

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2018 AT 15:00

Present

Councillor PA Davies – Chairperson

S Aspey	SE Baldwin	TH Beedle	JPD Blundell
NA Burnett	RJ Collins	HJ David	P Davies
SK Dendy	DK Edwards	J Gebbie	T Giffard
RM Granville	DG Howells	A Hussain	RM James
B Jones	M Jones	MJ Kearn	DRW Lewis
JE Lewis	JR McCarthy	DG Owen	D Patel
RL Penhale-Thomas	AA Pucella	JC Radcliffe	KL Rowlands
B Sedgebeer	RMI Shaw	CE Smith	SG Smith
JC Spanswick	RME Stirman	G Thomas	T Thomas
JH Tildesley MBE	SR Vidal	MC Voisey	LM Walters
KJ Watts	CA Webster	DBF White	PJ White
A Williams	AJ Williams	HM Williams	JE Williams
RE Young			

Apologies for Absence

MC Clarke, N Clarke, CA Green and E Venables

Officers:

Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Andrew Jolley	Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services
Gary Jones	Head of Democratic Services
Susan Jones	Development Planning Manager
Gill Lewis	Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Andrew Rees	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities

113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

Councillor PJ White declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall as a Member of Maesteg Town Hall. Councillor White declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction. Councillor White withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor DBF White declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor JM McCarthy declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 – School Modernisation Programme Band B as the Chair of the Governing Body of Pencoed

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Primary School. Councillor McCarthy also declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Maesteg Town Hall as a Member of Awen Trust.

Councillor MC Voisey declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 – Departure Planning Application as he owns a property and runs a business elsewhere on Bridgend Industrial Estate. His business is not in any trading relationship with the applicant.

Councillor JC Spanswick declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor SB Smith declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor P Davies declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall as a Member of Maesteg Town Hall. Councillor Davies declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction. Councillor Davies withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor RJ Collins declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall as a Member of Maesteg Town Hall.

Councillor McCarthy also declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 – Maesteg Town Hall as a Member of Awen Trust.

Councillor RM James declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor TH Beedle declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 – School Modernisation Programme Band B as a member of the Strategic Review and Overarching Board. Councillor Beedle declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 – Council Tax Reduction Scheme as a family member is in receipt of Council Tax reduction. Councillor Beedle withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

114. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Council of 20 December 2017 be approved as a true and accurate record.

115. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

The Mayor

The Mayor announced that she had attended several carol services over Christmas, one of which the staff concert in the Council Chamber. She thanked the all the staff involved in organising this very entertaining event and her Chaplain for attending to give a blessing.

The Mayor attended on New Year's Day attended a "Man Hunt" in Pyle which is an annual event with the Three Counties Bloodhounds and was attended.

The Mayor also attended a performance of the Cinderella Pantomime in the Porthcawl Pavilion which was very enjoyable and along with the Town Mayor for Porthcawl Lorri Desmond Williams were presented with a cheque to be shared between their Charities.

The Mayor was honoured to represent the authority and light the candle at the Holocaust Memorial ceremony in Bridgend Sony Theatre. This was a most moving and thought provoking event which included poetry read by pupils of our local comprehensive schools and an address by Eric Muranghwa Eugene MBE a survivor of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, who lost 35 of his family members during the atrocity. She stated that it was very interesting to listen to his account of his life since coming to this country 20 years ago. The Mayor also attended a second Holocaust Event in Cardiff City Hall and which was also very moving.

The Mayor also announced that she had attended a production of Phantom of the Opera in the Pavilion by Porthcawl Comprehensive school which was a delight and very professional. She stated that an added surprise was that several of the pupils belong to the Bridgend Youth Theatre which is one of her chosen charities and she hoped that they would follow their dreams and go on to act and sing in Musical Theatre. The Mayor and Consort were privileged to meet the cast, teachers and parents after the performance. She thanked the cast and teachers and background staff for all of their hard work.

The Mayor announced that she had attended the Awards Ceremony for the Lord Lieutenant held in Pontypridd South Wales Conference Centre. She also attended the MPCT Awards in the Cardiff City Stadium which included demonstrations, marching and giving out certificates. The Mayor and Consort both enjoyed the Ceremony very much and she is very proud of the young men and women taking part, some of which have been accepted into the Armed Forces.

The Mayor announced with sadness that former Councillor, Mrs Margaret Bertorelli passed away on Sunday morning. She informed Council that Mrs Bertorelli both a Borough Councillor and a long serving Bridgend Town Councillor and former Deputy Town Mayor. She stated that Mrs Bertorelli worked hard in her public life and serving as a Councillor was a very important part of her life. The Council sends its condolences to her family at this sad time.

