

COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2018

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2018 AT 15:00

Present

Councillor JR McCarthy – Chairperson

S Aspey	SE Baldwin	TH Beedle	JPD Blundell
NA Burnett	MC Clarke	N Clarke	RJ Collins
HJ David	P Davies	PA Davies	DK Edwards
J Gebbie	T Giffard	RM Granville	CA Green
DG Howells	A Hussain	RM James	M Jones
MJ Kearns	DRW Lewis	JE Lewis	D Patel
RL Penhale-Thomas	AA Pucella	KL Rowlands	B Sedgebeer
RMI Shaw	CE Smith	SG Smith	RME Stirman
G Thomas	T Thomas	JH Tildesley MBE	E Venables
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

SK Dendy, B Jones, DG Owen, JC Radcliffe and JC Spanswick

Officers:

Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Gill Lewis	Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Michael Pitman	Business & Administrative Apprentice
Kelly Watson	Head of Legal & Regulatory Services

224. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Head of Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer gave the following advice to Members in respect of an agenda some Members may have an interest in later in the meeting (i.e. Agenda Item 10), as follows:-

Members who are in the pension fund will have a personal interest in this item. However, under the Code of Conduct if that interest arises from their membership of the fund through their Councillor salaries they would not have a prejudicial interest. This exemption applies to them personally and would not apply to any interest they had as a result of family being part of the pension fund. It was for each Member to consider their own individual circumstances, she concluded.

The following declaration of interest was made:-

Councillor RM James Agenda Item 8 personal interest in that his wife worked for the Wales Audit Office.

The following declarations of interest were made in respect of Agenda Item 10:-

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Councillor PJ White personal interest.

Councillor DBF White prejudicial interest as his wife was in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor DG Howells personal interest, as well as a prejudicial interest as a representative Member of WDA.

Councillor P Davies personal interest.

Councillor HJ David prejudicial interest in that close family relatives are in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor HM Williams personal interest.

Councillor CE Smith personal interest as well as a prejudicial interest due to a close family member being a beneficiary member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor S Baldwin personal and prejudicial interest.

Councillor MJ Kearn prejudicial interest as a close family Member was in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor G Thomas prejudicial interest as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor KJ Watts prejudicial interest.

Councillor RM Shaw personal interest.

Councillor N Clarke personal and prejudicial interest.

Councillor MC Voisey personal interest.

Councillor N Burnett personal interest as a close family relative is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor M Jones personal as a recipient of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor T Beedle prejudicial interest as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor A Williams personal and prejudicial interest as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor D Patel personal interest as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor MC Clarke personal interest as he has paid into the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor S Aspey personal interest as he is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor T Thomas personal interest as he had previously paid into the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor J Gebbie personal interest.

Councillor R Penhale-Thomas prejudicial interest as his husband was in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Councillor R Collins prejudicial interest as his wife was a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Those Members above who had declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10, advised that they would leave the meeting whilst this item was being considered.

225. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of Council dated 19 September 2018, be approved as a true and accurate record.

226. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM:

Mayor

The Mayor extended his congratulations are due to the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Bridgend Extrication Team. The team recently retained their title of the very best in the UK for the sixth time. The team fought off strong competition from teams across the country at a Challenge event in Cardiff Bay which was hosted by the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. He gave a big thank you to all involved for their continued dedication and hard work.

He had a busy period since the last Council meeting, with Judy and he having carried out 28 official engagements, which had been varied, different and very enjoyable. He especially mentioned:

- Mrs Catherine Powell's 100th Birthday at Oakland's Residential care home Bridgend, she has only recently moved from her home in Penprysg Pencoed
- We attended the 60th Wedding anniversary of Mr and Mrs Lewis of Nantyffyllon.
- The opening of Brynmenyn School by the First Minister Carwyn Jones was well attended by Members, this is the fifth new school to open in five years and demonstrates the authority's ongoing commitment to first class education.
- After the last Council meeting we had the pleasure of raising the RAF ensign to celebrate 100 years since their formation. I would like to thank all who attended to help us commemorate this important milestone.
- We attended KPC's Macmillan coffee morning and a Rotary Club Charity lunch in aid of the Tenovus Closer to Home appeal which raised over £7,000 for this excellent cause.
- The Interfaith Seminar and dinner at City Hall Cardiff was an excellent evening and a great chance to meet people from all faiths and backgrounds.
- The Annual Bridgend Business Forum awards held at the Coed-y-Mwstwr were another highlight and I will be visiting all the winners to offer congratulations in person, meet their staff and see the work that they do.
- My Mayoral Civic service was well attended and he thanked all the officers who took part for their hard work in making the event a such a success.
- Congratulations to the Bridgend Cancer Research shop who celebrated their 25th Birthday, the shop and its dedicated band of volunteers have raised over £1.8 million pounds during that period.

- We were honoured to be invited to the presentation of the British Empire Medal to Mr. John Berry in recognition of his lifetime's work for the YMCA. I was also delighted to invite Mr. Roger Hudd into the civic offices to receive his BEM for all his hard work over the years in respect of various charities.

To conclude the Mayor reminded all male Councillors that after the meeting today there will be a photo opportunity in support of the White Ribbon Campaign. Members should have already received an email to this effect from Councillor David White who is our White Ribbon Champion and it would be nice if as many male Councillors as possible could participate to show our support and commitment to this important initiative he concluded.

Deputy Leader

The Deputy Leader hoped that Members found the pre-Council Budget workshop useful and illuminating, and those that could not make that, could attend a repeat session on the same topic after Council.

