

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON  
WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 3.00PM

Present:-

Councillor G Thomas - Mayor and Chairperson

M W Butcher	R M James	A D Owen	R Thomas
N Clarke	R D Jenkins	D G Owen	J H Tildesley MBE
H J David	C L Jones	G Phillips	H J Townsend
G Davies	R C Jones	D R Pugh	E Venables
P A Davies	M Jones	C E Rees	C Westwood
E Dodd	D R W Lewis	C Reeves	D B F White
D K Edwards	J E Lewis	M Reeves	P J White
E P Foley	J R McCarthy	C E Smith	R Williams
C A Green	H E Morgan	J C Spanswick	M Winter
M Gregory	M E J Nott OBE	M Thomas	R E Young
E M Hughes			

Officers:

D Mepham	- Chief Executive
S Cooper	- Corporate Director - Wellbeing
D McMillan	- Corporate Director - Children
M Shephard	- Corporate Director - Communities
Z Shell	- Head of Neighbourhood Services
G Jones	- Head of Human Resources, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
R Hughes	- Senior Solicitor
A Rees	- Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
G P Jones	- Head of Democratic Services (Electronic Support)

388 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members/Officer for the reasons so stated:-

Councillor S Aspey	- Work commitment
Councillor D M Hughes	- Personal commitment
Councillor C J James	- In hospital
Councillor P James	- Caring
Councillor B Jones	- Work commitment
Councillor L C Morgan	- Hospital
Councillor D Sage	- Hospital
Councillor K J Watts	- Holiday
P A Jolley - Assistant Chief Executive - Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer	- Holiday

389 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 6 - Pay Policy Statement 2014/15 as they each had a family member employed by the Authority and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item:-

Councillor M W Butcher	Councillor G Davies MBE	Councillor D Pugh
Councillor N Clarke	Councillor C A Green	Councillor J C Spanswick
Councillor H J David	Councillor G Phillips	Councillor H Townsend
Councillor P J White		

The following Officers declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 6 - Pay Policy Statement 2014/15 and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the item:-

- S Cooper - Corporate Director - Wellbeing
- D McMillan - Corporate Director - Children
- M Shephard - Corporate Director - Communities
- Z Shell - Head of Neighbourhood Services
- R Hughes - Senior Solicitor
- A Rees - Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

390 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of Council of 16 July 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

391 **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor welcomed all Members and Officers back from the summer recess.

The Mayor referred to the announcement he had made at a previous meeting of Council in relation to the Poppy Appeal Concert which would be taking place on 8 November 2014 at the Sony Theatre featuring talented local musicians. He informed that tickets were now available from Councillor D B F White at a cost of £7.50 with profits going to the Bridgend Poppy Appeal. He hoped that Members would support this unique event, which was followed the next day by the Annual Remembrance Day Parade and Service.

The Mayor announced that as part of this year's Centenary Tributes of the start of the First World War, he was privileged to have attended the National Service of Commemoration at Llandaff Cathedral on 1 August 2014, as well as the Great War exhibition held in Porthcawl and a dedication of extension of the Community Garden Plaque unveiling at Sarn.

He was also delighted to have attended the Senior Open Championship sponsored by Rolex which took place at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. This was the first senior major championship to be held in Wales and reinforced Wales' reputation as a world class events destination. He stated that it was a truly memorable experience.

The Mayor announced that there had been a number of events for the last few weeks in which he had attended nine Flying Start days during the summer holidays as well as several official openings at the Bridgend Life Centre, the launch party for the HALO beauty rooms, the opening of the extension at Tyn y Coed Surgery in Bryncethin, the opening of the new Home Bargains Store in Bridgend and the new Child Care Provision provided at Abercerdyn Primary School all of which showed that the County Borough of Bridgend was growing and delivering improved services all the time.

The Mayor informed Council that he had also celebrated 100<sup>th</sup> birthdays of two remarkable ladies who are resident in Treetops and Ty Cwm Ogwr.

He also congratulated pupil Benji Lock from Tondu Primary School for being awarded a place at the Welsh College of Music and Drama's Conservatoire.