All present stood in silence as mark of respect.

The Mayor asked Councillor G Thomas to announce that Harry Morgan an 18 year old of Bryncethin RFC has received his first Wales rugby cap.

Deputy Leader

The Deputy Leader informed Council that latest statistics have revealed that an incredible recycling increase of 68 per cent was collected over the Christmas and New Year period when compared with the previous year.

Cardboard, plastics, paper, food waste and other recyclable materials totalled a hefty 1,138 tonnes. This represented an increase of 676 tonnes on 2016-17, while landfill waste saw a decrease of 29 per cent from 990 tonnes down to 704. This had shown just how much of festive waste is recyclable, and he thanked everyone who had made such a fantastic effort.

He announced that now that residents have had a chance to get to grips with the new procedures, enforcement of the two-bag limit will begin. Excess bags will be stickered, and reminders will be issued to households.

Officers will also visit homes where this is a persistent or recurring problem to offer support, and help them get to grips with the procedures. In extreme cases, they will also issue fixed penalties, but this will only ever be a last resort when all other options have failed. He stated that the Council and its partner want to work with households to increase recycling across the county borough, and the emphasis will remain firmly focused on this. Local residents can find out more by visiting www.recycleforbridgend.wales

The Deputy Leader also announced that Member mentoring training will take place on Thursday 1 February at 4pm, and Members who need to attend have already been identified from political groups. He reminded Members that there is an equalities and diversity session from Stonewall on 6 February at 4pm. The pre-Council briefing on 28th February will regard the Local Development Plan and it is hoped that all Members will attend this session.

The Deputy Leader informed Council that the Head of Democratic Services had recently circulated information about ICT training and he asked Members to contact him directly to make arrangements.

Finally, he requested that all Members ensure that they have completed the data protection and safeguarding e-learning modules.

Cabinet Member Communities

The Cabinet Member Communities announced that Members may be interested to hear that all streetlights within Bridgend County Borough are expected to be energy efficient LED models within the next couple of years. There are a total of 20,000 street lights in the county borough, 8,000 of which are already LED, and these use between 30 and 60 per cent less energy. Plans are underway for upgrading the remaining 12,000. He stated that the LED lights come with a 20 year life guarantee, and are relatively maintenance free. As they are generally more directional and can light roads more efficiently, they will make it safer for drivers and pedestrians, and if required can also be dimmed at pre-set times to deliver further energy savings.

The Cabinet Member Communities informed Members that they may also have noticed that signage had been erected in and around Angel Street advising that work will soon begin. This is part of a scheme to make Bridgend town centre even more bike-friendly, and will involve the extension of the national cycle route between Sarn and Bridgend so that it links up with the route that joins with Newbridge Fields, Broadlands, Cefn Glas and Laleston. The footway through the Embassy car park area is to be widened and made safer, and higher railings will be installed along the Dunraven Place footbridge. On Angel Street, the loading bay in front of the Civic Offices will become a larger disabled parking bay, and the location of the flag poles will be moved. The riverside footway along Angel Street will be widened, the railings by the Water Street Bridge raised, and the pelican crossing at the junction of Water Street and Angel Street converted to a toucan crossing suitable for cyclists. Signage will be installed along the route, and it was expected that the works will be completed by the end of March.

The Cabinet Member Communities informed Members that he had attended a meeting organised by Councillor Shaw of Pontycymer recently in which seven local and national organisations agreed to work together with residents of the Garw Valley to ensure that the popular community route remains open and suitable for use. He stated that this was a significant development which could break a deadlock over the future of the route, which used to be maintained by Groundwork Bridgend before passing to the Garw Valley Heritage Railway Society. A site visit is being organised so that necessary work can be identified, factsheets drawn up and a plan developed for managing undergrowth

and wildlife. He hoped that this would become an example of how organisations and local residents can work together for the good of the community.

Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help announced that the caretaker's house at Heronsbridge School had been converted into a new residential unit that provides all-year-round support for children and young people with complex needs. This meant that for the first time, local children can be offered this service within the county borough instead of sending them elsewhere. As well as offering children and young people greater stability and continuity, the new unit will save the authority money. He stated that feedback so far had been terrific, and he was sure Members will agree that it is entirely fitting the unit has been named Harwood House in honour of the school's former caretaker.

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help also announced that if any Members are aware of constituents who have hearing difficulties, they may want to let them know that between 2.00 – 3.00pm every third Monday of the month, Action For Hearing Loss Cymru holds a drop-in session at Pencoed Library. Each session is designed to help people get to grips with their NHS hearing aids and manage their hearing loss more effectively. The sessions also offer help with tubing, minor repairs, cleaning, battery replacement, basic training on how to use and maintain equipment, details about other useful services, and much more. More details are available at the Action For Hearing Loss Cymru website.

Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations

The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations announced that the power of sport has once again been used to help a group of young people make positive life choices thanks to the Get On track programme. Provided in partnership with the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust, the scheme uses elite athletes as inspirational mentors. The latest phase has seen Wales' women's rugby player Philippa Tuttiett and paralympian swimmer Liz Johnson guide fifteen young people over five weeks of various activities. Participants have learned important social skills, gained First Aid qualifications, learned about nutrition and cookery, brushed up on interview and CV skills, and volunteered with the Steer Social Enterprise before running sports and activity sessions with pupils at Maesteg Comprehensive. Bridgend became the first Welsh local authority to host the programme in 2016. This was the third time the 'Get on Track' scheme has worked with young people since The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations was happy to confirm that within eight months of the first programme, nearly three quarters of all participants were in employment, education or training. She stated that the scheme is very worthwhile and she hoped to see it continue and develop further.

The Cabinet Member Wellbeing and Future Generations announced that volunteering can be a great way to improve mental well-being, stay active make new friends and get out and about, and Members may be interested in letting their constituents know about some opportunities that have recently arisen. She stated that the Council's countryside team are seeking volunteers to take part in woodland management events at local nature reserves next month on at Tremains Wood in Brackla on 2 February, and two at Frog Pond Wood in Pyle on 9 and 16 February. She stated that more information is available from the team, and by visiting the Natural Neighbourhoods website to find out about other volunteering opportunities.

Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration

The Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration informed Council that the 25th consecutive annual report published by Estyn has highlighted five local schools from Bridgend County Borough as being case studies for best practice in Wales. The report highlighted that Ysgol Cynwyd Sant plans exciting, creative learning activities to develop pupils' literacy skills, while Brackla Primary makes families a key part of the learning process, leading to improved standards in literacy, numeracy and attendance across the school.

He informed Members that mathematical intervention at Oldcastle Primary has transformed the subject for the lowest-achieving learners, and has raised standards for all. The school is also the first in Wales to use a new system to support pupils' speech and language therapy, and has worked with businesses and universities to develop a week of science, technology, engineering and mathematics that has improved pupils' aspirations and attainment.

He stated that a review of the senior leadership team at Bryntirion Comprehensive has been highlighted for enabling the school to develop a strong strategic vision and direction, supported by the development of a strong middle leadership team and the creation of an inclusive ethos for students and staff alike. He also informed Members that Heronsbridge has skilfully organised pupil participation opportunities to contribute to developing self-confidence and social skills, with many taking increased responsibility for themselves and their learning.

The Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration congratulated Sarah Davies, a teacher from Ysgol Bryn Castell, who has been selected to attend the 'Teachers' Institute' programme at the Houses of Parliament. Designed to give people working in education from communities all around the UK a detailed understanding of the democratic process, the institute trains participants to become UK Parliament Teacher Ambassadors. Sarah Davies was selected from more than 170 applicants to attend the training. It presented an excellent opportunity to engage with young people about democracy, and he was sure that her pupils and fellow teachers will benefit from it on her return.

Chief Executive

The Chief executive updated Members about the latest situation regarding pay negotiations for 2018. Discussions were being held nationally with trade unions and laying out the Councils' position as an employer. He stated that the pay award proposal that has been put forward particularly benefits staff who are between spinal column points six and nineteen. Increases range from 3.7 per cent to 9.1 per cent at the lower end of the scale, and two per cent for staff who are on spinal column point twenty or above.

He informed Members that Unison's NJC Committee has voted to reject the offer, but has also stated that this is the best that can be achieved without substantial all-out strike action. Unison is currently balloting members which will close on 8 March. Unite's National Industrial Sector Committee has voted unanimously to recommend that its members reject the offer, while GMB has advised their members that this is the best offer to be achieved by negotiation, and their ballot closes on 9 March.

The Chief Executive informed Council that the pay award is due to be implemented on 1 April 2018, and if the outcome of any of these three trade union ballots is to reject the offer, the Council will need to override its current spinal column point six, which is £7.78, and replace it with the new 1 April national minimum wage rate of £7.83. He stated that

a new pay spine is currently under development in order to accommodate the National Living Wage; this will also require negotiation with trade union colleagues at a national level. He advised that a communication will be issued to staff later today to advise them of the situation, and more news would be brought as the situation develops.

116. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader announced that the new Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services Alun Davies AM has in recent weeks spoken publicly about his ambitions for major local government reform. He said that he would like larger and much stronger local authorities in Wales and has expressed the view that no one in local government believes that 22 local authorities are sustainable and that local government re-organisation is back on the agenda.

