

CABINET - TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB / REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

JC Spanswick
JPD Blundell

W R Goode

J Gebbie

HM Williams

Apologies for Absence

N Farr

Officers:

Rachel Keepins	Democratic Services Manager
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services
Julie Ellams	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Andrew Thomas	Group Manager Sports & Physical Activity

107. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Hywel Williams – Prejudicial interest- Item 9, Council Tax Premiums – Long Term Empty Homes and Second Homes – Outcome of Consultation

Councillor Jon Paul Blundell – Prejudicial interest - Item 7, Capital Programme Update - Quarter 3 Report 2022-23, Governor of Bryntirion Comprehensive School.

108. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet of 13 December 2022 be approved as a true and accurate record.

109. CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION: PORTHCAWL WATERFRONT REGENERATION: APPROPRIATION OF LAND AT GRIFFIN PARK AND SANDY BAY

The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report to Cabinet with the findings and recommendations of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 from their meeting held on 3 November 2022, following a Call In of a decision of Cabinet in relation to Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration: Appropriation of Land at Griffin Park and Sandy Bay.

The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy explained that Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees requested that the executive

decision made by Cabinet on the 18th of October 2022, be called in. The Committee had their meeting on the 3rd of November and they considered the proposed decision by Cabinet, including the reasons for the decision taking into account whether the decision was in line with corporate priorities and policies. Following its examination of the decision and detailed discussions with the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and officers invited, the Committee concluded that the decision would not be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration, but they did make the following recommendation. Having regard to concerns expressed to Members by Porthcawl residents, views shared by public speakers and questions from Members, that Cabinet be requested that going forward for the next stages in the process that they involve Porthcawl Town Council, all stakeholders and the public in further consultation and engagement.

The Corporate Director Communities replied that it was their intention to respond back in writing to the Committee with a very positive response. Consultation was a very important part of the regeneration plans and she would be able to provide some detail of what would be happening over the next couple of months.

The Leader welcomed the engagement that had already taken place and that would continue. Consultation was always part of the plans for Porthcawl and continued to be at the heart of the vision for regeneration.

RESOLVED: Cabinet considered the Recommendation of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 as outlined in paragraph 4.1 of the report and agreed to provide a written response to the Committee.

110. **LLANGYNWYD PLAYING FIELDS**

The Corporate Director Communities presented a report for Cabinet to consider the business case prepared in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Policy document to support the leasing of the pavilion and, two football pitches, other green spaces and car park at Llangynwyd Playing Fields to Llangynwyd Rangers Boys and Girls Club (Llangynwyd Rangers BGC). Cabinet were also being asked to assess and, where appropriate, approve the funding package requested by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC under the Council's CAT Fund to support proposals to undertake essential pavilion repairs upon the completion of a proposed long-term 35-year lease for the whole site.

The Corporate Director Communities provided a background to the facilities and usage of the club. She then outlined the current proposal and that the Club sought to widen participation particularly with women and girls and had a number of initiatives to broaden the appeal of football. The FAW 'Huddle' had been in operation since April 2021 and had attracted over 180 girls to play football. Detailed business and financial plans outlining their proposals were attached at appendix G and H to the report. Both had been reviewed by the Finance Department and were considered to demonstrate the financial viability of the project being proposed in the short and medium term in accordance with the CAT Policy document. The Corporate Director Communities explained the three funding applications that had been made and that the Club wished to complete the proposed 35-year lease for the whole site which would enable them to undertake essential pavilion repairs subject to Cabinet approving their funding application in the sum of £157,240.85.

CABINET - TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023

The Cabinet Member for Communities welcomed the report which would bring in even larger sums of money to create not only a football location but also a green space location.

The Leader agreed that this was a very exciting proposal for the Club, the valley and for the Borough. The funding enabled the Club to get match funding securing a total investment of more than £450,000 and he was particularly pleased with the plans to engage with more women and girls.

The Corporate Director for Communities added that the Club had vision and a particularly strong female section but not the facilities. They were planning to get dedicated facilities but would start by repairing what was already there.