The Mayor thanked all those Members who had attended his Civic Sunday on 7 September, which was a truly memorable day. He also reminded Members that the

Mayor's Charity Committee would be holding a MacMillan Coffee Morning in the Civic Offices on Wednesday 24 September 2014 commencing at 10.00am and all are welcome to come and support this worthy cause.

392 CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Cabinet Member - Resources

The Cabinet Member - Resources announced the following pre-Council presentation:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>
15 October 2014	Support for Transgender People in Bridgend

He also announced the following Member Development sessions:-

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>
19 September 2014	Social Services and Wellbeing Act.
21 October 2014	Budget Workshop

The Cabinet Member - Resources informed Council that it was intended to publish all annual reports on the Council's website by 30 September 2014 and he requested Members to return their completed report as soon as possible in order that they be formatted ready for publication. To date 60% of reports had been returned and Members were requested to contact the Democratic Services Team should they require any assistance.

The Cabinet Member - Resources also announced that the Equalities Cabinet Committee had requested that all elected Members update their personal equalities data. This information will help to get a better understanding of the diversity of Elected Members and improve equality and diversity training. An email would be sent to Members shortly with guidance on how to make any amendments to the details that were currently being held.

(2) Cabinet Member - Communities

The Cabinet Member - Communities welcomed and introduced to Council Mr Zak Shell who had recently commenced his employment with the Council as Head of Neighbourhood Services.

The Cabinet Member - Communities informed Council that the Council's Regeneration Team in partnership with Maesteg Town Council had been successful in securing funding by the Welsh Government to support the development of a Town Centre Partnership and support a three year action plan for Maesteg Town Centre. Funding of £100k would be used to develop initiatives including and events programme in the newly refurbished market, a bespoke marketing and promotions plan. Town Centre signage strategy helps support the traders to develop digital business initiatives.

The Cabinet Member - Communities also informed Council of a celebration of the completion of the Bridgend Town Centre convergence project would take place this Friday in Elder Lane. Dignitaries and guests from Bridgend will help unveil a commemorative plaque and help launch the new regeneration projects and initiatives for the Town Centre. The event will re-launch the

Bridgend Town Heritage Initiative as well as introduce the Vibrant and Viable Places Project and the Bridgend Business Improvement District. Information Boards would also be on display all day and all Members were invited to Elder Lane to find out more.

The Cabinet Member - Communities also informed Members that the Festival will return to Bridgend Town Centre on 26 and 27 September 2014. The festival was now in its fourth year offering over 50 stalls selling food, drink and craft. New to Bridgend this year was the Champagne Tent sponsored by HRT and run by Nolton Corner, which are two new businesses in the town centre. Bridgend Town Council will be providing children's activities in Carnegie House. Young farmers and Bridgend College as well as local restaurants would be providing cooking demonstrations and there would be the creation of a 10 foot potato dragon.

(3) Cabinet Member - Children and Young People

The Cabinet Member - Children and Young People informed Members that they would have been shocked at the recent news from Rotherham. He reassured Members that the Council has robust child protection procedures and effective inter agency practice in place and he had asked that a public report is made to Cabinet on how the Council responds to child sexual exploitation in Bridgend. He stated that the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support is preparing a comprehensive report and would also be organising a briefing session for Members on child sexual exploitation.

The Cabinet Member - Children and Young People informed Members that the Health and Wellbeing Centre at Griffin Park, Porthcawl had been re-launched. The facility which is run by the Youth Service is designed to offer targeted help to vulnerable young people aged 11 to 25 deal with important issues such as substance misuse, sexual and physical health, wellbeing and includes activities such as a weekly Saturday morning Breakfast Club.

The Cabinet Member - Children and Young People informed Council that in response to the planned industrial action on 14 October 2014, the Young Carers Conference had been moved to 7 October 2014 taking place at the Heronston Hotel between 10.30am to 1.00pm. He stated that Members are very welcome to join professionals to learn more about how caring for a parent or a sibling impacts on a child's life and how everyone can work together to better support young carers.