The Leader informed Council that he had spoken to the Cabinet Secretary in recent weeks and sought re-assurance that the current regional collaborations and partnerships like the City Deal, education consortium and the shared services into this Council has invested so much time and energy will not be dismantled or rebuilt if re-organisation is taken forward by Welsh Government. The Leader also expressed the view that any extra and prolonged uncertainty around the future is unhelpful as the Council continues to explore and develop different ways of working and asked that any decisions are made carefully of course, but quickly. He stated that the Cabinet Secretary is clear that he would like councils to lead and shape this agenda. There are no plans or proposals or maps but more was expected to be heard in the spring. The Leader stated that whatever the latest plans are from Cardiff Bay the Council would continue to focus on working with all its partners, balancing the budget and modernising services and investing in the future.

The Leader also announced that earlier this month, the Minister for Housing and Regeneration Rebecca Evans AM visited the town centre to officially open the landmark Rhiw gateway development, which incorporates a modern multi-storey car park, 28 apartments with dedicated parking, and also a soon to be open health club on the ground floor. He stated that the £10m project has been funded with around £5.7m from the Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places programme, along with contributions from Coastal Housing Group, Bridgend County Borough Council and a Social Housing Grant. The investment has provided the Council with not only a chance to replace the old car park, also a new community living at the heart of the town centre. There was now a waiting list for the smart, well designed and very energy efficient apartments that have beautiful views of the valleys and hills in the north of the borough. The tenants, the couple, that he and the Cabinet Education and Regeneration had met, were thrilled with their new home.

He congratulated all who had played a part in delivering this major project. Efforts were continuing to revitalise the town and he looked forward to seeing the new building offering commercial opportunities and new homes on Nolton Street and to seeing the restored historic Davies Building on the corner of Queen and Caroline Street.

He also announced that Members will have noted the extensive media coverage of the Caerau Minewater project, which was launched recently by Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths. With £6.5m funding in place for the scheme, this is a UK-first that could pave the way for heating thousands of homes cheaply and cleanly using geo thermal techniques made possible by the area's industrial heritage. He understood that a similar initiative is already running successfully in Holland where the town of Heerlen is benefitting from the scheme. He stated that the Caerau project has the potential to put Bridgend County Borough on a global map, and placed the County Borough at the forefront of this exciting development. He thanked

everyone who had helped to make it a reality, and looked forward to hearing more about how it is progressing.

The Leader announced that two letters had been received from Lesley Griffiths AM, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs the first inviting the Council to undertake a joint Local Development Plan with RCT and Caerphilly. The second letter invited the Council to develop a strategic development plan. He stated that it was critical to managed long term planning that an up-to-date LDP is in place, and work needs to start work on the next LDP now to have it in place in time for the end of the current LDP. He informed Council that the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet discussed the invitation on Monday and given the uncertainty about the future and the different stages each authority is at on the LDP cycle it was decided not to pursue joint LDPs but a SDP for South East Wales. He stated that this was a major commitment in the Cardiff Capital City Region Deal and would be an important tool in planning a shared long term vision for the region.

The Leader announced that he had been invited by the Secretary of State for Wales to the Severn Growth Summit. He stated that the Secretary of State has a long-term vision for increased cross-border integration between South East Wales and South West England. The Leader took the opportunity to speak to senior representatives of Great Western Rail and ask that in their new franchise they consider additional services from London or Bristol or extending services that terminate in Cardiff to Swansea or Bridgend. This would enhance the frequency for Bridgend residents travelling east and west but also help relieve pressure on Cardiff Central Station which is bursting at the seams and cannot accommodate significant additional services. The Leader encouraged Members to take part in the consultation www.gov.uk/government/consultations/great-western-rail-franchise , which closes at 11:45pm on 21st February 2018. He stated that the Council would make a submission and meet with representatives.

117. SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME BAND B

The Interim Corporate Director Education and Family Support sought endorsement of the financial commitment required for Band B of the School Modernisation Programme.

He reported that a Schools Task Group was established in 2014 to ensure the Council planned for a high-quality education system and it became evident that the work of the individual work streams established under the Schools Task Group could not be undertaken in isolation, as there were dependencies relating to each work stream and there needed to be a coherent strategy for Bridgend. Cabinet approval was sought in September 2015 to build on the work of the Schools Task Group and approval was given for officers to undertake a strategic review into the development and rationalisation of the curriculum and estate provision of primary, secondary and post-16 education. In May 2016, a Strategic Review Overarching Board was established, and four operational boards were identified, one of which was specifically related to consideration of Band B investment priorities. It was considered that Band B priorities identified within the 2010 SOP may no longer be of primary importance and the issues facing the Council and schools need to be reviewed to establish a strategic approach for investment, establishing a priority list of schemes for delivery within the Band B timescale (i.e. 2019-2024).