Our budget consultation recently crossed the half-way mark and is continuing to draw a strong response, but he asked all Members to please continue to make every effort to encourage their constituents to take part in this to have their say.

He was sure that Members will have seen recent media coverage about the forthcoming Council budget, warning that significant service cuts and an increase in council tax are now unavoidable.

Unfortunately, following an extremely disappointing allocation, this is no exaggeration. The Council would be receiving less money with increased pressures

The nationally-negotiated pay increase for teachers will take this year's overall budget shortfall to more than £12m. While Welsh Government indicate providing additional funding to help meet this extra financial pressure, there was no indication yet whether or not this will cover the full amount, or whether it will only partially contribute to the cost.

A council tax increase by around 5 per cent next year would not cover even a third of the shortfall the Authority faces.

BCBC were no longer in a position to be able to protect services that many people regard as being essential, and therefore, significant cuts were now unavoidable.

Nearly three quarters of the budget goes towards Schools and Social Care services, but the Council had been forced into a position where it can no longer offer any guarantees.

The fact of the matter was that local authorities were not getting the increase they needed to cover basic costs. He was therefore appealing to all Councillors, now more than ever, to work together.

All Members needed to be realistic about this situation, and accept that a number of important services must be reduced or even withdrawn entirely. At the same time, central Government and Welsh Government must also accept that this cannot go on indefinitely.

As many views as possible needed to be taken into account, so he asked all Councillors to urge their constituents to complete the budget consultation.

It was available at the Council website, in hard copy, in a range of alternative formats, including easy-read and one produced especially for younger residents.

As part of the consultation, a Social Media debate is being organised for 7th November to help encourage as many people as possible to take part before the process closes for analysis.

The deadline for returning all completed consultation surveys is 18 November 2018. After that some very difficult decisions will need to be made he concluded.

Cabinet Member – Communities

The Cabinet Member – Communities announced that the first big storm of the season had been and gone and council workers were once more out in the thick of it as dedicated staff made sure that everything continued to run smoothly.

Gullies were regularly jetted to ensure that they remained free of obstruction, and our highway inspectors, supervisors and drainage teams responded to a number of incidents and resolved numerous issues to prevent them from becoming a bigger problem.

The Council had distributed a large quantity of sandbags, responded to reports of localised flooding and removed several fallen trees to keep roads safe and the county borough moving.

Flood sensors kept us aware of rising water levels, especially at Heol Faen, Greenacre and Wyndham Street. As before, much of this was caused by the sheer volume of rain that fell, but also by debris and fly tipping which washed downstream to block drains and culverts.

As Members could imagine, this was cold, uncomfortable difficult work, but our staff were on hand to respond and help, each and every time.

He was sure that Members will want to acknowledge their efforts, and thank everyone who played a part in keeping our communities safe.

We have received more than £1.7m from Welsh Government to fund further Active Travel schemes. These are designed to make it easier for residents to leave their cars at home when making local journeys, and the money will be spent on a number of schemes and improvements.

The biggest single investment of £500,000, will complete the missing link between Coychurch and Pencoed Comprehensive School with an off-road route for pedestrians and cyclists along Coychurch Road.

The second largest investment, £450,000, is benefitting Porthcawl by extending the active travel route along the Eastern Promenade from Coney Beach so it that it continues through to Newton Primary School along New Road.

Other works are included in the funding, and we will also be investing it in design and feasibility costs for the next eight planned Active Travel schemes.

Active Travel improvements take time, energy and money to establish, and he was delighted to see how an extensive local network of safe cycling and walking routes is coming together in Bridgend County Borough.

Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help

Safeguarding and protection services for our most vulnerable residents received a significant boost recently with the official launch of the Bridgend Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub announced the above Cabinet Member.

Also known as MASH, the new integrated service became operational in September, and is the third hub of its kind in Wales.

Based at the Ravens Court offices, the MASH brings together more than 80 professionals including police officers, social workers, education welfare officers, nurses, probation officers and more.

It is a true partnership effort, and is designed to support more efficient information sharing so that faster assessments to take place, in turn ensuring that vulnerable people can receive the support they need.

This is an incredibly significant development in how we are finding new ways of providing essential services, and represents a welcome addition to the county borough's existing safeguarding arrangements.

Members may also have noticed that it was National Adoption Week recently. As far as we are concerned here in Bridgend, every week is adoption and fostering week. As you know, we have dedicated staff in place who work to recruit more people able to offer a home to vulnerable children.

Our current 'empty nesters' and 'bridge the gap' campaigns are targeting households where children may have grown-up and moved away, and we are seeking people who are over 21, fit and well enough to care for children, who have a spare bedroom and who can provide a stable home for a local child.

Anyone who would like to find out more can do so by visiting the Bridgend Foster Care website, or calling the fostering team on 642674.

BCBC's programme of support for newly qualified social workers has earned them an award at the Social Care Wales Accolades, the BAFTA's of the social care world.

The local authority took top spot in the 'Developing a confident and sustainable workforce' category at the prestigious award ceremony held in Cardiff City Hall.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help, was thrilled to have been recognised for the imaginative way that our programme helps new social workers get their careers off to the best possible start.

New social workers are given support, teaching and mentoring through a mixture of in-house workshops and training events with outside speakers, as well as individual and group mentoring sessions.

The biennial 'Accolades' awards, organised by Social Care Wales with support from partners and sponsors, are held to reward excellent practice in social work, social care, early years and childcare he concluded.

Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations

The Cabinet Member – Wellbeing and Future Generations confirmed that it was great to see that developers Lovell are creating 48 new energy-efficient, high-quality affordable

homes for local people at Coychurch Road following their appointment by Hafod Housing.

The £5.4m design and build scheme has been developed in partnership with Bridgend County Borough Council, and will deliver some much-needed new social rented homes.

The new development will provide significant training and employment opportunities for local people, including 3 apprenticeships, 6 jobs, 7 paid traineeships and more than 150 hours of work experience placements.

The housing will be completed in phases, and the final properties are scheduled to become ready to occupy in May 2019.

She also took an opportunity to remind members that October is Black History Month, and asked members to help promote the Ethnic Minority and Youth Support Team Wales event.

This was taking place on Tuesday 30 October at Bridgend College, and is aimed at Black Asian and Minority Ethnic people living in Bridgend.

It hopes to gauge a better understanding of their experience of health and social services.

If Members knew of anyone who would be interested in attending, then she asked them to contact the Council's Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager for more details.

Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration

The above Cabinet Member wished to congratulate Oldcastle Primary School for embracing a junior savings scheme organised by Bridgend Lifesavers Credit Union.

Around 76 children took part in the first week of the scheme and saved £340 of their pocket money.

Membership now stands at 236, and the school has saved a total of £11,900 so far.

As member-owned financial co-operatives, credit unions can accept deposits and give out low-interest loans.

The initiative is teaching the pupils about the importance of saving and financial matters, and is supporting the development of skills such as numeracy, team working, communications and more.

The school's efforts have been recognised with a top prize from Credit Unions of Wales.

As research by the Money Advice Service has revealed that one person in every six in Wales is at risk of being unable to keep up with credit repayments, the scheme is even more worthwhile. He extended his thanks to all concerned.

He hoped members saw the recent feature about the latest developments at Bridgend Indoor Market, but for the benefit of those who may have missed it, since launching our plan to revive the market's fortunes, five new businesses have signed leases for stalls and we are expecting to make further announcements soon.

The new stalls are offering a diverse mix of goods that range from vintage vinyl, protein health food and Welsh gifts to boutique fashions and specialist wool and knitting supplies.

Members will also see work taking place to give the exterior of the market a fresh new look as a series of illustrative panels are erected, and the historic market bell is moved to a more prominent location.

We have worked closely with market traders, the Rhiw Shopping Centre, Bridgend Town Council, the CF31 business improvement group, Watts and Morgan and local elected members on this, and it ably demonstrates just what partnership working can achieve.

The news has been extremely well received, especially on social media, and bodes well for future developments and further initiatives.

Finally, Members may also wish to advise their constituents that secondary school admissions for September 2019 have now opened, and that for the first time, parents and guardians can make applications online by using a form which is available in the 'My Account' section of the council website.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive reminded Members that the Authority had embarked on a series of management reviews across the organisation. All Councillors will have received already an overview of the senior management structure in the new Chief Executives Directorate

Yesterday Zak Shell was appointed to the role of Head of Operations in the Communities Directorate following an assessment centre style competency based selection process.

Further changes at third tier are also moving forward in that Directorate and Members would be advised of the senior structure when that was complete.

He added that further changes to third tier management have also been completed in Children's Social Services, with further consultations underway in the Directorate.

In the Education Directorate, the Adult learning and Skills and economy functions have been moved to become part of the education directorate thus better aligning our learning and skills offer from early year's right through to working age adults. However, any senior management changes will only be considered once we have concluded our exploration of collaboration options with Merthyr Council.

All of these changes seek to strike a balance, responding to the overall reduction in staff numbers as the council becomes a smaller organisation, realising financial savings and maintaining our drive for ever closer integration of functions to support the 'One Council' approach.

As Members may be aware, the UK Government's refugee resettlement programme is helping to provide safe, secure accommodation for families of refugees fleeing the Middle East conflict.

Up to 1,500 are expected to settle in Wales, and to date, six families totalling 31 people have been rehomed in Bridgend County Borough where they have fully integrated into local life.

We have recently agreed via Cabinet yesterday, to house a further five families between now and 2020. UK Government is making specific funding available to facilitate this, and we will be working with Hafod Housing to support them.

As before, Hafod will manage tenancies in the private rented sector for the refugee families, and there will therefore be no impact or knock-on effect on the existing housing list.

If it is still unsafe for them to return home after five years, the refugees will be able to apply to the UK Government to remain in the UK.

There will be further updates as the programme develops.

Members will also be aware of the wealth of activity undertaken by faith communities of all denominations, very often working on agendas that are also important to us and our partners. For example supporting people at risk or experiencing homelessness, supporting people living in poverty or connecting people and addressing isolation

The public service board of which Bridgend is a member is organising an event in November to coincide with interfaith week. This event will bring together representative of those organisations and facilitate networking and exchange of ideas and approaches. It is also intended allow networking between these organisations and some statutory agencies working to address similar issues such as the fire service, social care and housing.

Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer wished to advise Members that an extra meeting of the Audit Committee has been added to the Programme of Meetings 2018/19, in order to adequately consider the number of items of business that comprise the Committees current Annual Forward Work Programme. This meeting will take place on Thursday 13 December 2018 at 2.00pm in these offices. Finance Officers and the Chairperson have agreed to the meeting being added to the Programme of Meetings, and Members of the Committee have been advised that a further meeting is required.

Council are asked to note this information, and that the meeting will be added to the Audit Committee Members' electronic calendars in the immediate future.

