

COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB /REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH 2024 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor W J Kendall – Mayor and Chairperson

H T Bennett	A R Berrow	F D Bletsoe	S J Bletsoe
JPD Blundell	E L P Caparros	N Clarke	RJ Collins
HJ David	C Davies	P Davies	S Easterbrook
M J Evans	N Farr	P Ford	J Gebbie
W R Goode	M Jones	M Lewis	RL Penhale-Thomas
J E Pratt	R J Smith	JC Spanswick	T Thomas
JH Tildesley MBE	G Walter	A Wathan	A Williams
AJ Williams	HM Williams	I Williams	MJ Williams
R Williams	E D Winstanley	T Wood	J Llewellyn Hopkins
S Aspey	MJ Kearn	I M Spiller	

Apologies for Absence

C L C Davies, G Haines and D Harrison

Officers:

Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Rachel Keepins	Democratic Services Manager
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Housing & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director – Education and Family Support

Declarations of Interest

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Decision Made	<p>The following declarations of interest were made:-</p> <p>Councillor JP Blundell prejudicial interest in Agenda item 8. Councillor Blundell left the meeting whilst this item was being considered.</p> <p>Councillor I Williams prejudicial interest in Agenda item 8. Councillor Williams left the meeting whilst this item was being considered.</p> <p>The Chief Executive, all Directors and Chief Officers declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 7 and left the meeting whilst this item was being considered.</p> <p>Councillor M Evans declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8. as a member of Pencoed Town Council</p> <p>Councillor T Thomas declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8. as through his employment he has engaged with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on Local Development Plans in England.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That the Minutes of a meeting of Council dated 17 January 2024, be approved as a true and accurate record.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**4. To receive announcements from:**

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Decision Made	<p>Announcements were received from the following dignitaries (no decisions made):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Mayor</li></ul> <p>As part of the Mayoral announcements he asked all Members to stand in silent tribute as a mark of respect to previous County Borough Councillor Clive James, who had recently sadly passed away. Members and Officers stood for a minutes silence.</p> <p>The Mayor also advised that Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 scheduled for 18 March will now be rescheduled instead on 11 April 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Health</li><li>• Cabinet Member – Education</li><li>• Cabinet Member – Climate Change and the Environment</li><li>• Cabinet Member – Community Safeguarding and Wellbeing</li><li>• Cabinet Member – Finance, Resources and Legal</li><li>• Cabinet Member – Housing, Planning and Regeneration</li><li>• Chief Executive</li></ul> <p>The Deputy Leader (and Cabinet) and Group Leaders paid tribute to the Leader following the public announcement of his intention to stand down as Leader of the Council from May 2024.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**5. To receive announcements by the Leader**

Decision Made	<p>Council received the Leader's announcements (no decision made).</p> <p>As part of the Leader's announcement he confirmed that he would be standing down as Leader from the date of the Annual meeting of Council onwards. He emphasised what an honour it had been to be Leader of the Council since October 2016 and thanked all Members and Officers he had worked alongside within that time for their invaluable support.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**6. Single Transferable Vote (STV)**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Executive presented a report, the purpose of which, was to allow Council to consider whether it wishes to consider changing the voting system for local elections to the Single Transferrable Vote (STV).</p> <p>An Executive summary of the report detailed the following information:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council now has the option of changing the voting system from a 'First Past the Post' (FPtP) to a 'Single Transferable Vote' (STV) system.</li><li>• FPtP is well understood by everybody but STV, whilst a more complex process, should provide more proportionate weighting to an individual's vote.</li><li>• Changing the voting system to STV would require a boundary review of all current County Borough wards to ensure there is a minimum of 3 Councillors per ward and no more than 6 Councillors per ward.</li><li>• In STV, voters rank candidates in order of preference, marking a '1' against their first preference, a '2' against their second preference, and so on, for as many candidates as there are on the ballot paper if they wish to.</li><li>• With STV, counting takes place in rounds with surplus votes from elected candidates and votes from eliminated candidates being transferred to the next preferred candidate until all seats have been filled.</li><li>• Surplus votes are transferred at a much lower value and eliminated candidate votes are transferred at the value they were received.</li><li>• The complexities involved mean counting can take at least 2 or 3 days to complete.</li><li>• Council must decide if it wishes to go out to consultation before it can make a resolution at Council by the 15 November 2024 to change the system which must then be used for at least the 2027 and 2032 local elections.</li><li>• Consultation must be with every local government elector, Town and Community Councils and other key stakeholders.</li></ul> <p>Members made the following points on the report:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If there was, for example in the future, 6 members per Ward there may be a risk in professionalising the vote of a County Borough Councillor which could be unmanageable and/or lead to some disconnect between Councillors and the smaller communities they represent;</li><li>• Some members were supportive of STV, but not in the current financial climate. It was suggested</li></ul>
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change was to designate the Ewenny Road site at Maesteg from a housing site to a Strategic housing site.