The Cabinet Member - Children and Young People informed Members that in the summer, Newcastle Higher Community Council unveiled mosaics to commemorate the Centenary of the start of the First World War in Aberkenfig Square. Each of the three mosaics was designed with the help of pupils from each of the three local schools, Tondy Primary, St, Roberts and Penyfai. Together with the Mayor and Assembly Member Janice Gregory, he was very impressed by the outcome of the children's work and he recommended it for viewing.

He also announced that Bryncethin Primary had achieved an Eco School Platinum Award, the highest possible, making a total of seven Bridgend schools flying the flag.

He also congratulated Garth Primary School in the Llynfi Valley on becoming the latest school in Bridgend to Invest to Achieve Investors in Families status. He stated that pupils can only realise their full potential if there was support

from parents and families. It was an important goal and milestone for a school to work closely with families and the work to be recognised with Investors in Families status.

The Cabinet Member - Children and Young People congratulated Coychurch Primary School and Blaengarw Primary School for their very positive Estyn Inspection reports.

He congratulated Heronsbridge School, a truly inspirational school which supported children with the most complex needs, which had been recognised with top marks being awarded an excellent rating for current performance and prospects for improvement.

### 393 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chief Executive drew Members attention to the latest round of performance statistics issued by the Welsh Government and Local Government Data Unit. He stated that the statistics cover the period 2013/14 and had highlighted some significant improvements across six of the seven indicators for Adult Social Care Services, including one, the number of local adult protection referrals where risks had been successfully managed, which had moved the Council from 19<sup>th</sup> place to 1<sup>st</sup> place in Wales.

He stated that overall, there had been performance improvement in 86% in Adult Social Care Services against an all Wales rate of 57% and the South East Wales rate of 71%. He congratulated staff for their help in delivering these performance improvements.

The Chief Executive also announced that Recycling and Waste Services continued to perform well with a value for money approach, keeping the Authority among the top six ranked Councils in Wales. The Council had moved from 9<sup>th</sup> place into the top 5 for improvements in road conditions, whilst making 6<sup>th</sup> place for the cleanliness of its local highways and other relevant land. He stated that the approach to how leisure services were being provided had also seen an increase in the number of the visiting libraries or undertaking physical exercise.

He stated that the statistics had also highlighted indicators where performance needs to be improved, which include the number of private sector dwellings which had remained vacant for longer than six months, the amount of fly tipping cleared within five days and the number of affordable housing units provided during 2013/14.

The Chief Executive also informed Members that at this stage of the year, the Council only had un-validated school performance data, but highlighted improvements made at key stage 2 and 3, provisional GCSE had shown an upward trend, there were marked signs in the performance of children claiming free school meals and attendance rates had markedly improved.

He stated that it was particularly pleasing that the Council had performed better than the Wales average across 50% of the 44 indicators and better than the average for South East Wales in 55% of the indicators. He stated that performance statistics such as these were useful in that they highlighted services which are doing well whilst also providing a picture of services which need more attention, which would be looked at carefully to see how further improvements across all areas of the Council business could be made.

The Chief Executive stated that significant improvements in performance in two service areas, namely the completion of special education assessments and the Architectural Design and Building Services Team. The Council had risen from 17<sup>th</sup> place to 1<sup>st</sup> place in the completion of special education assessments, which was commissioned from an external provider. The Architectural Design and Building Services Team had been transformed in that it could deal with all construction work directly or commission it, thereby producing significant savings on the

Council's Capital Programme. This service is on track to deliver savings this year of half a million and is enabling significant savings on large elements of the capital programme, for example, schools modernisation by being able to challenge and refine specification and package work in a way that captures the benefits of our economies of scale.

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Medium Term Financial Strategy had a requirement to produce savings of £50m and in order to meet the significant savings the Council services would need to be re-modelled and changed.