She also reminded Members that they would shortly be forwarded a form to complete with regard to Disclosure and Barring Checks. This needed to be returned to the Council at the earliest opportunity.

227. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE LEADER

The Leader reminded all members that Darren Mephram was leaving the authority in the New Year to take up a new role as Chief Executive of Barnett and Southgate further education college in north London.

He took the opportunity to offer Darren his congratulations. The Authority had made significant progress in the six years that he had been employed here, and it had faced some of the most challenging circumstances this Council has ever seen.

This has included developments with the change in health board, working through difficult financial challenges to deliver a balanced budget and sound finances, achieving further collaboration with our neighbouring councils like the shared regulatory services, radical changes to streamline the managements of all directorate including establishing

a new directorate which has brought together the majority of our corporate services and of course he has reduced senior management costs by over a third.

Darren would be with BCBC for the next three months and will continue to play a hands-on leading role in that time. As an authority, we would be seeking to appoint a permanent replacement to the post as soon as possible, and he had been, and would be speaking further with Cabinet colleagues and group leaders about the interim arrangements required to put in place.

Darren will be here for two more Council meetings between now and starting his new role so today wasn't a time to say goodbye.

We have a very capable and skilled senior management team in place who between them have decades of experience, and the Leader was very confident that our ambitious programmes will all continue to move forward.

Welsh Government has confirmed that EU funding of £1.5m is to be invested in Porthcawl's all-new water sports centre at Rest Bay. The funding is being made available as part of Welsh Government's new Tourism Attractor Destination programme, which has been launched by Visit Wales to create 13 must-see tourist destinations. The water sports centre will be one of these, and is designed to appeal to water sports enthusiasts throughout South Wales and beyond. Work has started, and a 'selfie board' has been erected on fencing placed around the building site to minimise the visual impact of the works, and demonstrate our efforts to ensure Porthcawl continues to thrive and grow as one of Wales's premier coastal resorts.

The Leader announced that he was delighted to attend the official opening of the all-new Brynmenyn Primary School by the First Minister last week. The £9m school is just one of the latest to be delivered as part of our flagship 21st Century school modernisation programme, and follows hot on the heels of the official opening of the new Betws Primary.

The former premises located at Bryn Road was more than a hundred years old, and could not expand due to being surrounded by common land.

The new school is twice the size and offers a nursery, 14 large classrooms equipped with modern learning technology, state-of-the-art educational facilities and more than 14,000 square metres of specially designed open space. This is contrast to the former site which had a small yard and did not have a single blade of grass.

It's new home next to Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen benefits from a dedicated car park and safe drop-off and pick-up zones, and also incorporates a memorial to a school heroine, Sarah Jane Howell, a former assistant teacher who died in 1911 while saving a pupil from drowning.

The old school building, partly because of its hillside location was simply not accessible for children with significant physical disabilities One of the many advantages of the new home is that local children who could not be educated at the old location can now attend their community school. Hearing the mum of one of the little boys who is now at Brynmenyn because of the fully accessible modern facilities and what it means to her was a reminder of the difference that this investment has made, as was listening to the emotional speeches of the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher at the official opening.

Brynmenyn Primary has a proud history behind it, and thanks to the efforts of everyone who has contributed towards the delivery of this project, the school also has a bright future ahead of it.

228. ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The Chief Executive presented a report the purpose of which, was to present the Council's Annual Report 2017-18 (attached at Appendix A) for Council to consider and approve.

He began his submission by advising that it was a legal requirement for Council to publish an assessment of its performance for the previous financial year, prior to 31 October.

The Plan had defined 38 commitments to deliver the three well-being objectives and identified 53 outcome-focused indicators for the financial year 2017-28.

The aim/objective of the Plan was to gauge how well the Council performed in 2017-18, using success measures and other fact based evidence.

Paragraph 4.2 of the report, confirmed that the Council performed well during the above period, with of the 37 commitments taken forward, the Council carried out to completion 29 of these (nearly 79%) with a further 6 (16%) being mostly completed. The Chief Executive confirmed that these were well in hand to complete, and he gave reasons why these had not to date been fully completed.

The Corporate Plan identified 53 indicators to measure success and 51 indicators had been collected for the year. Of those with a target, he advised that the Council met or exceeded the target for nearly 69%, with a further 10% missing the target marginally. Detailed information about the Council's performance against its commitments and targets was included in Appendix A to the report.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Annual Report also provided a summary of budgets for the year, regulators' findings, themes that underpin our work and an overview of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

He concluded his submission, by confirming that once approved, the Annual Report will be published on the Council's website and shared with stakeholders. Hard copies of the report would also be produced and placed in the Council's public libraries.

The Leader reiterated the words of the Chief Executive, adding that the 6 commitments currently showing as uncompleted would be completed at the earliest possible opportunity and applauded work undertaken to date, such as for example, the Bridges into Work Scheme and the Kerrigan Project.

A Member also added that it would be welcomed if all Members had the opportunity of receiving the Presentation with regard to the 'Get on Track Programme' given previously to some Members and Officers by Jodie Coupland, a former pupil of Ysgol Bryn Castell School.

This programme was explained within the penultimate paragraph on page 36 of the Appendix. Members felt that this would be worthwhile.

RESOLVED: That Council approved the Annual Report 2017-18, attached at Appendix A to the covering report.

229. TREASURY MANAGEMENT – HALF YEAR REPORT 2018-19

The Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to comply with the requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the Code), to provide an overview of treasury activities as part of a mid-year review. The report also provided a summary of the Treasury Management activities from 1 April to 30 September 2018 and reports on the projected Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for 2018-19.