The Interim Corporate Director Education and Family Support reported that the Welsh Government in 2017 requested that local authorities submit a new SOP, updated to reflect revised priorities. In October 2017, Cabinet was presented with a report detailing the outcome of the work of the school modernisation work stream and the revised SOP submission and gave approval to discontinue the original Band B schemes identified in

the November 2010 Cabinet report, and approved the revised Band B schemes detailed below:

- Bridgend North East (2 form entry (FE)) - capital grant
- Bridgend South East (2.5FE) - capital grant
- Bridgend Special School (270 places) – Mutual Investment Model
- Bridgend West – Welsh-medium (2FE) - capital grant
- Bridgend West – English-medium (2FE) - capital grant

He also reported that the Welsh Government on 6 December 2017, gave ‘approval in principle’ for Bridgend’s second wave of investment, which at this stage has an estimated programme envelope cost of £68.2m of which approximately £43.2m is anticipated to be capital funded, the balance proposed to be funded through the Welsh Government Mutual Investment Model (MIM). In order to receive this funding, the Council will need to submit detailed business cases for each project including details of how the match funding (circa £22.8m) required from the Council will be provided. It was proposed that this be met from general capital funding in the first instance (subject to Local Government settlements from Welsh Government), with the balance to be met from s106 funding, receipts from the sale of school and other sites, earmarked reserves and unsupported borrowing. He stated that the capital programme will be updated with individual scheme costs and revised funding as each business case is approved, and reported through the appropriate channels.

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) approved in principle the financial commitment required for Band B of the School Modernisation Programme. The approval would be subject to sufficient resources being identified and allocated to meet the match funding commitment;
- (2) approved the finance required in respect of Band B of the School Modernisation Programme to be incorporated into the capital programme.

118. **REDEVELOPMENT OF MAESTEG TOWN HALL**

The Corporate Director – Communities reported on an update on the Maesteg Town Hall Project and sought approval for a revision to the capital programme for 2017-18 to 2016-27.

He reported that following the transfer of management of the Town Hall to Awen Cultural Trust in 2015, feasibility work was commissioned for the restoration and renovation of the building and creation of a modern multi-purpose culture and arts venue. The scheme proposal had been prioritised by WG for Buildings for the Future Funding and a full business case for the project was now required.

The Corporate Director – Communities informed Council that Mace Group was commissioned in August 2017 to develop the design concept, carry out additional feasibility and provide more accurate cost estimates for the project. The detailed feasibility work was scheduled for completion by March. It was anticipated that the cost of the scheme based on the original ambition would be £5-£6 million, an increase over the initial preliminary estimate of £4-£5 million which reflected the more detailed design work and engineering analysis and will be further refined by the ongoing work. He stated that until tenders had been received, the cost estimate would remain indicative,

albeit informed by design and feasibility work carried out to date. The renovation of historic buildings was complex and until feasibility was complete and all pertinent issues identified a true capital estimate was difficult to predict accurately. He informed Council that a further report will be presented to Cabinet when the feasibility work and cost plan had been completed.

The Corporate Director Communities also reported on the complexity of the capital project and it included a number of potential funding sources. A bid for funding would be submitted to the Welsh Government by March / April 2018 who had confirmed that the maximum available grant would be £2.86m.

He reported that the Council had previously agreed to allocate £500,000 from the capital programme and Cabinet had previously resolved to ring fence £800,000 of the anticipated receipt from the sale of land at Ewenny Road for regeneration in the Llynfi Valley. He stated that in order to provide the required funding assurances to Welsh Government and Heritage Lottery at bidding stage, this commitment would need to be made specific to the Maesteg Town Hall project. Additionally, it would be necessary for the Council to underwrite the receipt to meet programme milestones. He informed Council that the land at Ewenny Road was originally bought with a grant from the Welsh Government, who had confirmed that they would not wish to clawback the original grant value. He stated that £206,000 of fees had been incurred to date, covered by a combination of secured corporate feasibility funding and Special Regeneration Fund revenue allocations. Further fees would be necessary to complete the final detailed design stage, a full suite of additional survey and investigative work would be necessary to satisfy planning and enable tenders to be invited, which was estimated to cost £175,000, which had been incorporated into the capital budget allocation.

