MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2024 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor H Griffiths - Chairperson

H T Bennett	A R Berrow	S J Bletsoe	JPD Blundell
E L P Caparros	RJ Collins	HJ David	P Davies
M J Evans	N Farr	P Ford	RM Granville
GH Haines	M L Hughes	M Jones	M Lewis
J Llewellyn-Hopkins	J E Pratt	JC Spanswick	JH Tildesley MBE

HM Williams I Williams E D Winstanley T Wood

Present Virtually

S Aspey	N Clarke	C L C Davies	S J Griffiths
D T Harrison	D M Hughes	RM James	P W Jenkins
M R John	W J Kendall	R J Smith	I M Spiller
T Thomas	G Walter	A Wathan	A Williams
AJ Williams	MJ Williams	R Williams	

Officers:

Mark Galvin Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Lindsay Harvey Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People

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

Oscar Roberts Business Administrative Apprentice - Democratic Services

Mark Shephard Chief Executive

Kelly Watson Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

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58. Apologies for absence

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F D Bletsoe, J Gebbie, W R Goode and MJ Kearn
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

59. Declarations of Interest

Decision Made	Councillor E Winstanley declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8., as she was employed by Awen Cultural Trust.
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

60. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	RESOLVED:	That the Minutes of a meeting of the Council dated 25 September 2024, be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024	

61. Presentation To Council By Representatives Of Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

Decision Made	The Chief Executive of Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB gave a verbal presentation to Council on the latest position regarding repairs to the roof at the Princess of Wales Hospital (POW), Bridgend.
	He advised that the roof had unfortunately deteriorated over the last 40 years to the point where rainwater was now entering the building. As a result of this, around 190 patients and several clinics and units had

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moved to other parts of the hospital, or to alternative sites, due to the risk of parts of the roof collapsing during high wind or heavy rain.

Mr. Mears stated that whilst this had an unavoidable impact on hospital services, plans were in place for managing and mitigating disruption for patients and he elaborated on what these were for the benefit of Members. He further added that remedial works would commence in November over a phased process. The replacement roof would be in place by the summer of 2025.

The cost for the replacement roof had been estimated at £20m and the Health Board were in discussions with Welsh Government regarding this. The problems with the roof were part of a multi-million maintenance backlog that the Health Board inherited, when it took over the responsibility for the Bridgend Borough area in 2019.

All the works required had been categorised on a 'risk basis'. When asked if funding had been focused more upon refurbishing the hospital in Merthyr Tydfil, as opposed to the POW hospital, Mr. Mears stated that it was not a question of this, but more a case of looking at the risks that Cwm Taf were managing and ensuring that, where appropriate, they concentrate their resources on where they are most needed across the Health Board.

Discussing how families can keep in touch with patients who may have had to move location, Mr. Mears stated that there had been dialogue with every patient affected in the POW hospital and where relevant, their family. The first priority was to relocate positions but now he was looking at how they were settling there, or whether their needs needed to be supported in another perhaps more specialist area of the service.

When asked about whether lessons would be learned from this issue and what procedures could be put in place to avoid any similar future critical incidents, Mr. Mears said he would be looking back at what has taken place since the Health Board had since taken on the POW site. He added that the Health Board's Estates team had a regular programme in place that was addressing problems over the last five years, including why issues with the roof had not been addressed previously.

Other than the roof there had also been significant problems with the fire alarm system, its electrical infrastructure and a number of other important issues, that were not immediately visible to patients or staff. These at the time posed the most risk, even more than the risk presented by the hospital roof.

