

CABINET - TUESDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2023 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

N Farr  
JPD Blundell

W R Goode

J Gebbie

HM Williams

Present Virtually

JC Spanswick

Officers:

Carys Lord  
Claire Marchant  
Janine Nightingale  
Kelly Watson  
Lindsay Harvey  
Alex Rawlin  
Michael Pitman  
Oscar Roberts

Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change  
Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing  
Corporate Director - Communities  
Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services  
Corporate Director Education and Family Support  
Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager  
Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services  
Business Administrative Apprentice – Democratic Services

Declarations of Interest

None

**269. Approval of Minutes**

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| Decision Made      | <b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That the minutes of Cabinet dated 21 November 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record. |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023  |

**270. Volunteer Policy Review**

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| Decision Made      | <p>The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing presented a new Volunteer Policy for Cabinet approval.</p> <p>The policy seeks to ensure that the Council has effective arrangements in place for volunteering. It provides a framework for every directorate and service area within and across the Council. It sets out responsibilities in relation to volunteers and duties of the team manager. It lays out the methods by which the Council will be assured that it is fulfilling its duties and that effective practices are in place to support individuals to flourish and be part of our thriving community.</p> <p>Cabinet considered and approved the report, thanking existing volunteers for their work that volunteers do for the borough and noting the need to ensure a good framework for other organisations the Council hosts using similar policies. Concerns were raised around a possible conflict relating to BAVO, and the intent of the policy was clarified by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing as applying only to volunteers working directly with BCBC.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Cabinet approved the Volunteer Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023  |

**271. Joint Inspection Of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA) In Bridgend  
12-16 June 2023**

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| Decision Made      | <p>The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing presented the inspection report of the Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA) in that took place in Bridgend during June 2023.</p> <p>The inspection was carried out by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW), Estyn and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)</p> <p>Cabinet noted and approved the report, further noting that inspection responses to action plans following the report has been positive, and thanks was given to relevant teams for their work during the inspection period. The importance of preserving safeguarding as a responsibility was also recognised. A follow-up report was requested within six months to note progress.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Cabinet noted the report on the Joint Inspection of Child Protection arrangements in Bridgend and the local authority improvement actions identified in the Joint Action Plan.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**272. Infection Prevention and Control Policy**

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| Decision Made | <p>The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing provided Cabinet with an overview of the development of the proposed Infection, Prevention and Control policy for Regulated Direct Care Services and sought approval to implement the policy across regulated care services provided by the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate.</p> <p>This report summarised the process and reasons for this policy to be devised and implemented. An Infection, Prevention and Control policy was required to be created following the issuing of Priority Action Notices from recent Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspections of regulated services. This policy has been written in line with the National Infection Control Manual.</p> <p>Cabinet discussed the importance of needing such a policy. The Deputy Leader added that the Covid 19 Pandemic proved evident to this as many care homes and facilities struggled to provide enough PPE for staff.</p> <p>The Leader echoed this comment and while it may seem like an insignificant policy, it was extremely important that these measures were in place if every an infection arose.</p> |
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|                    | <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Cabinet approved the Infection, Prevention and Control Policy for implementation across regulated care services provided by the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**273. Development Of Strategic Equality Plan 2024 - 2028**

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| Decision Made      | <p>The Chief Officer Finance Performance and Change sought approval from Cabinet to commence a public consultation on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028.</p> <p>She advised that all public bodies in Wales must comply with the Public Sector Equality. One of the specific duties is to produce a Strategic Equality Plan</p> <p>The Cabinet Member Community Safety and Wellbeing advised that this had been approved by the Cabinet Committee Equalities in November.</p> <p>Cabinet Members discussed points around the engagement with young people as well as those with disabilities and further information was given on this by the Chief Officer Finance Performance and Change. The Leader asked if workshops can also be held in the Ogmore and Garw Valley</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Cabinet gave approval for the commencement of a public consultation on the draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 and noted that the final Strategy will be reported back to Cabinet in due course for approval.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**274. Housing Support Programme Strategy (Homelessness Strategy) 2022 - 2026**

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| Decision Made      | <p>The Chief Officer Finance Performance and Change presented the final Housing Support Programme Strategy (Homelessness Strategy) 2022-2026 and Action Plan for submission to Welsh Government. These were attached at Appendix 1 and 2 to the report.</p> <p>This document will replace Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) existing Homelessness Strategy 2018- 2022. This strategy was required by Welsh Government to be in place in all Local Authorities.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning &amp; Regeneration stated that there was a significant increase in homelessness and therefore the need to provide support and services was extremely important. He hoped that Welsh Government provided the funding necessary for BCBC to continue to support those who need it. Further questions were asked and responded to by the Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Cabinet approved the Housing Support Programme Strategy (Homelessness Strategy) 2022-2026 (Appendix 1 to the report) and Action Plan (Appendix 2) for submission to Welsh Government, to include an amendment that the strategy acknowledges The Corporate Parent Charter – A promise for Wales “A Shared Parenting Pledge”, which the LA will want to formally adopt this which states “A Stable Home – We will seek out and provide stable places to live that are right for all care-experienced children and young people. This is because all children have a right to special protection if they don't live with their family (Article 20).’</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**275. Hybrid Working Policy**

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| Decision Made | <p>The Group Manager HR &amp; OD presented the reviewed Hybrid Working Policy for Cabinet approval.</p> <p>In October 2022 the Council implemented an interim Hybrid Working Policy. This policy set out a framework for hybrid working at the Council and in doing so sought to support the Council with its future service delivery model.</p> |
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|                    | <p>The annual staff survey held during December 2022 and January 2023 was utilised to obtain staff feedback with a section of questions specifically addressing hybrid working.</p> <p>Feedback from staff via the staff survey in relation to hybrid working was positive. 62% of respondents confirmed that their work roles were subject to the new interim hybrid working policy that was introduced in October 2022. 72% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied that the new interim hybrid policy supports working arrangements which enabled them to meet work demands. 70% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the flexitime working hours scheme and hybrid working allowed them to achieve a good work life balance.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader queried whether or not the contracts for staff had their place of work listed as their home address. The Group Manager HR &amp; OD confirmed that this was not the case. The Civic Offices were considered the main place of work for all office staff and their contracts will reflect this.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Cabinet approved the Hybrid Working Policy for full implementation.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**276. Information Report for Noting**

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| Decision Made      | <p>The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented an Information Report for noting, which has been published since its last scheduled meeting. The report provided details of the current policy under the Regulation and Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Cabinet acknowledged the publication of the Information report referred to in paragraph 3.1 of the report.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**277. Urgent Items**

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| Decision Made      | None             |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023 |

**278. Exclusion of the Public**

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| Decision Made      | <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> The following item was not for publication as it contained exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.</p> <p>Following the application of the public interest test, Cabinet resolved pursuant to the Act to consider this item in private, with the public being excluded from the meeting during such consideration.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023   |

**279. Approval of Exempt Minutes**

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| Decision Made      | <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That the exempt minutes of Cabinet dated 21 November 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.</p> |
| Date Decision Made | 19 December 2023  |

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 4:00pm