The Leader thanked the volunteers and Committee Members at the club for their hard work in achieving this success.

RESOLVED: Cabinet:

1. Noted the funding already allocated from the CAT Fund to Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to support the self-management of the two football pitches and other green spaces at Llangynwyd Playing Fields which was agreed in principle by the CAT Steering Group:

Purpose of Funding	Funding under CAT Fund
Drainage & Pitch Improvements (2 x Football Pitches)	£50,000.00
Pitch Maintenance Equipment	£10,000.00

2. Approved the business case (business and financial plans) submitted by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to support the leasing of the Pavilion, two football pitches, other green spaces and car park at the Llangynwyd Playing Fields, under the Council's CAT programme, by demonstrating the financial viability and sustainability of the project.
3. Approved the funding request under the CAT Fund submitted by Llangynwyd Rangers BGC to undertake essential pavilion repairs in the sum of £157,240.85 which would take the full funding package for the transfer under the CAT Fund to £217,240.85.

111. **BUDGET MONITORING 2022-23 - QUARTER 3 REVENUE FORECAST**

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change provided an update on the Council's revenue financial position as at 31 December 2022. She explained the background to the settlement and that the overall projected position as at 31 December 2022 was a net over spend of £731,000 comprising £8.711 million net over spend on directorates and a net under spend of £7.980 million on Council wide budgets.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change outlined the ongoing impact of Covid 19 including Covid related claims to Welsh Government, budget virements and technical adjustments, pay/price inflation and budget reduction proposals. She provided a summary of the financial position for each main service area and commented on the most significant variances.

The Cabinet Member for Resources welcomed the improved position from quarter 2. He referred to the pressures in the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and added that careful consideration should be given to that area moving forward.

The Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing provided additional information around the concerning position in terms of the learning disabilities budget and the budget across social services and well-being. They were working with independent experts who had worked with local authorities across Wales, to make sure they were providing cost effective learning disabilities, care and support services. The outcome of the review would be submitted to Cabinet in the next few months.

The Deputy Leader explained some of the pressures within the social services budget and added that they were doing a piece of work looking at what how they were spending money and if it was being spent appropriately. The findings would be submitted to Cabinet shortly.

The Corporate Director Education and Family Support provided additional information regarding the overspends in home to school transport and catering services. He also referred to children being supported out of county and work with partners to ensure the service was being delivered as efficiently as possible.

The Leader referred to the latest information in the report regarding the numbers of homeless people. He welcomed the recent announcement from the Minister for Climate Change of a one-off revenue contribution and additional capital expenditure announced after the report was published.

RESOLVED: Cabinet noted the projected revenue position for 2022-23.

112. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE - QUARTER 3 REPORT 2022-23**

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change provided an update with regard to the capital position at the end of quarter three. By way of background, she explained that the Council's capital strategy was approved by Council on the 23rd of February 2022 and at that time the approved capital budget totalled £69.9 million.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change outlined the current position on the program. The revised programme for 2022-23 currently totalled £61.732 million, of which £28.242 million was met from Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) resources, including capital receipts and revenue contributions from earmarked reserves, with the remaining £33.490 million coming from external resources, including Welsh Government General Capital Grant. A breakdown of the program across services was shown in table one and more detail regarding how they were actually funding that program was included in Table 2.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change highlighted the slippage of some schemes which were likely to slip into the new financial year. At quarter 3 the total requested slippage was £28.542 million, the reasons for this were detailed in the report.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change explained that since the last capital report approved by Council in October 2022, there had been a number of new externally funded schemes approved and proposed internally funded schemes, which had been incorporated into the Capital Programme and were detailed in the report. A revised Capital Programme was included at Appendix B to the report. With regard to the Capital Strategy, Appendix C to the report showed that the Council was operating in line with the approved limits.

The Cabinet Member for Resources thanked the Chief Officer for the report and added that slippage was not desirable but the reasons given were acceptable. He asked the

officers to look at reprofiling the schemes before presenting the latest position to full Council in March. With regard to the new external funding schemes that had come forward, in particular the Urban Centre Property Enhancement Scheme, he requested that a report be submitted to Cabinet on why this scheme had been successful for the authority.

