Tina Haddon	Early Years and Childcare Manager

473. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following interests were declared:

Councillor HJ David – personal interest agenda 7 – Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities & Parks Pavilions and Community Asset Transfer as President of Cefn Cribwr Athletic Bowls Club, Member of Cefn Cribwr Athletic Club and Cefn Cribwr Community Association, who are potential transferee organisations.

Councillor CE Smith - personal interest agenda 7 – Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities & Parks Pavilions and Community Asset Transfer as a member of Laleston Community Council which has expressed an interest in a CAT for Bryntirion Park and Pavilion.

Councillor D Patel - personal interest agenda 7 – Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities & Parks Pavilions and Community Asset Transfer as a member of Ogmere Valley Community Council which is a potential transferee organisation.

Councillor PJ White - personal interest agenda 7 – Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities & Parks Pavilions and Community Asset Transfer as a member of Maesteg Town Council which is a potential transferee organisation.

474. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings of Cabinet of 14 and 21 January 2020 be approved as a true and accurate record.

475. CORPORATE PLAN 2018-2022 REVIEWED FOR 2020-21

The Interim Section 151 Officer sought endorsement of the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-22 reviewed for 2020-21 prior to submission to Council for approval.

She informed Cabinet that the Corporate Plan 2018-2022 describes the Council's vision for the County Borough, the three well-being objectives and organisational values and principles that underpin how the Council will work to deliver its priorities. In reviewing the Plan, the Council has further developed its well-being objectives and these priorities, once approved, will be the Council's well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and improvement objectives under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

The Interim Chief Executive reported that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 February 2020 had considered the revised draft plan and had made a series of constructive comments for amendment and inclusion. The comments had been considered and wherever feasible, appropriate amendments had been made to the draft Plan. She informed Cabinet that the Plan will be reviewed annually taking into account changing circumstances and progress made against the well-being objectives to ensure that the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are met. Once approved, the Plan will replace the current Corporate Plan and will be supported by the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Directorate business plans and service plans.

The Leader placed on record his thanks to the officers who had contributed to the Plan and to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee which had been very thorough in its scrutiny of the Corporate Plan and had contributed to the revised Plan. He stated that one of the most significant changes in April 2019 had been the transfer of all health services within the County Borough from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board to the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and which had been reflected in the foreword to the Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet endorsed the Corporate Plan 2018-2022 reviewed for 2020-21 and recommend it to Council for approval on 26 February 2020.

476. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) 2020-21 TO 2023-24**

The Interim Section 151 Officer presented the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24, which included a financial forecast for 2020-24, a detailed revenue budget for 2020-21 and a Capital Programme for 2019-20 to 2029-30.

She informed Cabinet that the MTFS has been significantly guided by the Council's well-being objectives and while there had been previous year-on-year reductions in Aggregate External Finance (AEF) which had necessitated budget reductions across service areas, the Council still plays a very significant role in the local economy, responsible for annual gross expenditure of around £420M and is the largest employer in the County Borough. The Interim Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet that the Corporate Plan is being presented to Council for approval alongside the MTFS 2020-24, which includes more re-focused well-being objectives and are aligned to each other, enabling explicit links to be made between the Council's priorities and the resources directed to support them.

The Interim Section 151 Officer provided Cabinet with a Corporate Financial Overview and over the last 10 years the Council has made £68M of budget reductions. The Council's gross budget will be around £420m while the net revenue budget is planned for 2020-21 at £286.885M. She stated that around £175M of this expenditure is spent on the Council's staff, including teachers and school support staff. Much of the cost of the services provided by external organisations is also wage related, including waste collection operatives, domiciliary care workers, leisure staff and foster carers. The Council faces having less income to fund services, as well as legislative and demographic changes. The Council has adopted a corporate plan that sets out the

approaches that it will take to manage these pressures whilst continuing to ensure that, as far as possible, services can be provided that meet the needs of the community.

The Interim Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet that the Council is proposing to spend £121m on services delivered by Education in 2020-21, supporting 59 schools and one pupil referral unit. Spending on schools are the biggest single area of spend in the Council. After Education, the largest area of Council spend is on Social Care, which includes social care for children and for adults who are vulnerable or at risk, the Council is proposing to spend £71m on social care and wellbeing services. She stated that the Council's work on the public realm has a more direct and visible impact within the community, with the Council proposing to spend £21.8m on these services. One of the Council's priorities is in Supporting the Economy and the Council will increasingly work collaboratively with the other nine councils which make up the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, which is creating a £1.2 billion fund for investment in the region over the next 20 years. The investment will be targeted on raising economic prosperity, increasing job prospects and improving digital and transport connectivity. The Interim Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet of the proposed spend on Other Services, the most significant areas being Regulatory Services; Registrars and Council Tax and Benefits. In addition, there are a number of services the Council does to support the delivery of those services, which are Property and Building Maintenance; Finance; Legal Services; ICT and Internal Audit.