Members made for example, the following points and/or asked the under mentioned questions, that were responded to by Officers:-

- As building costs have increased expedientially during the time the Local Development Plan has been put together, does the local authority have the ability to revisit any previous S106 funding contributions committed to new developments by site developers for added amenities, such as the provision of new schools, playground areas, etc, in order to ensure that the funding so allocated is relevant to the size of the development that is being provided;
- Adequate healthcare provision and facilities should be considered as an integral part of the provisions of the RLDP.
- If a planning application was proposed that departed from the RLDP, then could this be considered as a recommendation of the Development Control Committee to a full Council meeting, where deemed appropriate?
- Could I have an assurance that there is sufficient scope and viability to support transport infrastructure proposals and traffic flow across the County Borough, for example at Junction 36, with proposals for the construction of further residential and commercial developments in areas, as for example, the Kenning and Hy Bont developments;
- Members needed to note that Council today either needed to agree to accept, or conversely, reject the RLDP in its entirety at today's meeting, as opposed to recommending any amendments to the same.
- Were there sufficient resources in place to ensure the delivery of the delayed Penprisk Bridge and Railway Crossing re-development proposals at Pencoed?

**RESOLVED:**

That Council:

- a) Noted the findings of the binding Inspector's Report attached at Appendix 1 (to the cover report) and approved adoption of the Bridgend RLDP 2018 – 2033.
- b) Authorised the Corporate Director - Communities and Group Manager - Planning and Development Services to make minor typographical or factual corrections, presentational changes or consequential amendments to the RLDP arising from the Inspector's recommended changes in accordance with paragraph 12.1 and Appendix A of the Inspector's Report (Appendix 1).
- c) Authorised the Corporate Director - Communities and Group Manager - Planning and Development Services to make the necessary arrangements to publish the RLDP, including making the Plan

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	<p>available on the Council's website and at deposit locations in accordance with Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended).</p> <p>d) Authorised continued use of adopted SPGs prepared to supplement the policies of the existing adopted LDP (2006-2021) as material considerations in the determination of planning applications until these SPGs are replaced or otherwise withdrawn.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**9. Related Party Transactions 2023-24 for Statement of Accounts**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report, the purpose of which, was to inform Council of the requirement for Members to formally declare any related party transactions for the 2023-24 financial year by completing the declaration attached at Appendix A to the report, even if it was a nil return, and that this must be completed no earlier than 31 March 2024 and returned by Wednesday 10 April 2024. The Officer added that it was a requirement to declare any related party transactions of Members under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council noted the requirement for Members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• formally declare any related party transactions for the 2023-24 financial year;</li><li>• complete and date the return no earlier than 31 March 2024;</li><li>• submit the return by Wednesday 10 April 2024.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**10. Elected Member Personal Safety Protocol**

Decision Made	<p>The Monitoring Officer submitted a report, seeking Council approval of the Elected Member Personal Safety Protocol and for delegated authority to be given to the Monitoring Officer and Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change, to consider and approve any requests for funding appropriate security measures where a Member is at personal risk or significant threat of harm in carrying out their role.</p>
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The Protocol was attached at Appendix A to the report and the Monitoring Officer confirmed that this had been shared previously with the Council's Democratic Services Committee, who had given their support to this.

