

COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB /REMOETLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor W J Kendall – Chairperson

A R Berrow
HJ David
N Farr
M L Hughes
RL Penhale-Thomas
A Ulberini-Williams
R Williams

F D Bletsoe
P Davies
J Gebbie
P W Jenkins
J E Pratt
G Walter
E D Winstanley

S J Bletsoe
S Easterbrook
W R Goode
M R John
R J Smith
HM Williams

RJ Collins
M J Evans
RM Granville
M Jones
JC Spanswick
I Williams

Present Virtually

S Aspey
N Clarke
S J Griffiths
M Lewis
A Wathan

H T Bennett
C Davies
D T Harrison
J Llewellyn-Hopkins
AJ Williams

JPD Blundell
P Ford
D M Hughes
I M Spiller
MJ Williams

E L P Caparros
H Griffiths
MJ Kearns
T Thomas

Apologies for Absence

C L C Davies, RM James, JH Tildesley MBE and T Wood

Officers:

Mark Galvin
Lindsay Harvey
Rachel Keepins
Carys Lord
Claire Marchant

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People
Democratic Services Manager
Chief Officer - Finance, Housing & Change
Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

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Janine Nightingale
Mark Shephard
Kelly Watson

Corporate Director - Communities
Chief Executive
Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

Declarations of Interest

The following personal declarations of interest were made by Members in relation to Agenda Item 6:-

Councillor J Pratt – As a governor at Porthcawl Primary School and a member of Porthcawl Town Council

Councillor J Gebbie – As a governor at Mynydd Cynffig Primary School

Councillor JP Blundell – As a governor at Bryntirion Comprehensive School

Councillor M Evans – As a governor at Croesty Primary and Pencoed Comprehensive Schools

Councillor R Collins – As a governor at Plasnewydd Primary School

Councillor F Bletsoe – As a governor at Heronsbridge School

Councillor Amanda Williams – As the Chair of governors at Coity Primary School and a governor at Brynteg Comprehensive School

Councillor M Jones – as a governor of the Garw Valley Federation of schools and as lead for the Interim Executive Board at Ogmere Vale Primary School.

Councillor R Williams – as a member of Pencoed Town Council

Councillor M Lewis – as a governor in the Garw Valley Federation of schools

Councillor I Williams – as a governor at Brynteg Comprehensive and Oldcastle Primary Schools

Councillor S Easterbrook as a member of Bridgend Town Council

Councillor E Winstanley – Personal interest in Agenda Item 6 and 8 As an employer of Arwen Cultural Trust that manage both the Porthcawl Grand Pavilion and the Maesteg Town Hall

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1. Presentation by the Chief Executive of Valleys to Coast (V2C)

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Executive introduced to the meeting Jo Oak, Chief Executive of V2C and colleagues in order that they make a presentation on the latest work of this Registered Social Landlord.</p> <p>The presentation covered the following main areas:-</p> <p>External Drivers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic – Covid Recovery, the Economic climate, impacts on the supply chain <p>Political Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change in First Minister• National Elections <p>Policy and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business Delivery and Performance – Complaints down 25% in recent times, Empty Properties down 35%, Repairs down to 3,562 and 327 new properties proposed <p>Tackling/preventing Homelessness</p> <p>Supporting the Social Care Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing for Care Grant – 131k for installation of Assisted Technology in 3 Sheltered Housing Schemes, 285k applied to support BCBC's Care Leavers Scheme <p>V2C's Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued investment in homes;• Repairs and Maintenance Programme growth;• To concentrate further on Business Focus and Efficiencies
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	<p>The Mayor then asked Members if they wished to raise any questions to the V2C representatives, an example of which were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member asked how, ie by what methods V2C deal with the current 91 anti-social cases affecting housing stock/residents;• In respect of increasing accommodation costs, eg rent and service charges; how are these determined, agreed or set. Also, how are these consulted upon with tenants/residents and also, how is value for money both measured and determined for property occupants;• How do V2C distinguish between urgent and ordinary queries or complaints from residents as from experience through contacting V2C for this purpose (on behalf of Ward members) all these go through the same contact point. Should there be two different methods, so that urgent complaints are given priority and should there be an extra avenue of contact for local Councillors who often receive the more serious complaints to deal with/act on behalf of tenants;• A Member stressed the level of importance of V2C carrying out regular surveys with tenants, so that they are aware of any changes to the service, including any increases in rent, etc;• Members acknowledged the reduction in repairs and maintenance works outstanding to the housing stock compared to previous, but added that these were still too high and that efforts should be made to reduce these levels further;• A Member felt that there should be better and earlier communication from V2C to leasehold tenants (ie of properties purchased by tenants under the Right to Buy Scheme), over any repairs required to their properties which they would have to pay for, compared with freehold tenants who do not pay for any such repair or maintenance costs to their properties;• A Member enquired if any statistics were collated by V2C with regards to health related conditions at properties, for example, damp/mould, so that these could be addressed quickly. He also asked if in the worst of these cases where there was damp or mould inside a premise, if the occupants were given alternative accommodation until such time the works were resolved;• A Member was encouraged by V2C's Placemaking Strategy, as amongst other positives, this would encourage the building of meaningful and long term relationships with Town/Community Councils, thus enhancing that partnership <p>The Chief Executive of V2C and her team responded to the above and other questions, adding that any that needed further investigation would be picked up in Members quarterly sessions with V2C.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member - Housing, Planning and Regeneration added that should any Members have any further questions or queries then these could be passed onto him outside of the meeting, then he would share these with V2C accordingly.</p>
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	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the report of the Chief Executive and the presentation from V2C representatives, be noted.
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