The Interim Section 151 Officer reported on the Strategic Financial Context and informed Cabinet that the MTFS is set within the context of UK economic and public expenditure plans, Welsh Government priorities and legislative programme. The Interim Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet that in response to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement in September 2019 of a fast-tracked one-year Spending Round for 2020-21, which included an additional £600m to the Welsh Government's budget in 2020-21, the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd announced that the Welsh Government's budget would increase by 2.3% or £593m. As a result of the General Election, the Welsh Government delayed the announcement of the provisional local government settlement until 16 December 2019, delaying the final budget and local government settlement until 25 February 2020. The MTFS and budget for 2020-21 was based on the provisional settlement, being an increase in Aggregate External Funding of 4.7%, no significant changes were anticipated between the provisional and final settlement.

The Interim Section 151 Officer reported that the 2020-21 final revenue budget included a Council Tax increase of 4.5%, which was lower than the options included in the public budget consultation of 6.5%. She explained that the scale of the financial challenge remained considerable once external pressures and risks have been taken into consideration and an assumed annual increase of 4.5% would continue to be included for 2021-24.

The Interim Section 151 Officer reported on a comparison of budget against projected outturn at 31 December 2019, which had a projected under spend of £798k, comprising £85k net over spend on directorates and a £5.274m net under spend on council wide budgets, offset by net appropriation to earmarked reserves of £4.391m. She explained that the main reason for the under spend of £4.154m on Other Council Budgets due to the Welsh Government advising local authorities of additional grant funding of £2.622m to meet the increased cost of teachers' and fire service pensions and teachers' pay increase, all of which were originally funded in full through the MTFS.

The Interim Section 151 Officer summarised the main headlines arising from the public consultation, of which the 7,427 interactions were received, being an increase of 40.6% interactions from last year. She also thanked the Budget Research and Evaluation

Panel in assisting facilitating the budget planning process and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees which resulted in a series of recommendations being made by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration by Cabinet.

The Interim Section 151 Officer outlined the MTFs principles and reported on the most likely budget scenarios, which for 2020-24 was predicated on budget reductions of £29.293m. The Interim Section 151 Officer highlighted the current progress on identifying budget reduction proposals together with the risk status of these proposals. The Interim Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet of the net budget requirement to fulfill the Council's functions, the financing of the net budget comes from the Welsh Government settlement and Council Tax income. The Interim Section 151 Officer also informed Cabinet of the net revenue budget for 2020-21 and how it would be funded through Revenue Support grant, Non Domestic Rates and Council Tax income, requiring an increase in Council tax of 4.5%. The Interim Section 151 Officer outlined the pressures of pay, prices and demographics, non-teachers' pensions and schools' budgets. The number of recurrent pressures total £6.683m, while budget reduction proposals amount to £2.413m.

The Interim Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet of the position of the Council's Reserves, which has been maintained at a minimum of £7m and at 31 March 2019 was £8.776m. The forecast movement in reserves to 31 March 2020 is an overall reduction of £4.250m.

The Interim Section 151 Officer reported on the proposed capital programme for 2019-20 to 2029-30, which has been developed in line with the MTFs principles and capital financing strategy. The provisional capital funding for 2020-21 is £7.983m, of which £3.986m is provided through un hypothecated supported borrowing and the remainder £3.997m as general capital grant. She stated that Council had approved a capital programme in February 2019, which has been revised during the year to incorporate budgets brought forward and new schemes and grant approvals.

The Interim Section 151 Officer also reported that Prudential Borrowing taken out as at 1 April 2019 was £43.998m, of which £27.796m was outstanding. It was estimated that the total borrowed will increase to £44.95m by the end of this financial year.