The Corporate Director Communities also reported there would be a requirement for a partnership agreement to be drawn up between the Council and Awen covering project delivery, project risks and financial and management arrangements for the contract and the Town Hall. It was not clear at this stage when this would be required by the Welsh Government and Heritage Lottery. It was envisaged that a start would be made by summer 2019, with commencement on site in early 2020, if all funding is secured.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that a critical part of the funding package is the use of a capital receipt from the disposal of the land at Ewenny Road which is yet to happen. As the funding is unsecured, an explicit agreement would be required for it to be used for the Maesteg Town Hall project. He stated that secured match funding for the project will be a requirement for WG and Heritage Lottery Fund prior to final grant approvals being issued. He stated that the Council would need to ensure that the sale transaction was complete prior to May 2019 in accordance with the project milestones. He informed Council that Awen had given a commitment to source charitable grant contributions towards the overall project cost to the value of £500,000. He explained that no capital works would be carried out or capital expenditure incurred until the external funding position had been finalised in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

A Member of Council expressed concern that unless the full funding package was secured the redevelopment scheme may not be delivered. Concern was also expressed that if there was a funding shortfall, and an assurance was requested from the Leader that the Council would treat this scheme as equitably as it had with the Porthcawl Regeneration scheme by providing match funding. The Leader informed the Council that he could not provide those assurances as a decision on match funding would have to be made by Council. He gave an assurance that the Council is committed to redeveloping the iconic Town Hall at Maesteg and was confident that funding would be forthcoming from the different funding mechanisms.

A Member of Council questioned what other schemes would be affected if the capital receipt from the sale of land at Ewenny Road is not generated and the scheme funded through general capital receipts. The Leader informed Council that the developer of land at Ewenny Road had invested in this development and he believed that project would be delivered.

A Member of Council referred to the additional items of work identified, namely to wall tiles, beams and electrics and asked whether these works had been identified as urgent. The Corporate Director Communities stated that the more detailed feasibility will identify the additional works to be addressed and that he was confident that additional funding would be secured.

RESOLVED: That Council approved an increased capital budget of £5.168 million for the proposed redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall, which includes an additional £800,000 of capital receipts, generated either by the sale of the land at Ewenny Road, or general capital receipts, in the event that the Ewenny Road receipt fails to materialise or is lower than the anticipated receipt together with revised funding from external sources.

119. **DEPARTURE PLANNING APPLICATION**

The Development Planning Manager reported that the Development Control Committee at its meeting on 21 December 2017 considered planning application P/17/373/FUL as a departure from the Local Development Plan. She stated that the Committee resolved not to refuse planning permission and the application referred to Council requesting that it approve the application subject to conditions.

The Development Planning Manager reported that the application seeks retrospective consent for a change of use from a retail unit (Class A1) to a Members Only Swimming Pool (Class D2), as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, at Unit 12d Kingsway Buildings, Kingsway, Bridgend Industrial Estate. The application site is located within Bridgend Industrial Estate which is allocated and protected for employment uses falling within uses B1, B2 and B8 employment uses by policies REG1(2) and REG2 of the adopted Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP).

The Development Planning Manager reported that the application is a resubmission of a previous application for the "Change of use from camping and leisure sales outlet to private swim school and formation of swimming pool within the space" under planning reference P/16/488/FUL. She stated that the resubmitted application, as considered by the Development Control Committee, included a planning statement to address local and national policy. It acknowledges that the business has commenced without permission but is seeking retrospective permission again on the basis of a number of changes to the business. The statement also confirms that Water Wings is a private members pool that only provides swimming lessons to members of Water Wings Swim School. Membership is included within the cost of purchasing a block of lessons and the school has also reduced the hours of opening for the Water Wings facility.

RESOLVED: That Council is minded not to refuse the development and the Corporate Director Communities be given plenary powers to issue a decision notice in respect of this proposal subject to the conditions contained in the report of the Corporate Director Communities.

120. ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2016-17 - BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Chief Executive introduced Sarah-Jane Byrne, Local Government Manager and Samantha Clements of the Wales Audit Office who would be presenting the Annual Improvement Report of the Auditor General to Council.

The Local Government Manager of the WAO informed Council that the Auditor General is required to undertake an annual improvement assessment and publish an annual improvement report for each improvement authority in Wales. She stated that overall, the Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement and based on the work carried out by the WAO and relevant regulators, the Council is likely to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Measure.