The report was based on the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) for 2018-19 which was approved by Council on 28 February 2018.

She explained that CIPFA published new editions of Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities in late December 2017, however, the TMS 2018-19 (and therefore this report) have been produced using the 2011 Codes due to the timing of the changes and there was still some information which had yet to be published when the TMS was produced.

In March 2018, the Welsh Government also published an amendment to the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations which enables the Council to invest in certain instruments which were previously treated as capital expenditure (for example Money Market Funds) without the potential revenue cost of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and without the proceeds from sale being considered a capital receipt.

The Council's external debt and investment position for 1 April to 30 September 2018 was shown in table 1 within the report, and more detail was provided in section 4.3 of the report, the Borrowing Strategy and Outturn and section 4.4 which explained the Investment Strategy and Outturn.

For Members information the Bank Rate started the financial year at 0.50% and remained at that rate until 2 August 2018, when the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee increased the rate by 0.25% to 0.75%. The current forecast is that there will be a further 0.25% increase in the Bank Rate by March 2019 reaching 1% by the end of 2018-19.

The key points to note in the report, were:

The total gross external debt outstanding 30 September 2018 £117.52m made up of:

- The £96.87m borrowing made up of :
- £77.62m relating to long term Public Works Loan Board at fixed rates (average rate 4.70%)
- £19.25m with a maturity date of 2054 relating to Lender's Option Borrower's Option loans which may be re-scheduled in advance of the maturity date (average rate 4.65%)

The Council would take the option to repay the LOBO loans at no cost if it had the opportunity to do so in the future.

Following advice from TM Advisers Arlingclose, the Interim Head of Finance and S151 Officer confirmed that the Council approached the LOBO's lender for potential repayment options in 2017-18. However, the premium was deemed too excessive to

action, but the Council would take the option to repay these loans at no cost if it has the opportunity to do so in the future.

The last time the Council took long term borrowing was £5 million from the PWLB in March 2012 and it is not expected that there will be a requirement for any new long term borrowing in 2018-19.

The £20.65m other long term liabilities figure includes £17.32m for the Authority's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) arrangement for the provision of a secondary school in Maesteg and £2.40 million relating to a loan from the WG Central Capital Retained Fund for regeneration works within the Llynfi Valley which has not yet commenced.

Treasury Investments outstanding 30 September 2018 £34.30m (average rate 0.81%) made up of

- £8m Banks average rate 0.85%
- £1m Building Societies average rate 0.80%
- £23m Local Authorities average rate 0.80%
- £2.30m Money Market Fund average rate 0.69% (provides instant access)

Table 2 in the report detailed the investment profile from 1 April, £30.40m to 30 September 2018, £34.30m.

Table 3 detailed the £34.30m by counterparty type based on the remaining maturity period at 30 September 2018

As previously reported to Cabinet and Council in 2017-18, the Council opened a Money Market Fund (MMF) in August 2017, which is an approved financial instrument in the TMS and provides instant access to the funds.

The Council set up additional MMF's in September 2018 (all approved by Arlingclose) as well as also setting-up a web based portal (at no cost to the Council) to simplify and introduce efficiencies to all aspects of MMFs, from account maintenance through to trading and reporting. The new MMF's and the portal application process were not finalised by 30 September 2018, but are expected to be used from October 2018 once the set-up is completed.

In terms of non-treasury investments, though these were not classed as treasury management activities and therefore not covered by the CIPFA Code or the WG Guidance, the Council may also purchase property for investment purposes and may also make loans and investments for service purposes. For example in shared ownership housing, or as equity investments and loans to the Council's subsidiaries. Such loans and investments will be subject to the Council's normal approval processes for revenue and capital expenditure and need not comply with the TMS.

The Council's existing non-treasury investments relate to investment properties and the unaudited balance outstanding at 31 March 2018 was £4.36 million she explained.

She then gave a resume of the information contained in the Appendices to the report, as follows:-

Appendix A – The Investment Strategy in the TMS 2018-19 defines high credit quality as organisations and securities having a credit rating of A- or higher and this table shows the equivalence table for credit ratings for Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's and explains the different investment grades. The pie chart in paragraph 4.4.10 of the report summarised the £34.30m investments at 30 September 2018 by credit ratings and shows this by percentage outstanding. Most Local Authorities do not have credit ratings

and the unrated building society was approved by Arlingclose, whilst the remainder of the investments all had a credit rating of A or above.

Appendix B – Council approved a revised MRP policy for 2018-19 on 19 September 2018 and a revised MRP Statement 2018-19 was shown, which amends the method of calculating a prudent annual amount to charge to revenue to repay capital financing costs. The revision of the MRP Policy 2018-19 for calculating MRP on capital expenditure funded from supported borrowing has resulted in a change from a 4% reducing balance method to a straight-line method over 45 years. The figures in Appendix B have been revised to reflect a minor change from the report approved by Council, to reflect the more up to date information available and a minor accounting adjustment in 2018-19.

Appendix C - details the Council's Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2018-19 and shows the estimate for 2018-19 (set out in the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council in February) and also the projection for the year. These show that the Council is operating in line with the approved limits.

The Deputy Leader wished it placed on record, that the report clearly evidenced that even in a very challenging financial climate; he was pleased to note that the Council were still in relatively safe hands due to the dedication and professionalism of Finance Officers.

RESOLVED: That Council:-

- (1) Approved the treasury management activities for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018.
- (2) Noted the projected Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for 2018-19 against the Indicators approved in the Treasury Management Strategy 2018-19.

230. INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOTING

The Head of Legal and Regulatory Services submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to inform Council of the Information Report for noting which had been published since its last scheduled meeting.

The Information Report in question, was detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report and was entitled 'Wales Audit Office – Overview and Scrutiny – Fit for the Future?'

The Head of Legal and Regulatory Services confirmed that a report on this topic had previously been considered and debated by Members of the Audit Committee and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: That Council acknowledged the publication of the document listed in the report.

231. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE:

Question to the Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration from Cllr T Thomas

'Will the Cabinet Member make a statement on the take-up of Welsh A Levels across schools in the County Borough?'

Response

Welsh (1st Language) A level

In 2017, 10 students from Bridgend schools sat an A level in Welsh 1st Language. Across Wales, in 2017, 214 students sat an A level in Welsh 1st Language. Therefore, 5% of all A level Welsh 1st Language entries from schools across Wales in 2017 came from Bridgend. This represents a similar entry to 2016 compared to a 13% decline across Wales since 2015.

The percentage of Bridgend pupils achieving A*-E grades matches the all-Wales average. The percentage of Bridgend pupils achieving A*-C grades was above the all-Wales average in 2015 but below in 2016 and 2017. The number of students sitting A level Welsh 1st Language in 2018 will at least match the number of entries in 2016.

Across Wales, the numbers of pupils studying A level Welsh 1st Language fell from 280 in 2015 to 214 in 2017. Similarly, the numbers of pupils studying AS level Welsh 1st Language fell from 280 in 2014 to 218 in 2017.

2. Welsh (2nd Language) A level

In 2017, 29 students from Bridgend schools sat an A level in Welsh 2nd Language. Across Wales, in 2017, 242 students sat an A level in Welsh 2nd Language. Therefore, 12% of all A level Welsh 2nd Language entries from schools across Wales in 2017 came from Bridgend. This represents a 4% increase from 2016.

The percentage of Bridgend pupils achieving A*-C grades was well above the all-Wales average. The percentage of Bridgend pupils achieving A*-E grades was just below the all-Wales average. Only one student failed to secure a 'pass'. The number of students sitting A level Welsh 2nd Language in 2018 will at least match the number of entries in 2015 and 2016.

Across Wales, the numbers of pupils studying A level Welsh fell from 272 in 2015 to 242 in 2017. Similarly, the numbers of pupils studying AS level Welsh 2nd Language fell from 354 in 2014 to 298 in 2017.

Welsh Government has decided to discontinue short course GCSE Welsh 2nd Language and now all students in key stage 4 study full course GCSE Welsh 2nd Language. There are therefore large numbers studying Welsh up to GCSE but this is not translating into numbers for A level. Schools in Bridgend are reporting that, if anything, the numbers opting for AS Welsh 2nd Language have declined since full course GCSE Welsh was made compulsory.

3. Curriculum offer

Welsh 2nd Language at AS and A level is timetabled within the collaborative timetable option blocks in the common curriculum offer that is accessible to all students across Bridgend.

Welsh 2nd Language AS/A levels are currently delivered by Bryntirion Comprehensive School but is also available at Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and Penybont Sixth Form College (at Pencoed Comprehensive School).

In addition to the 16 students at Bryntirion Comprehensive School, there are small numbers of students studying A/AS level Welsh at Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and at Pencoed Comprehensive School.

The link to Welsh (1st Language) A level in the online common Bridgend prospectus is listed below:

<https://www.bridgendpathways.co.uk/en/course?courseid=140>

The link to Welsh (2nd Language) A level in the online common Bridgend prospectus is listed below:

<https://www.bridgendpathways.co.uk/en/course?courseid=139>

4. Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

Bridgend's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) fully promotes the increased development of the Welsh language from child care through early years, primary and secondary. The WESP is fully aligned with Welsh Government policy and Bridgend's WESP has been thoroughly scrutinised by Welsh Government to ensure it is compliant and sufficiently robust to support Welsh Government's ambition to ensure there are 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

There is also a regional Welsh-medium plan being developed by Central South Consortium and supported by a Welsh Education Officer. The plan is there to help support Welsh Government's ambition of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. There is specific work on additional learning needs (ALN) provision and the partnership work among the Welsh-medium schools in Rhondda Cynon Taff and Bridgend.

Through careful monitoring, the Council is looking to see strong retention in Welsh-medium settings and addressing any issues that may hinder this. Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has specifically increased the range of Welsh-medium ALN provision as a result of feedback from the monitoring. Teaching staff are going on sabbaticals in order to improve their Welsh language skills and making an impact on their return adding to the Welsh-medium resource in our schools.

5. 21st Century Schools Programme

BCBC is currently looking to expand Welsh-medium provision in early years and primary settings including new provision in child care and increasing WM provision in primary schools. Consideration is being given to further expansion of the sector as part of Bridgend's 21st Century Schools Programme plans.

6. Further promotion of Welsh language

Siarter Iaith is being adopted by a number of schools across the primary sector. It is a charter mark which recognises the prevalence, encouragement and development of Welsh language skills right across the school – not just in the teaching of the subject.

All of Bridgend's Welsh-medium primary schools have achieved the Siarter Iaith threshold and a number of English-medium schools are setting out to achieve it. This approach will feature more strongly in the future in the Team Bridgend cluster plans.

Supplementary question by Cllr T Thomas

With regards to Welsh A level take up, what are the authority doing to promote an active offer? This would include planning of provision, timetabling, workforce planning including professional development/training, but what I am particularly interested in in this context is general promotion work with Year 11 pupils and career opportunities.