The Leader thanked all members of the authority in helping shape the budget and hoped all members would support the proposals at Council. He stated that the Council had received a better than anticipated settlement this year and hoped that austerity measures had been brought to an end, but the Council would need to plan to make savings in future years. He informed Cabinet that the largest proportion of the budget would be spent on schools and due to the better than anticipated settlement it had been possible to protect schools from making the proposed 1% annual efficiency savings. He also stated that the Council proposed to increase funding for the Special Educational Needs, whilst the Council would continue its commitment to apprenticeship opportunities to replace specialist staff and to grow its own. The Council would also be investing in the public realm and the highway infrastructure and the planting of trees to prevent flooding due to the effects of climate change. He stated that the views of the public had been listened to in retaining CCTV services and adult community learning.

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help stated that austerity was continuing and the authority was still having to make difficult cuts to services, however there needed to be investment in services. The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations stated that the views of the public had been listened to and she commended the investment being made in the schemes included in the capital programme and was pleased to see the Council supporting citizens by providing digital and personal budgeting support to assist in new claims for Universal Credit. The Leader

stated that the Council is proposing significant investment in renewable energy in the Caerau Heat Network scheme and by investing in its schools and older buildings. The Council will also be working sustainably with the Valleys Taskforce.

The Leader questioned whether the cost of living rise for care packages would be allocated into the budget. The Interim Section 151 Officer stated that the money will be transferred into the budget. The Leader also questioned the impact on the budget of the reduction in employer's contributions in non-teachers' pensions. The Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services stated that Payroll is looking at the calculations, prior to a decision being made on the way forward.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the MTFS 2020-21 to 2023-24, including the 2020-21 revenue budget and the Capital Programme 2019-20 to 2029-30, and recommended them to Council for adoption. In particular Cabinet approved the following specific elements Council for approval:

- The MTFS 2020-21 to 2023-24 (Annex 3).
 - The Net Budget Requirement of £286,885,169 in 2020-21.
 - A Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,537.06 for 2020-21 (Table 11 of the MTFS).
 - The 2020-21 budgets as allocated in accordance with Table 9 in paragraph 3.3 of the MTFS.
477. • The Capital Programme 2019-20 to 2029-30, attached at Appendix G of the MTFS.
- TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL STRATEGIES 2020-21 ONWARDS**

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer reported on the Treasury Management Strategy 2020-21, which included the Treasury Management Indicators and the Capital Strategy 2020-21 to 2029-30, which included the Prudential Indicators before submitting for approval by Council.

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer reported that treasury management and the control of capital expenditure are based in legislation, its treasury management activities are regulated by legislation which provides the powers to borrow and invest as well providing controls and limits on this activity. Borrowing activity must have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and to operate the overall treasury function with regard to the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. Regulations also contain detailed provisions for the capital finance and accounting controls, including the rules on the use of capital receipts and what is to be treated a capital expenditure. She stated that the revised Prudential Code placed a new requirement on local authorities from 1 April 2019 to determine a Capital Strategy. The Capital Strategy contains the Prudential Indicators and the Treasury Management Strategy contain the Treasury Management Indicators.

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer reported that the Treasury Management Strategy 2020-21 confirms the Council's compliance with the Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and also fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the Welsh Government Guidance. The Treasury Management Strategy is an integrated strategy where borrowing and investments are managed in accordance with best professional practice. She stated that the Council borrows money either to meet

short term cash flow needs or to fund capital schemes within the capital programme but loans taken are not associated with particular assets. The Treasury Management Strategy had been considered and reviewed thoroughly by the Audit Committee.

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer reported that the Capital Strategy 2020-21 to 2029-30 was presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 February 2020 for information. It confirms the Council's compliance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Capital Strategy sets out a framework for the self-management of capital finance and examines the following areas:

- Capital expenditure and investment plans
- Prudential Indicators
- External debt
- Treasury Management

It reports on the delivery, affordability and risks associated with the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made. The Capital Strategy is linked to the Corporate Plan, Treasury Management Strategy, MTFs and the Asset Management Plan. The Council is planning capital expenditure of £56.434m in 2020-21, and the Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer highlighted the sources of where it would be funded from.

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer summarised the external debt and investment position as at 31 December 2019, the Council held £96.87m of borrowing and £38.95m of investments. She presented a balance sheet showing forecast changes in borrowing and investments and has been produced using estimates of capital spend and forecasts on useable reserves for the current financial year and the next three years. The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet of changes in the accounting treatment for leases under International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 16 which will have an impact and once known, and updated Treasury Management Strategy will be presented to Council for approval.