Mr. Mears offered assurances about the ongoing welfare of staff at the POW hospital and confirmed that they had access to 24/7 health and wellbeing support.

	discharged patients and the	unity-based support was being developed via a 'hospital at home' initiative for at assessments were being put in place to ensure patients with issues such as Ities, could attend an alternative location, that was appropriate for their needs.
		nless they were contacted with updated details, people waiting for a scheduled ospital should attend these as normal.
	reassure Members that eve	the Health Board for the impact of the current challenges, though he wished to ery decision that had been made had been based around making sure that safe as possible, when considering the known risks at the hospital.
	He concluded by advising I him outside of the meeting.	Members that if they had any specific concerns, the they could raise these with
	RESOLVED:	That Council noted both the report and the presentation as referred to at paragraph 3.1 of the report from the Chief Executive Officer of Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024	

62. To receive announcements from:

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the following dignitaries (no decisions required/made):-
	Mayor;Chief Executive
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

63. To receive announcements by the Leader

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the Leader (No decisions required/made)

Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

64. Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

Decision Made	The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Housing presented a report, the purpose of which, was to seek Council approval to amend the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2024-25.
	A summary of the report, was as follows:-
	The debt financing of any capital expenditure requires a charge to revenue to set aside resources to repay that debt in the future. This is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The level of debt that has to be provided for is known as the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).
	Debt is either supported, where Welsh Government provide funding within the local government settlement towards the cost of borrowing and repayment, or unsupported, where the Council has to meet the full cost of that borrowing from existing resources.
	The current MRP Policy requires the setting aside of MRP over a straightline basis, over a 45-year period for supported borrowings or the life of the asset for unsupported borrowing.
	A straight-line basis of MRP results in a higher cost in early years (when including interest costs), reducing over time.
	Using an annuity method of calculating MRP spreads the total cost – MRP plus interest – over the life of the asset and is considered to match the benefit gained from the use of the asset over its full lifetime.
	The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Housing, confirmed that Council approved the Annual MRP Policy 2024-25 as part of the Capital Strategy in February 2024. This report proposed changing the calculation of MRP identified in paragraph i. and ii. of the Policy.
	The report gave details of the changes proposed.
	Finally, the report outlined the financial implications relating to the suggested proposals.

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	 Members then asked questions of the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Housing, examples of which were as follows:- A Cabinet member made the point that this was a technical report and changes proposed within it, were in line with current guidance and developed with support from the Council's Treasury Management advisors. Other authorities had also developed such a policy; A member considered that an annuity based calculation would result in a lower debt repayment in initial years and help alleviate pressure on the Revenue budget in the short term, however, he felt that assurance was needed regarding the more long term financial sustainability for the Council. He felt that the annuity based model could become problematic if budgets became tighter due to further economic downturn and/or cuts to Central Government funding. There may also be a perception of intergeneration inequality through shifting financial responsibility to future generations should there be asset depreciation if assets devalue faster than it is anticipated. It may be more beneficial and prudent to adopt a more flexible strategy over a longer term basis (than annually) which would allow Officers to more tailor our debt repayments schedule to suit different types of Capital assets. This would ensure steady, predictable repayments to match any asset depreciation, with this annuity method then being applied to more longer term statutory assets, for example, schools, roads or other major infrastructure programmes. Also, a more mixed MRP approach would offer greater flexibility in managing cash flow, whilst ensuring that some of the debts are being repaid steadily, thus preventing future financial burdens from escalating. A member also asked that if the Council changed to this proposed model and it did not work or benefit the local authority and we then reverted to our existing model, would we then end up paying more than what we would estimate paying now with the current model?
	The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Housing responded to the above points for the benefit of Council.
	RESOLVED: That Council:
	Approved the revision of the MRP Policy 2024-25 for calculating MRP on capital expenditure funded from supported and unsupported borrowing from a straight line basis to an annuity method and a revised Minimum Revenue Provision Statement is approved (Appendix A to the report referred).
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

65. To receive the following Questions from:

Decision Made	Councillor I Williams to the Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Economic Development and Housing (response circulated previously to members)
	A supplementary question was asked by Councillor Williams to the Leader
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

66. Urgent Items

Decision Made	There were no urgent items
Date Decision Made	23 October 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this link

The meeting closed at 17:18.