The Local Government Manager provided Council with an overview of the headline findings of the following projects it had undertaken:

- Good Governance when Determining Service Changes
- Annual Audit Letter 2015-16
- Savings Planning
- Corporate Assessment Follow Up
- Annual Improvement Plan Audit
- Annual Assessment of Performance Audit

The Auditor General did not make any formal recommendations or proposals for improvement. In relation to the Good Governance when Determining Service Changes project, the Council had responded positively to the issues raised by the WAO and has taken action to address each area that requires improvement. The WAO has found that the Council has clear priorities that shape its decisions on significant service change and it seeks to learn and improve arrangements, but there is scope to improve the accessibility of some information. It also found, that the Council benefits from generally clear governance and accountability arrangements and positive working relationships between officers and members. The Council typically considers a range of options for significant service changes that are supported by clear information, but they are not generally accompanied by a formal options appraisal. The Council has generally effective consultation arrangements when considering significant service changes and it continues to develop them, though the accessibility of information could be improved. The Council monitors financial savings and the impact of some significant services changes, though this could be strengthened by clearly setting out how impact will be monitored at the point of decision. The Council is learning from its experience to improve its arrangements for determining and delivering service changes.

The Leader thanked the representatives of the WAO for their engagement on the Annual Improvement Report which he believed to be a fair reflection of the Council's position but also indicated there was always room for improvement.

RESOLVED: That Council noted the Annual Improvement Report and the Good Governance when Determining Significant Service Changes report produced by the WAO.

121. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

The Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer presented a report, the purpose of which was to provide Council with information regarding the implementation of the 20118-19

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Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR) (to be adopted by 31 January 2018), together with the funding implications.

She confirmed that on 11 January 2017, the Council adopted the CTR for 2017-18 in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013, which will end on 31 March 2018. There were currently 13,892 households receiving CTR, 8,517 of these were of working age and 5,375 were of pensionable age. Of the 13,892 households receiving CTR, 10,615 were entitled to a full CTR reduction.

The Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer reported that the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 had now been laid and made amendments to:

- Mirror changes made to the benefit system with respect to Employment Support Allowance.
- Make changes to reflect new service provision arrangements following the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.
- Make changes to address an anomaly within the wording of the amending provisions included within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 with respect to changes of circumstances provisions.
- Make a number of changes with respect to payments which are disregarded for the purposes of calculating 'income' and/or 'capital'. These include the new bereavement support payments among others.

The Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer stated that the new regulations did not contain any significant changes from the claimants' perspective to the current scheme, and the maximum level of support that eligible claimants could receive remained at 100%. She explained the limited discretion given to the Council, to apply discretionary elements that were more generous than the national scheme. It was proposed that the discretionary elements be as follows:-

- The extended payment period is maintained at the minimum standard of 4 weeks.
- War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions are fully disregarded when calculating entitlement to CTR. The estimated cost of this proposal is £15,300.
- Backdating was maintained at the minimum standard of 3 months.

The Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer explained that the total estimated cost to the Council for these proposals is £15,300 for 2018-19.

The Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer informed Council that it must consider whether to replace or revise its CTR scheme and is obliged to make a scheme under the requirements of the Prescribed Requirements Regulations. The obligation is a statutory duty and applies even if the Council chose not to apply any of the discretions available to it. She stated that the Council's recommended approach to the available discretions is to apply the recommendations in Table 4, paragraph 4.23 of the report. There are no additional monies available from the Welsh Government to fund the discretionary elements and the scheme must be administered by local authorities within a fixed budget.

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- (a) Noted the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013, and the 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 amendment regulations
- (b) Adopted the scheme, details of which were given in paragraphs 4.18 to 4.24 of the report.

122. **TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO THE CABINET**

Question to the Cabinet Member Communities from Councillor Tim Thomas

Over the duration of the next medium term financial plan, what will this Council do to ensure that people living with disabilities are fully able to access roads, streets and highways that they use on a day to day basis within their community?

Response:

All carriageways and footways are regularly inspected, in accordance with the code of practice "well maintained Highways" defects in excess of nationally agreed criteria are repaired in accordance with appropriate response times. This ensures as far as reasonably practical the highway is safe for the use by all members of the public.

Where requests are received for dropped kerbs to be introduced at junctions currently such improvements are installed in conjunction with highway maintenance work carried out to reconstruct a footway, when its condition has deteriorated to such an extent that it is considered to be dangerous. The highway maintenance budget is limited and we would advise that it has not been possible to fund the installation of pedestrian aids in isolation in the past. When individual requests have been received they are entered on to the Works Register and considered when funding is available, there are currently over 100 locations on the register. However, town and community councils have previously funded individual improvements within their areas and these have been installed in-line with current guidance.

Requests are made yearly for capital funding to undertake some of the streets recorded on the works register, and funding was granted this year to target those locations where requests have been received. £50,000 of orders had been issued to the term maintenance contractor to undertake these types of works this financial year. The streets on the work register have been prioritised based on the categorisation of the footway, which is based on the code of practice. Streets with a higher categorisation have a greater footfall, and are hence targeted first. As these locations are at junctions of carriageways, the categorisation of the higher of the two streets that are joined is used to assess the priority.