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer highlighted the borrowing strategy and outturn and summarised investment strategy and outturn with the main objectives during 2020-21 to maintain capital security; to maintain liquidity so funds are available when expenditure is needed and to achieve the yield on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.

The Leader highlighted the importance of the cautious approach the Council takes in relation to Treasury Management being mindful of risk when investing. He was grateful to the Audit Committee for its role in reviewing the Treasury Management Strategy. The Chief Executive thanked the Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer and team for the level of experience and advice they provide with regard to Treasury Management activity.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet considered the report and noted that the following would be presented to Council for approval:

- the Treasury Management Strategy 2020-21 including the Treasury Management Indicators 2020-21 to 2022-23 (Appendix A);
- the Capital Strategy 2020-21 to 2029-30 including the Prudential Indicators 2020-21 to 2022-23 (Appendix B);

the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2020-21 (Appendix B - Schedule A).

478. **PLAYING FIELDS, OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES & PARKS PAVILIONS AND COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER**

The Community Asset Transfer Officer presented an update on the community asset transfers (CATs) of playing fields and park pavilions to Town and Community Councils (T&CCs) and/or sports clubs under self-management arrangements. He also reported on proposals to support the improvement and development of playing fields and park pavilions post transfer to ensure that facilities became more sustainable. The measures outlined were also designed to stimulate the Council's CAT Programme and ensure that the expectations of sports clubs were appropriately managed and transfers progressed and completed in a timely manner in support of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The CAT Officer reported that the provisional settlement for the Council showed an overall budget increase 4.7%, compared to the -1.5% "most likely" assumption contained within the Council's original MTFS for 2020-21. He stated that the provisional settlement did not recognise a number of new pressures faced by the Council, however, it provided an opportunity for savings previously identified in the MTFS to be re-considered in line with the priorities of the Council. He also stated that the Final MTFS saving of £300,000 for playing fields and parks has been deferred until the 2021-22 financial year to reflect the level of ongoing CAT activity providing sports clubs and the Council with more time to complete transfers in an orderly manner; and to allow the Council to engage more effectively with the governing bodies of sport and where possible developing joint strategies and more partnership working. He informed Cabinet that initial positive meetings have already been held with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU), Football Association of Wales (FAW) Trust and Cricket Wales.

He also reported that the situation beyond April 2021 would need to be re-assessed by the Council in December 2020 to take account of the financial settlement from Welsh Government for 2021-22 and the level of CAT activity particularly the number of completed transfers. He stated that in view of current level interest in CAT from T&CCs and local sports clubs, the increased resources intended to be deployed by the Council to support CAT, the positive dialogue with the relevant Governing Bodies, and the enhanced packages of support that are now in place, the process of completing CAT's will accelerate significantly over the next year. He highlighted the level of CAT activity as at 31 January 2020 and the progress of CATs being made with Town and Community Councils and sports clubs.

The CAT Officer reported that proposals for additional staff resources have been outlined in a business case that will be submitted to the Corporate Management Board shortly and additional funding has been identified and earmarked provisionally in the Change Management Fund to support this application for more resource that will ensure that the pace of CAT is accelerated. He stated that the "Team" approach favoured by the CAT Task & Finish Group whereby multi-disciplinary staff from different sections of the Council work together has already commenced with the formation of a CAT Operations Group.

The CAT Officer also reported that the Sports Pavilion Fund has been re-designated as the CAT Fund and the scope for funding widened under the MTFS 2019-20 to 2022-23 in February 2019 to also include building works on other Council facilities such as community centres and public toilets, to support the CAT process. This is to ensure that as many buildings as possible can be kept open and provide long-term community benefits. He stated that to date, six projects have been allocated funding from this source totalling up to £340,520. He informed Cabinet that currently a sum of £340,520 is already committed from the £1 million CAT Fund, while he had liaised with Town and Community Councils on funding under the Capital Grant Scheme. He stated that

applications to the T&CC Capital grant scheme 2020-21 were made available in January 2020 with the deadline for receipt of completed applications of 28 February 2020 being established.

The CAT Officer reported that a Bridgend Sports Team Support Fund (BSTSF) will be established to encourage participation in sport, which requires annual funding of £75k being made available in 2020-21 and 2021-22. He outlined initiatives aimed at improving green spaces pre and post CAT and the scope of the CAT fund would be extended to include the maintenance of playing fields. He also outlined the transitional support for bowls facilities, where a one-off grant of £5,000 would be made available for each bowls facility. He reported on the strategy for Newbridge Fields which may require alternative management and operational arrangements and Maesteg Welfare Park and Aberfields which are also used extensively as public parks.