The Corporate Director Communities provided further information regarding the Welsh Government Transforming Towns Fund and included details of two of the larger schemes. A detailed report would be submitted to Cabinet in Spring. The fund would be reopening at that time and she explained that officers were available to advise businesses how they could apply.

The Leader agreed with the comments made by the Cabinet Member for Resources regarding the potential to reprofile some of the schemes, in particular the Waterton Depot. The Corporate Director Communities provided more information on why the site was no longer viable and efforts made to secure a new venue.

In light of the recent call-in, the Deputy Leader referred to the additional £0.608 million awarded from Welsh Government's Housing with Care Fund for the Children's Residential Hub. This would enable net zero carbon and landscaping works to be completed, which were not included in the original scheme. There were issues with procurement around costs and she provided the example of Enterprise Hubs where tender costs were returned in the region of 250% over budget.

The Cabinet Member for Communities explained that there would be a capital demand for the Waterton Depot and further reports would be submitted in due course. He added that there were pots of money for various net zero schemes and that the Council had been awarded £0.300 million funding from the Welsh Government's ULEV Transformation Fund to support the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the Council's public car parks.

The Leader asked if a list was available of where the additional charging points would be installed. The Corporate Director Communities replied that a strategy was in place to transfer the Corporate fleet to electric and to install charging points for this and the public and she explained how the charging infrastructure would be delivered.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet:

- noted the Council's Capital Programme 2022-23 Quarter 3 update to 31 December 2022 (Appendix A)
- agreed that the revised Capital Programme (Appendix B) be submitted to Council for approval
- noted the projected Prudential and Other Indicators for 2022-23 (Appendix C)

113. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023-24 TO 2026-27

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change presented a report with the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27, which set out the spending priorities of the Council, key investment objectives and budget areas targeted for necessary savings. The strategy included a financial forecast for 2023-2027 and a detailed draft revenue budget for 2023-24.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change explained that they were seeing residual cost pressures and loss of income coming through from the pandemic, significant inflationary pressures and also the impact of the cost of living crisis on both pay and prices. This made budget planning for the coming financial year more uncertain and more challenging than usual. The current financial situation was outlined together with the ongoing pressures. She added that the Council would seek to protect the most vulnerable people in the Community. The Council had made £73 million worth of revenue savings since 2010, a considerable amount to find.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change outlined the planned net budget for the next year and how it was funded. Section 4 of the report explained the particular issues for each service area. She explained that Welsh Government announced the provisional Local Government Settlement on the 14th of December 2022. The final Local Government Settlement would not be announced until the end of February so the draft revenue budget for 2023/24 was shown in Table 6 of the report.

During 2022-23 a number of unavoidable service budget pressures had arisen as detailed in Appendix A to the report. The total of the budget pressures identified for 2023-24 was £10.711 million. Budget reductions had also had to be found in order to balance this budget, and proposals for £3.2 million had been identified and these were outlined in Appendix B to the report. The report also covered plans with regards to the capital programme as part of that settlement. Bridgend had been awarded just over £8 million to support the capital funding in the coming year. The latest capital programme was to be considered by Council and any further changes to that program would be included in the final medium term financial strategy, which will be brought to Cabinet and then to Council in February and March this year. No capital bids had been requested for the coming year, although it was accepted that there were a number of capital pressures that would need financing going forward and these would be updated when the final budget proposals were presented to Cabinet and Council.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change explained that this was a draft budget and these proposals were now subject to consultation with the four scrutiny committees in the coming week. The public consultation was due to end shortly and the findings from both exercises would be considered when drafting the final budget for 2023-2024.

The Cabinet Member for Resources thanked the Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change for the report in very difficult and challenging times. This budget would provide hundreds of services to tens of thousands of residents of the County Borough. They would listen to the scrutiny process and he encouraged members of the public to get involved in the public consultation. They would have to limit service growth and where possible, take money from the back office rather than the front line recognising the consequences for that. They were mandated to deliver a balanced budget but they were conscious of the cost of living crisis and if they could minimise the impact of Council tax, then they would. He again urged residents to take part in the consultation process.