Response (by the Cabinet Member Education and Regeneration)

As the relevant Cabinet Member, I can confirm that Bridgend CBC is fully committed to the statutory provision of the Welsh Language. He was proud to say that it was the Labour controlled Glamorgan County Council that set up the first Welsh medium secondary school, at Rhydfelin, and of Bridgend's Welsh medium secondary at Llangynwyd. He had a strong interest in language and culture he added.

When students embark on their A Levels, Welsh is no longer compulsory and students make choices. He agreed with the Councillor that a recent headline in the Glamorgan Gazette was wrong and misleading when it said that students in Porthcawl could not study Welsh. It is because we are putting resources into a common Sixth Form timetable across all our schools that students from Porthcawl are able to study Welsh, by combining with groups from Cynffig and Bryntirion.

As we develop our 16+ strategy, this investment will benefit Welsh as well as other "A" Level subjects which might otherwise be unviable. What we have done so far has enabled Welsh Language "A" level numbers in Bridgend to resist the downward trend in many other counties of Wales.

It is concerning that across Wales, and across the UK, there is a downward trend in the take-up of all modern languages, and he further agreed with the Councillor that it would be good policy to work with Year 11 students to convince them of the value of studying language and culture in general, including of course the language and culture of Wales. Unfortunately, this was not helped by the idea of Brexit, as Brexit would lead to insularity and a mentality which is unaware of the value of both mainstream languages and minority languages such as Welsh, Catalan, and the languages and cultures of other European regions.

Studying any language makes it easier to study yet another language, and it's therefore a very positive aim for Wales to be a bilingual country; and also, it follows that the best way to achieve a million Welsh speakers is not just to rely on schools, but to promote interest across society in languages and culture per se, to enable society to go forward to compete in the jobs markets in Wales, the UK, Europe and across the globe.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support reiterated paragraph 6 of the initial response, that communication through the Welsh language was promoted in all schools within the County Borough, and this was emphasised not just to pupils being taught there, but with their parents and guardians also.

He further referred to paragraph 4 of the initial response and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) which also advocated for Welsh speakers.

Question to the Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help from Cllr A Hussain

'The number of people living with hearing loss in Wales is 575,500 and this number is rising as the population ages and we live longer. I don't have the number of people we have with hearing loss here in Bridgend County.

Action on Hearing Loss Cymru in their recent report have recommended that, I quote “Local Authorities should review their provision and access arrangements for people who are deaf or have hearing loss, ensuring they are meeting their duties under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act. Particular attention should be given to:

- the first point of contact/access,
- the assessment process,
- the system for issuing assistive equipment and
- the provision of information/advice/guidance throughout.”

Keeping in mind the above recommendation suggested by Action on Hearing Loss Cymru, Could the Cabinet Member let the Council know how we are supporting people with hearing loss here in our County?’

Response

Adult Social Care have a Sensory Team based in the Community Resource Team, with Specialist Social Workers, an Assistant Social Worker, Rehabilitation Officers and Sensory Assistants. The team work with individuals living with sensory loss which includes people who have a vision loss, people who are culturally deaf (D), acquired deaf (d) or have hearing loss, as well as people who have a combined vision and hearing loss (deafblind).

The aim is to ensure that adults and children with sensory loss are supported to lead as full and independent a life as possible.

In the order in which the question is asked:

The first point of contact/ access- All queries/referrals regarding sensory loss for adults come through the Common Access Point. Contact can be made through email, letter, fax and mobile text. We are also testing “Signvideo”, this is a platform that gives deaf people, using BSL, access to the Common Access Point enabling them to make telephone calls confidently to hearing people through fully qualified interpreters. SignVideo calls can be made via a videophone, laptop, PC, smartphone or tablet. All individuals are asked about their preferred method of communication and this is recorded within WCCIS. Appropriate information, or some advice or assistance is all that may be required to deal with a query. If a specialist assessment is required then this can be arranged to take place at an individual’s home and / or in Trem y Mor Resource Centre in Bettws.

The assessment process - The Team can undertake a number of different assessments depending on the circumstance of the individual. Assessment of need is undertaken, with the same assessment tool, as any other member of the public. The way in which we communicate may differ and may include interpreters for different types of sign language as well as spoken language. There have been times where both a sign language and a spoken language interpreter have been required at the same time to assist in an assessment. The important point is that the individual is given all opportunity to explain their circumstance and challenges to their independence.

If a specialist assessment is required then this can be undertaken. There is a range of specialist equipment available to help people with sensory loss to remain independent. Some of the equipment may be provided as part of the specialist assessment or rehabilitation training. Within Trem y Mor there is a Sensory Resource Room with equipment on display and available for demonstration as well as information and advice on where to purchase specialist items.

The team work closely with the Audiology Clinic in the Princess of Wales Hospital and receive referrals for people who need support to maintain their independence. The Specialist Social Worker for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing regularly holds sessions within Trem y Mor for those people referred, to identify equipment/ skills training to maintain that person's independence.

Provision of information and advice (throughout) - We have a duty to maintain registers of people living in Bridgend who have a sensory loss. Registration is voluntary but these registers help us to develop and plan services. We can give information about registering as severely sight impaired (blind), sight impaired (partially sighted), Deaf and hard of hearing or Deafblind. We also explain about any entitlements relating to registration.