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help welcomed the process to speed up CATs and commented on the need to find additional resource for CAT. The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations commented that the updated Equality Impact Assessment now helped protected groups and that the support fund and TCC fund would improve assets. The Leader commented that clubs would be eligible to access funding through their governing bodies to improve facilities which would not be accessible to the Council.

The Chief Executive informed Cabinet that the direction of travel remained the same and there was a need to ensure a sufficient level of support for self-management and although there was a better than anticipated settlement, the savings had only been deferred for a year. He hoped there would be a significant level of interest in CAT.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved:

- that Council should regularly monitor the level of CAT engagement with T&CCs and sports clubs and associated progress on a case for case basis to ensure that this key priority was being achieved in line with the requirements of the MTFs.
- that the principle of replenishment of the CAT Fund as and when necessary as CAT's were completed be agreed, subject to known commitments, and there being sufficient capital resources and the approval of Council through quarterly capital reporting.
- the creation of the Bridgend Sports Team Support Fund for an initial 2-year period, to be reviewed prior to the 2022-23 financial year and informed by the level of take up and the success of the Council's CAT policy for playing fields and parks pavilions.
- extending the scope of the CAT Fund to include pitch and drainage improvements and pitch equipment grants.
- commissioning of pitch condition and drainage surveys.

the principle of providing transitional funding to facilitate the self-management of bowls greens by 30 September 2020, subject to the establishment of an earmarked reserve for this purpose.

479. **PROPOSAL TO PILOT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC) INITIATIVE**

The Corporate Director Education and Family Support reported on options to progress Welsh Government's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) pilot and to seek approval of Cabinet's preferred option. He outlined the current situation for early years' provision within Bridgend and that the Welsh Government Childcare Offer is a commitment to provide 30 hours of funded early education and childcare for 3 and 4 year-old children of eligible working parents for up to 48 weeks of the year (39 weeks of

provision during school term time and 9 weeks of the year during school holiday periods).

He reported that the ECEC is a new approach being introduced by Welsh Government which aims to develop a holistic vision of education and childcare to support children in their early years. Piloting an ECEC approach would develop understanding of the challenges and opportunities this change could bring and focus on the removal of barriers that exist between education and care to ensure that any setting, whether a school or private/voluntary childcare, can offer ECEC provision. He stated that the Council would be provided with funding for the ECEC pilot; Bridgend would continue to commit to provide 30 hours education provision for 'rising 4s'; all settings who express an interest to pilot, both schools and childcare sector, are supported to deliver 30 hours ECEC provision; working parents are to be no worse off in Bridgend than in other local authorities (working parents will be able to access the 'Childcare Offer' hours during terms where part-time FPN provision is available, alongside holiday childcare provision); options available to non-working parents are set out at paragraph 4.8; and evaluation and monitoring activity will run alongside the pilot. He stated that the Welsh Government have confirmed that up to £3.5m per year is available to support this pilot. He stated that in order to support the pilot, the Council will need to develop, manage and process a system for paying providers monthly as well as being able to gather monitoring and evaluation information. He outlined the four options available and stated that it was proposed that the ECEC pilot would commence at the start of the 2021-2022 school year (from September 2021). He informed Cabinet that ECEC will be funded at £4.50 per hour to all settings in line with the rate paid for childcare under the Childcare Offer and it was that 64% of families in Bridgend would be eligible working parents under the current Childcare Offer.

The Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration commented that the 'All for all parents' should be pursued and would give children the best start in life. The Leader commented that the most cost effective and lasting difference to a child is at early years and he was keen that children who have additional learning needs access the provision.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- considered the four options outlined in the report; and
- selected option 2 as the preferred option to take forward as the pilot;
- requested the Corporate Director Education and Family Support present a progress report on the pilot to Cabinet in six months;
- that officers work with the Welsh Government to protect existing provision and have dialogue with the Welsh Government on the capital funding to make changes to develop provision.

480. CENTRAL SOUTH CONSORTIUM JOINT EDUCATION SERVICE

The Corporate Director Education and Family Support reported on a proposal to secure Cabinet's commitment to the long-term future of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.