The Cabinet Member for Education echoed what had been said and added that this was not the end budget but a live and working document. They would listen to the recommendations from scrutiny and the consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Communities welcomed the inclusion of an additional annual allocation of £400,000 per annum to support the decarbonisation agenda. The cuts in the report were not welcomed, they were all difficult and some came with a long term impact however he did welcome the scrutiny process.

The Leader explained that they would want to keep the increase in Council tax as low as possible. This meant they would not be able to finance all the budget growth proposals that had been made and they were going to have to make some savings and cuts.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations agreed with the comments made. There were four more days for the public to engage in the consultation and Members should encourage their residents to be involved so that they could make decisions that were informed and reflected the values of the Community.

RESOLVED: Cabinet agreed to submit for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the 2023-24 annual budget and development of the MTFS 2023-24 to 2026- 27, as set out in the report, prior to presenting a final version for approval by Council in March 2023.

114. **COUNCIL TAX PREMIUMS - LONG TERM EMPTY HOMES AND SECOND HOMES – OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change presented a report updating Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation exercise in respect of charging a council tax premium on long term empty homes and second homes and also seeking a recommendation from Cabinet on how they wished to proceed, in light of the consultation feedback.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change provided the background to the report and explained that the results of the consultation exercise were before Cabinet for a recommendation to full Council. She explained that Councils in Wales were able to charge higher amounts on top of the standard rate of Council tax on long term empty homes and on second homes. The discretion given to local authorities was intended to be a tool to help them bring long term empty homes back into use and also to support local authorities to increase the supply of affordable housing within their areas. She added that there were exceptions where premiums could not be charged and these were detailed in the report along with information on the local authorities that had applied a premium in Wales as at November 2022.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change explained that in Bridgend, as at the end of October, there were 701 long term empty homes. The Empty Home Strategy for the Council sought to reduce empty properties, to contribute towards increasing the availability of housing for sale or for rent and charging a tax premium on empty properties was in line with the aims of that strategy. The report also looked at the proposal to charge a premium on second homes. Bridgend had 72 properties which were classed as second homes and they currently paid 100% of the Council Tax charge. She added that should a decision be made to apply a premium for second homes, it could not be applied to this category of homes until April 2024.

The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change outlined how the consultation was advertised, the responses received to the consultation as detailed in appendix A to the report and the options available for Cabinet to consider.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations explained that in light of the housing crisis that they were facing across the Borough, across Wales and across the UK, any proposal that helped them to bring more houses into use should be welcomed. He supported a premium on Council Tax on long term empty properties to get those properties back into use or to pay extra to help fund housing and homelessness services within the borough. With regard to second homes, there was a very small number of

second homes currently in Bridgend and he thought they should take time to review the potential impact before taking a decision.

The Deputy Leader agreed with these comments and added that any funds that were raised by these charges should be used to reduce and assist with homelessness in Bridgend.

The Corporate Director for Communities advised that new regulations would be coming in late spring for Wales relating to holiday lets and second homes. Welsh Government were working with local planning authorities to see how they could amend the planning regulations enabling them to control the number of second homes and the number of holiday homes. This was particularly important when looking at the regeneration scheme in Porthcawl.

The Leader agreed that it would be sensible to consider second homes in more detail, taking into account the changes in the planning system.

The Cabinet Member for Communities agreed with the proposal for long term empty properties and asked for clarification regarding a decision on second homes and what date any increase would take effect if they failed to make a decision today. The Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change confirmed that in accordance with the regulations, they would have to make a decision a full 12 months before implementation on the second homes provision. They could decide to make those premiums applicable from April 2024 but that there would be some modifications during the year.