The Team can provide catalogues of equipment and advice on the items that can be purchased that will support that individual's independence. The team maintains lists of support groups within the Bridgend area that people can access for socialising/ support/ information and advice. Action On Hearing Loss hold a "Hub" monthly in Pencoed, the Team support this by a team member attending to be on hand to accept referrals, provide information and advice.

Bridgend has a Service Level Agreement with Sense Cymru which provides an outreach service which supports people who are D/deaf or have hearing loss and who may have additional needs such as mental health, physical disability or learning difficulties. The Service supports individuals to achieve positive outcomes through promoting independence, engagement and participation in the local community whilst promoting or maintaining independence within their own home. This is aided by individualised communication methods, encouraging appropriate social interaction, increasing confidence and knowledge, assisting individuals to develop skills and techniques to manage daily living, improving opportunities for individuals to engage in activities such as education, work, training, health and leisure and provide relevant information in appropriate formats and sign posting. This service also visits Deaf Club twice a month where they can signpost individuals onto other services and/or provide advice and information. To our knowledge this is a unique service, not replicated anywhere else in Wales.

Another Service Level agreement provides a Communicator Guide service. This supports people in Bridgend who have a dual sensory loss, to enable participation and engagement within their communities and promote or maintain an individual's independence within their home.

Communicator Guides ensure that people are better supported to lead fulfilled lives and achieve well-being through facilitating communication support and access to the community, providing escorting and guiding techniques and provision of accessible and relevant information in appropriate formats.

In communications with the Director of Action on Hearing Loss, Bridgend is positively identified for its responsiveness to people who are D/deaf or have hearing loss.

Supplementary question by Cllr A Hussain

Thank you for your detailed response and I am pleased to note that Bridgend has some of the more specialist service provision in Wales. The use of sign video at the Common Access Point is superb, as is initial access to emails and texts.

Could the Cabinet Member let the Council know, how long the waiting list is for a specialist assessment (i.e. how many days/weeks/months might someone wait) and what is the process of assessment.

Response

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help confirmed that he would take this further question away, and in turn, respond to all Members outside of the meeting.

232. **NOTICE OF MOTION PROPOSED BY COUNCILLOR TIM THOMAS**

Following an introductory speech, the Notice of Motion below was proposed by the above mentioned Member:-

That Council acknowledges:

The damaging impact that increased levels of gasses within the atmosphere is having on the environment and the part it is playing in adverse climate change. Council further acknowledges that international cooperation is required to hold the immediate impact on our climate.

“That Council welcomes:

The UK and Welsh government’s commitment to tackling climate change with initiatives to limit global warming, and its acceptance that the use of fossil fuels is a major contributory factor in rising world temperatures and carbon dioxide emissions.

Council notes that during the financial year 2016/17, the Rhondda Cynon Taff Pension Fund, which administers pension arrangements on behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council, invested a percentage of indirect pooled funds in fossil fuels.

This council calls on the Rhondda Cynon Taff Pension Fund to start making an ordered withdrawal of such investments at the earliest opportunity.”

Members debated this item and due to there being a difference of opinion from the floor on whether or not the Motion should be supported by the Council, an electronic vote was taken on whether or not there should be a recorded vote on the proposal, the result of which was as follows:-

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>	<u>Did not Vote</u>
19	15	0	15

A recorded vote was then undertaken on the above Notice of Motion, the result of which was as follows:-

Notice of Motion (Motion)	
Councillor Sean Aspey	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Stuart Baldwin	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Tom Beedle	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell	Against
Councillor Nicole Burnett	Against
Councillor Mike Clarke	For
Councillor Norah Clarke	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Richard Collins	Against

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Councillor Huw David	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Paul Davies	Against
Councillor Pam Davies	Against
Councillor Keith Edwards	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Jane Gebbie	Against
Councillor Tom Giffard	Against
Councillor Richard Granville	Against
Councillor Cheryl Green	For
Councillor Gareth Howells	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Altaf Hussain	Against
Councillor Malcolm James	For
Councillor Martyn Jones	Against
Councillor Mike Kearn	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor David Lewis	Against
Councillor Janice Lewis	Against
Councillor John McCarthy	No vote recorded
Councillor Dhanisha Patel	Against
Councillor Ross Penhale-Thomas	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Aniel Pucella	Against
Councillor Kay Rowlands	Against
Councillor Bridie Sedgebeer	Against
Councillor Rod Shaw	Against
Councillor Charles Smith	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Stephen Smith	Against
Councillor Roz Stirman	For
Councillor Gary Thomas	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Tim Thomas	For
Councillor Jefferson Tildesley MBE	For
Councillor Elaine Venables	For
Councillor Sadie Vidal	For
Councillor Matthew Voisey	Against
Councillor Lyn Walters	Against
Councillor Ken Watts	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Carolyn Webster	Against
Councillor David White	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Philip White	Against
Councillor Alex Williams	Conflict Of Interests
Councillor Amanda Williams	For
Councillor Hywel Williams	Against
Councillor Julia Williams	For
Councillor Richard Young	Against
Rejected	

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>
10	24	0

It was noted that the remaining Members present either did not vote or had withdrawn from the meeting for this item, due to the declaration of interest they had made in this earlier in the meeting.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that the above Notice of Motion by way of a majority decision was not carried/supported.

233. URGENT ITEMS

None.

234. 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 Paragraph 12 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

Following the application of the public interest test it was resolved that pursuant to the Act referred to above, to consider the under-mentioned item in private with the public being excluded from the meeting as it would involve the disclosure of exempt information as stated above.

235. VER AND REDUNDANCY PACKAGE

The meeting closed at 16:48