2. To receive announcements from:

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the following dignitaries (no decisions made):- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Health• Cabinet Member – Education• Cabinet Member – Climate Change and the Environment• Cabinet Member – Community Safeguarding and Wellbeing• Cabinet Member – Finance, Resources and Legal• Cabinet Member – Housing, Planning and Regeneration• Chief Executive
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

3. To receive announcements by the Leader

Decision Made	Council received the Leader's announcements (no decision made)
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

4. Capital Programme Update Quarter 3 2023-24

Decision Made	The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change provided for members an update on the capital programme position for 2023/2024 as at 31 December 2023, and for Council to note the projected prudential and other indicators for this financial year.
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	<p>On 1 March 2023 Council approved a capital budget of £69m for this financial year as part of the capital programme covering the period 2023/2024 to 2032/2033.</p> <p>Since March the programme has changed and was last considered by Council on 18 October last year. The report updated members on the current position.</p> <p>The revised programme outlined a predicted spend of £49.114m in this financial year. This spend will be funded from £27.279m from Bridgend County Borough Council resources, including capital receipts, the use of Earmarked reserves and borrowing. The remainder of the programme, £21.835m, would be funded from external resources, including General Capital Grant.</p> <p>Table 1 in the report detailed the revised programme for each Directorate with the details of the funding for this programme shown in Table 2 of the report.</p> <p>The individual schemes making up this year's programme was shown in Appendix 1 to the report.</p> <p>The report highlighted that some schemes will not spend in full this year and slippage totalling £33.4m into 2024 / 2025 and beyond was reported. The reasons for the slippage were detailed in paragraph 3.1.4 of the report. There were also some new and amended schemes detailed at 3.1.5 of the report, that totalled £697k.</p> <p>A revised 10 year programme was shown at Appendix B of the report.</p> <p>It was important to note that certain external pressures continued to detrimentally impact on this programme. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delays in getting schemes delivered due to workforce shortages in the private sector companies• Delays in getting supplies and equipment to progress schemes• Significant cost pressures, due to the issues above together with inflation. <p>Tenders were as time progressed, being returned at costs considerably above the original tender. This was leading to services having to rethink the scheme, and possibly reduce specifications in order to reduce costs.</p> <p>When the programme was approved by Council, prudential indicators were included to provide an overview. Details of these for the current year were shown in Appendix C to the report.</p>
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	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change, confirmed that the Council was operating in line with the approved indicators.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member – Resources advised that a similar report was considered by Cabinet yesterday. In light of the financial position the authority was placed in, a number of revisions had to be made to the Capital Programme. One of these included Fleet Services, where in order to ensure continuing value for money was being made, a review of the Policy was deemed to be required.</p> <p>Members then made a number of points on the report, examples of which as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern was expressed regarding the re-profiling of monies to the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRC). It was explained however, that this was due to BCBC as one of the constituent authorities being bound by a contractual agreement in the manner by which it makes a financial commitment towards the CCRC. Further explanation regarding the legal implications in respect of these, would be shared with the member who posed the question, outside of the meeting. • Confirmation was sought when Active Travel routes proposed would be completed, particularly in respect of the route connecting Ynysawdre to Bryncethin. • A member asked for some clarification on paragraph 3.1.2 of the report – Table 2 with regards to the Revenue contribution to the Capital Programme ie 944k. The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change confirmed that she would give a breakdown of some changes that had been made during the year in terms of capital funding for certain schemes included in the programme and she would share the detail of these with members outside of the meeting. • A member referred to paragraph 3.1.4 of the report and the topic of the Universal Primary Free School Meals and he asked when works required at Trelales School would be completed in order that these could be provided there. • A member raised some concern over the further revenue costs committed to the Cosy Corner development Porthcawl. • <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noted the Council's Capital Programme 2023-24 Quarter 3 update to 31 December 2023 (Appendix A to the report). • noted the slippage of £33.400 million to 2024-25 as detailed in Appendix B. • approved the virements between schemes as detailed in Appendix B.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• approved the new schemes/additions to the capital programme totalling £0.697 million as outlined in Appendix B.• noted the projected Prudential and Other Indicators for 2023-24 (Appendix C).
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

5. Information Report for Noting

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy informed Council of an information report for noting, that had been published since the last scheduled meeting.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council acknowledged the publication of the report referred to in paragraph 3.1 of the covering report.</p>
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

6. To receive the following Questions from:

Decision Made	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Councillor G Walter to the Cabinet Member – Housing, Planning and Regeneration (response circulated previously to members) Supplementary questions were asked by Councillor Walter and Councillor RM Granville2. Councillor T Thomas to the Cabinet Member – Climate Change and the Environment (response circulated previously to members) Supplementary questions were asked by Councillor Thomas and Councillor S Griffiths.3. Councillor M John to the Cabinet Member – Climate Change and the Environment (response circulated previously to members) Supplementary questions were asked by Councillor John and Councillor S Bletsoe.
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

7. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	7 February 2024

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

The meeting closed at 19:00.