The Leader referred to some confusion in some of the consultation responses in relation to an exemption for properties which were being renovated and were uninhabitable and those where they were waiting for Grant of Probate. He confirmed that there were already a number of specific exemptions from council tax that could apply in these circumstances.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet:

- noted the outcome of the consultation and recommended the implementation of a council tax premium on long term empty homes and second homes, to Council, with the proviso that additional work be carried out regarding second homes and wider factors.
- subject to the above, and any decision made by Council, authorised the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change to implement any changes

115. PLAY SUFFICIENCY DUTY, ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN TO SECURE SUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITIES IN BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report informing Cabinet of the statutory duty on all local authorities to secure a sufficient quantity and quality of play opportunities for children and young people in relation to Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the statutory guidance produced by Welsh Government in July 2014. They were also seeking comments, observations and approval on the three-year assessment conducted during 2021-22 and the proposed action plan for 2022-24 which was required in relation to the statutory matters established by Welsh Government in relation to play sufficiency.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that the assessment and action plan were the subject of detailed pre scrutiny and consideration prior to coming to Cabinet. The assessment and action plan had benefitted from extensive engagement and the involvement of young people in its development. This was a One Council approach to play sufficiency and a Bridgend commitment together with the commitment of partners, was critical in delivering the priorities within the action plan.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing explained the background to play sufficiency and that Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) had conducted and submitted play sufficiency assessments and action plans as required by Welsh Government. He explained the issues and matters that were considered within the assessment and the need for a "One Council" approach and collaboration with stakeholders and partners. The assessment and action plan were provided at appendix 1 to the report and he highlighted the key themes for them to focus on.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing explained the financial implications that would apply across the Directorates and that it was uncertain as to how much could be absorbed within existing core revenue budgets. In recent years, Welsh Government had provided a range of funding support schemes but there was no confirmation of future or ongoing investment.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations thanked the officers for the report and the work that had been undertaken by the team. This was a good example of how the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act should work. He thanked the elected Members who had contributed and for the questions asked in scrutiny and more widely and as a result of that work.

The Cabinet Member for Communities thanked the Play Sufficiency Champion for his hard work and added that it was not just fixed play equipment but also play spaces which should be valued and used more. Nine playgrounds had been completed and in all nine there was accessible, disabled equipment, roundabouts and seat swings. He had met with local ward members and officers to make sure that going forward, they take account of access audits, accessibility, disability and inclusivity and to take on board procurement specialist advice. He added that some training for members from Play Wales at the appropriate time would help to improve understanding.

RESOLVED: Cabinet:

reviewed the detail of the play sufficiency statutory duty and the scope of services that were contributing to creating a 'play friendly' society as identified within the play sufficiency assessment and provided observations and comments on the 2022-2025 assessment and the action plan that had been developed as an initial response to the findings of the assessment.

Approved the play sufficiency assessment and action plan in line with the national requirements regarding play sufficiency.

116. **UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN**

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report providing an update to Cabinet on the mandated National Transfer Scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young people (UASC) and requesting that delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director of Social Services and Wellbeing to modify a current contract, in accordance with rule 3.3.3 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and to the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing in consultation with the

Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change and Section 151 Officer, and Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy to agree the terms of the regional agreement (SLA) and any ancillary agreements, as required.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained the background to the report and that to date, BCBC had successfully placed 6 children, utilising supported accommodation and independent foster agencies. At present, BCBC did not have sufficient capacity within existing Supported Accommodation contracts to accommodate young people coming through the NTS. Placement sufficiency across fostering and residential care was also limited. She explained that the current proposal was to develop more supported accommodation suitable for young people who were over the age of 16, provided by a registered social landlord. The support would be provided by a commissioned support provider, Dewis Ltd. The current Supported Accommodation contract in place with Dewis only allowed a 10% modification however a contract modification of 36% was required to help BCBC meet the UASC requirements identified in the report.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing added that this would be a cost-effective way of meeting the needs of those children and the location would be quite suitable for access to local services, including education provision within the county borough. She explained that there had been a change from the Home Office in terms of the finance attached to asylum seeking children and she was confident that the money from the Home Office would meet the need for the supported accommodation.