He informed Cabinet that the Welsh Government is making significant changes to the delivery of education in Wales and in the autumn of 2018, the five Education Cabinet Members of the Central South Consortium Joint Committee commissioned the ISOS Partnership to undertake an independent review of Central South Consortium to ensure it was fit for purpose and financially viable for the foreseeable future. He stated that the Joint Committee approved a request that five local authorities share the ISOS report with the Cabinets of the five local authorities to Central South Consortium before the end of February 2020, and that the five Councils consider and restate their commitment to a joint approach to school improvement through Central South Consortium.

The Corporate Director Education and Family Support informed Cabinet that the ISOS report provides robust evidence that the educational performance of the Central South Region has significantly exceeded that of the other three Welsh regions. He stated that the majority of the region's head teachers are positive about the support, advice and guidance provided by the Joint Service. Given fundamental changes to the educational landscape in Wales against a backdrop of continued funding pressures, it was critical that the service evolves to meet needs in a flexible and sustainable manner. He stated that the Joint Committee of Education Cabinet Members has been proactive and commissioned the ISOS review to independently evaluate the performance of the Joint Service, identify the areas for improvement and to ensure it is fit for purpose and financially viable for the long term. He informed Cabinet that in one of the four regions, there has been some uncertainty as to the long-term future of their shared educational advisory services. He stated that a clear commitment was being sought from each of the five Councils to the long-term future of Central South Consortium and provide schools and Central South Consortium staff with some certainty in a period of significant flux for the education sector in Wales. There would be significant engagement with headteachers and governors as part of the remodelling of Central South Consortium, and in the delivery of future work programmes.

In response to a question from the Cabinet Wellbeing and Future Generation as to how the schools had been selected to participate in the review of the Central South Consortium, the Corporate Education and Family Support would provide Cabinet with that information.

RESOLVED: That based on the fact that an independent review of the work of Central South Consortium has determined the Joint Service will be well placed to deliver school improvement functions effectively, and support schools to manage the major reforms across the region, along with positive feedback received from head teachers at recent Scrutiny sessions, it Cabinet agreed to support the decision of the Central South Consortium Joint Committee to continue to deliver shared educational advisory services in partnership with the other four Councils in the region for at least the next three years.

481. **COASTAL PROTECTION ENGINEERING WORKS TO WESTERN BREAKWATER AND EASTERN PROMENADE, INCLUDING RHYCH POINT, PORTHCAWL**

The Head of Operations Community Services sought approval in accordance with procurement rules to invite tenders for coastal defence work to the Western Breakwater and Eastern Promenade, Porthcawl that are estimated to be in excess of £5 million.

He reported that the Western Breakwater, Eastern Promenade and Rych Point are covered by the South Wales (Lavernock Point to St. Ann's Head) Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2), inside Policy Scenario Unit 7. He stated that the sea wall and breakwater structures have re-pointing works undertaken funded from its annual budget allocation, which provides a basic level of maintenance to the outer shell of the structures and does not address any internal structural and hydrology issues. He also stated that the need to provide continuing flood and coastal erosion defence to the sea-front is recognised in the SMP2 and the Council carries out regular inspections of the structures carrying out holding repairs as required to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic failure.

He reported that improvement of these structures has been identified as a priority and by remediation and futureproofing the current structures the Council is investing in sustainable outcomes for the community to put in measures to mitigate against potential flooding and property loss. He stated that the Welsh Government (WG) following initial appraisals, has invited a Full Business Case from the Council for the remediation works

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and the Council is currently awaiting confirmation of scheme approval. He informed Cabinet that subject to approval by WG, the scheme may be eligible for 75% funding from WG. The remaining 25% that would be required has been identified in the Council's Capital Programme. He stated that a contract will be tendered through the online tendering process in accordance with Council's approved procurement strategy, with an oversight from the Procurement section. The successful tenderer will be identified through a quality/price tender process and the awarding of any contract will follow appropriate procurement and award procedures. Following a successful procurement, tender and award process, it was considered that the contract will be a 2-18 month contract starting in spring/summer 2020.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved authorisation to tender for the coastal defence work to the Western Breakwater and Eastern Promenade structures and subsequently to award the most economically advantageous tender.

482. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

483. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it contained exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 and/or Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Following the application of the public interest test it was resolved that pursuant to the Act referred to above, to consider the following item in private, with the public excluded from the meeting, as it was considered that in all circumstances relating to the item, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

484. APPROVAL OF EXEMPT MINUTES

485. DISPOSAL OF TY'R ARDD, SUNNYSIDE ROAD, BRIDGEND

The meeting closed at 17:16