394 ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Senior Solicitor announced on behalf of the Monitoring Officer that Councillor P A Davies would replace Councillor C E Rees as a Member of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

395 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader announced that he was pleased to hear that work to bring Bryncethin Primary Schools Early Years' Unit back into use was expected to be completed within the next few weeks. He informed Members that the Unit sustained considerable damage in July when a sprinkler head failed, causing flooding to the whole building damaging walls, floors and carpets, which in turn prevented the Unit from opening on time for the start of the new term. The building was now expected to be completely dry and ready to open its doors again by the October half term. Everything which had been damaged would be replaced so the Unit would be as new for the pupils' return. He thanked the Council Officers and the Emergency Services who had attended the incident for their prompt actions which kept damage to a minimum and also to staff who had helped find alternative temporary nursing care for the children whilst the repair work was being carried out.

The Leader informed Members that the Council's Fostering Team were targeting "empty nesters" as part of their latest drive to encourage more people to foster. The Fostering Team would like to hear from people whose children had left the family for new homes, University or to make homes of their own and who can use their valuable parenting skills to help vulnerable children. He stated that there was a current shortage of approximately 90 placements in Bridgend County Borough and last year saw a 6% increase in a number of looked after children and young people and hoped that Members would agree that this was a very worthwhile initiative. The Fostering Team will be setting up stands at local supermarkets next week and more information was available from the website or contacting the team directly.

The Leader also announced that the Council was supporting a new national campaign called Pledge for Plastics which he hoped Members would encourage their constituents to support. The campaign asks householders to try and recycle one extra plastic bottle or container each week, thereby cutting down on the amount of waste sent to landfill, 5 billion plastic items were sent to landfill sites in the last year. He stated that this was a shockingly high amount, where the

average household uses approximately 440 plastic bottles every year. He urged Members to help spread the word about this very worthwhile campaign and encourage constituents to place plastic containers in their blue recycling bags instead of the bin.

The Leader announced a new initiative called 'Access to Research' which had been launched at local libraries in Bridgend County Borough, which is a free service making more than 10 million academic articles available to students across a wide range of disciplines. The initiative is designed to help students in their studies and is a result of a unique collaboration between the Bridgend Library and Information Service and publishers, which further demonstrates the wide range of services that a modern local library service is offering communities throughout the County Borough.

396 INFORMATION REPORTS FOR NOTING

The Senior Solicitor presented a report, the purpose of which was to inform Council of the information report which had been published since the last meeting.

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

<u>Title</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Date Published</u>
Urgent Delegated Decision	Monitoring Officer	11 September 2014

397 PAY POLICY STATEMENT - 2014/15

The Senior Solicitor advised Council that all Bridgend County Borough employees other than the Head of Democratic Services would now be leaving the meeting. The Head of Democratic Services would be co-ordinating the use of the electronics and to take the minute. All Members and Officers who had made a declaration left the meeting.

Mr G Jones, the Head of Human Resources, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council presented a report which requested approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2014-15. This report had been prepared by him to negate recent concerns regarding senior manager involvement in the preparation of reports that may affect their own position. The report provided an accurate summary of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for publication under the Localism Act 2011.

He advised that the Pay Policy Statement was fully compliant with the Act however, revised guidance relating to the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 requires the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider the pay of the Head of Paid Services and Chief Officers would not be ready until April. An update to the Pay Policy Statement would be provided to Council in due course.

The data in respect of pay scales (shown at paragraph 4.4.1 of the statement) and pay relativities (shown at paragraph 7.3) is based on the Bridgend County Borough Council pay arrangements following the implementation of the new pay and grading structure system on 1 September 2014. The calculations for the pay relativities did not include those yet to be agreed nationally negotiated pay award or changes to the incremental progression.

The current Redundancy and Redeployment Policy, which was under review/consultation was attached to the report as required. The collective agreement with the Trade Unions confirmed that there would be no pay protection

following the implementation of the new pay and grading system and this policy needed to be aligned accordingly.

Members requested clarification of the definition of Chief Officers as the initial view was that anyone who reported directly to the Head of Paid Service including Personal Assistants could be categorised as Chief Officers. The Head of Human Resources indicated that in Bridgend the Chief Officers included the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Assistant Chief Executive and Heads of Service. The terms and conditions of other employees were outlined in the Green Book which was a separate matter.

**RESOLVED:** That Council approved the updated Pay Policy Statement as attached at Appendix A of the report.

The meeting closed at 3.53pm