The Deputy Leader replied that she was really pleased to note that Westminster were going to be paying all the costs. There was some uncertainty around the cost of the care and support plans because they did not actually know who the young people were until they arrived. She asked for assurances that the young people could be placed with providers by the 28th of February and if arrangements for education were in place.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing replied that assurances were in place and the purpose of this report was to get the requisite permissions to fulfil the responsibility before the end of February.

The Cabinet Member for Education asked what provisions were being put in place for the children and were there any special categorisations for these children? He also asked if the costs would be covered by UK Government.

The Corporate Director Education and Family Support replied that they would be identified as looked after children and obviously prioritised under the School Admissions Policy. They would also be considered eligible for school transport in line with the Learner Travel Wales measure and also be eligible for free school meals. In addition, as far as wider education support was concerned, they would have additional support through the inclusion service with regard to English as an additional language. He explained that with regard to the costs being covered by UK Government, he would need to seek clarification from finance colleagues.

The Leader explained that expectations were that funding to cover all the costs to support these children, would come from UK Government. These were the most vulnerable children in our society fleeing horror and terror and it was our duty to make them as welcome as possible. He added that they had met with the Ward Members and they were very supportive and they would work closely with the Community as the proposal developed.

The Leader asked that clarification be sought that all costs, including education, would be covered by UK Government.

RESOLVED: Cabinet:

- Delegated authority to the Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing to modify the existing Supported Accommodation contract with Dewis in order to provide additional services up to the value of £213k in accordance with rule 3.3.3 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- Delegated authority to the Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing in consultation with the Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change and Section 151 Officer, and Chief Officer - Legal, HR and Regulatory Services to agree the terms of and enter into a regional supported accommodation service agreement (SLA) and any ancillary agreements, as required.

117. **APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS**

The Corporate Director Education and Family Support presented a report seeking approval from Cabinet for the appointment of local authority governors to the school governing bodies listed at paragraph 4.1. of the report. He added that all applicants met the approved criteria for appointment as a local authority governor and there was no competition for these vacancies.

The Cabinet Member for Education thanked those people who had put their name forward and asked Members from Wards with vacancies on the Governing Bodies, to consider applying.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the appointments detailed at paragraph 4.1 of the report.

118. **UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOUR/VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANT POLICY**

The Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report on the revised Unreasonable Behaviour or Vexatious Complainant Policy for approval. She explained that Cabinet approved an Unreasonable Behaviour and Vexatious Complaints Policy in January 2019. However unreasonable behaviour towards representatives of the Council was not limited to complaints and could arise more generally from service interaction with the public, which is what had been seen more recently. The policy attached to the report had been revised to recognise that whilst the Council would continue to respond openly and transparently to complaints, it had a clear set of values and would not tolerate unreasonable or abusive behaviour towards its staff, Elected Members or any third party.

The Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate further explained the background to 3 particular complainants and their excessive contact with the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations explained that the report was not about preventing anyone from the borough from raising concerns but about the very small number of complaints that started to impact on the well-being and health of officers and Members. As an authority, there was a duty to make sure that everyone in the workforce was kept safe. He had recently spent some time with the customer service colleagues

CABINET - TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023

on the front desk and had observed them doing an amazing job providing an amazing service. They provided information on over 800 services that the Council provided and they had the right to work and feel safe.

The Deputy Leader added that it was important to take measures to protect staff and members to ensure they were not subject to abuse.

The Leader agreed that it was not acceptable to treat staff in the way that had been seen recently and that if the behaviour became unreasonable, then they would respond to that and if necessary contact South Wales Police.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the revised Policy attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

119. INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOTING

The Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report informing Cabinet of any information reports that had been published since the last scheduled meeting. Only one report had been published and that related to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). She confirmed that the RIPA policy had been reviewed and was considered fit for purpose for the next period.

RESOLVED: Cabinet acknowledged the publication of the document listed in this report.

120. URGENT ITEMS

None

121. 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 Paragraph 14 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 circumstances relating to the item, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

122. APPROVAL OF EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet of 13 December 2022 be approved as a true and accurate record.

The meeting closed at 17:30