The Protocol also made reference to the Authority's Lone Working Guidance, which Members were encouraged to familiarise themselves with to ensure their own personal safety. This was to be read in conjunction with the Protocol in order to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably practicable

Members made the following points in respect of the report:-

- They welcomed the Personal Safety Protocol and its targeting of harassment to Members by primarily certain members of the public, through avenues such as Social Media, email, letters, texts, phone calls or in person;
- A Member wished that the Democratic Services were kept informed at least annually on the success of the Protocol, in order to assess that it was fit for purpose in terms of supporting the safety of Councillors, acknowledging that it may require some modifications to ensure this is best achieved;
- That in addition to the Protocol, consideration be given to individual wellbeing support being put in place for any Member, on a case by case basis, when it is considered this is necessary;
- That consideration also be given for a mechanism to be put in place, so that Members can have direct contact with the Police on cases of threat or harassment etc, or via a referral from a Senior Officer of the local authority;
- The Leader confirmed that the Personal Safety Protocol had been shared with the new Superintendent of South Wales Police, who had offered to meet with local Members to offer advice on courses of action that could be pursued should any Member feel that their safety is being compromised in any way. Key contact Officers within the Police could also be identified, in order that any action required is swiftly dealt with.
- The Monitoring Officer confirmed in response to a question, that threats from one Councillor to another could be dealt with via herself, the Ombudsman or direct through the Police, depending upon the severity of each case that may arise;
- That consideration be given to a Memorandum of Understanding being introduced between BCBC and the South Wales Police in order to further give weight to the Personal Safety Protocol.

**RESOLVED:**

That Council:

- a) Considered and approved the Elected Member Personal Safety Protocol attached at Appendix A to the report; and

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	b) Delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change to consider and determine any requests for funding appropriate security measures where a Member is at personal risk or significant threat of harm in carrying out their role.
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**11. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2024/25**

Decision Made	<p>The Monitoring Officer presented a report, in order to advise Council of the Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRWP) for Wales in respect of the level and range of remuneration the Authority must make available to its elected members for the 2024/25 municipal year.</p> <p>The aim of the IRPW is to support local democracy and give communities their voice, through setting up an appropriate and fair remuneration framework, which encourages inclusion and participation. The IRPW make determinations on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the salary structure within which members are remunerated;</li><li>• the type and nature of allowances to be paid to members;</li><li>• whether payments are mandatory or allow a level of local flexibility;</li><li>• arrangements in respect of family absence.</li></ul> <p>For its Annual Report 2024/25 the main elements of change affecting the Local Authority include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basic Salary for Elected Members of Principal Councils Determination 1;</li><li>• Salaries paid to Senior, Civic and Presiding members of Principal Councils – Determination 2;</li><li>• Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JOSC) – Determination 3;</li><li>• Payments made to co-opted members of Principal Councils and Fire and Rescue Authorities - Determination 5.</li></ul> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council noted the Annual Report for 2024/25 and approved:</p> <p>(1) The adoption of the relevant Determinations of the Panel contained within the Annual Report (attached as Appendix 1);</p>
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	(2) Those posts (shown in the revised Members' Schedule of Remuneration at Schedule 1 of Appendix 2) who will receive a senior / civic salary;
	(3) The revised Members' Schedule of Remuneration (Appendix 2 of the report) and for it to become effective from 1 April 2024;
	(4) That the Members' Schedule of Remuneration be updated with any changes to senior / civic salary positions subsequently made by Council during the 2024/25 municipal year.
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**12. Information Report for Noting**

Decision Made	The Group Manager, Legal and Democratic Services informed Council of an information report for noting, that had been published since the last scheduled meeting.  <u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council acknowledged the publication of the report referred to in paragraph 3.1 of the report.
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**13. To receive the following Question from:**

Decision Made	Councillor R Penhale-Thomas to the Cabinet Member – Climate Change and the Environment (response circulated previously to members)  Supplementary questions were asked by Councillor Penhale-Thomas and Councillor Ian Spiller (no decision made)
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

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**14. Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Alex Williams:**

Decision Made	Following a proposal by Councillor Williams, Council agreed to defer this Notice of Motion to the next scheduled meeting of Council.
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

**15. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	There were no urgent items.
Date Decision Made	13 March 2024

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