Any new highway works adhere to the appropriate acts and ensure that they are DDA compliant.

If there are issues with access from private properties onto the highway, that is a matter for the private properties to address within their boundaries.

Councillor Thomas asked a supplementary question as to whether the £50,000 funding would tackle the backlog of requests. The Cabinet Member Communities confirmed that the funding of £50,000 would not cover the backlog which is a county wide issue.

Councillor Webster highlighted the difficulties experienced by residents of the Newcastle ward with people parking in streets in order to access the town centre and questioned whether further residents parking schemes could be implemented in order to alleviate the problem. The Cabinet Member Communities asked Councillor Webster and Councillor T Thomas to provide him with details of the streets affected within their ward so that he can ask officers to look at the problems highlighted.

The Corporate Director Communities informed Members that the Council has a prioritisation programme for residents parking and requests for dropped kerbs could be considered as part of funding within the capital programme.

Question to the Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help from Councillor Altaf Hussain

According to the Royal College of Emergency Medicine Wales, Accident and Emergency Departments in Welsh Hospitals are like battlefields. Welsh Government blames flu outbreak, increase in calls over the Christmas and New Year Norovirus. Dr Robin Roop, Vice President of RCEM Wales said for the staff an emergency department feels like a battlefield, patient safety is compromised, this is unsafe, undignified and distressing for patients and their relatives. Several Health Boards across Wales have had to postpone operations because of the winter pressures. ABMU cancelled most routine planned surgeries. The Health Secretary Wales has apologised to the patients whose surgeries are being cancelled.

This means that more patients especially elderly will be admitted through Accident and Emergency with Flu, Respiratory problems, falls etc. Some of these patients will be discharged soon.

Are we well equipped with regards to the Social Care for these discharged patients at Council Level and will the Cabinet member assure the chamber that there will be no bed block syndrome in our hospitals because of delays in social care?

Response:

The impact of 'winter pressures' is felt across the whole health and social care system and therefore the response to these pressures must also be from the whole system. When the hospital is at Level 4 escalation this, in turn, impacts on the capacity of our community teams.

The context in Bridgend is that there are established integrated teams and a strong history of partnership working across the health and social care sector. This means that we have a strong relationship and processes in place which we can rely on at such challenging times. At the moment we have in place daily telephone conference calls with the POW hospital for social care discharges and daily meetings for wider hospital flow. Senior managers on both sides are committed to regular communication to jointly problem solve those situations that warrant escalation. In order to respond to the current pressures social care in Bridgend has the following in place:

- Integrated community team which includes 2 Community Physicians
- Acute Clinical Team in place which operates over 7days
- Hospital social work team who are focusing their attention on effective discharge
- 2 staff who between them attend every appropriate board round and receive direct referrals, this is a pro-active approach to ensure that patients, medically fit for discharge, are 'pulled' from the hospital

- Better at Home service in place which is a short term discharge service that facilitates early discharge from hospital so that patients aren't waiting for a social work assessment or another care service

At the moment BCBC has been able to respond quickly and appropriately and the number of delayed discharges for social care reasons at any one time is very low and these are being given a very high priority. There are wider issues in the system, for example there is a shortage of nursing EMI beds within the Borough. Although plans are in place to develop this sector this will take some months to achieve.

Councillor Hussain asked a supplementary question, as to whether there is an ambitious plan to go through the difficult years at local level so that we are well prepared about the future years which the panel has warned about.

He also referred to the concerns about the move from ABMU to Cwm Taf Health Board and since BCBC are the major stakeholders facilitating the move, have they considered bringing up this issue with Cwm Taf Health Board to ensure that patients transfer from health facilities to social care is as smooth as possible and what discussions they have had with Cwm Taf around this area?

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help stated that there is a need for reform both locally and nationally and a partnership approach is needed. He gave an assurance that every effort would be made to ensure that residents would not stay in hospital any longer than required. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing stated that the Council is always ambitious and has a good track record with transfers to care and is in the top quartile for performance. She also informed Council that the Cabinet Secretary had recently launched a review of health board boundaries and a presentation on the proposals would be made to the meeting of Council in March where the Chief Executive and Chairperson of Cwm Taf Health Board would be in attendance.

123. NOTICE OF MOTION

This item was withdrawn and will be deferred to a future meeting of Council.

124. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

125. 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 contains exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 and 16 of Part 4 and 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 the circumstances relating to the item, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

126. REDUNDANCY AND EARLY RETIREMENT PACKAGES CARRYING COSTS IN EXCESS OF £100,000

The meeting closed at 16:52