

COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2024

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor H Griffiths – Mayor and Chairperson

A R Berrow
HJ David
J Gebbie
M Jones
JC Spanswick

S J Bletsoe
P Davies
RM Granville
M Lewis
JH Tildesley MBE

E L P Caparros
M J Evans
GH Haines
J Llewellyn-Hopkins
HM Williams

RJ Collins
N Farr
M L Hughes
J E Pratt
T Wood

Present Virtually

H T Bennett
P Ford
RM James
R J Smith
G Walter
MJ Williams

JPD Blundell
W R Goode
P W Jenkins
I M Spiller
A Wathan
R Williams

N Clarke
S J Griffiths
M R John
T Thomas
AJ Williams
E D Winstanley

C L C Davies
D M Hughes
W J Kendall
A W Ulberini-Williams
I Williams

Officers:

Mark Galvin
Laura Griffiths
Lindsay Harvey
Carys Lord
Claire Marchant
Janine Nightingale
Michael Pitman
Anya Richards
Mark Shephard
Kelly Watson

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Group Manager – Legal and Democratic Services
Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People
Chief Officer - Finance, Housing & Change
Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Corporate Director - Communities
Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Group Manager - Communications and Public Affairs
Chief Executive
Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

67. Apologies for absence

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from the following Councillors:- M Kearn F Bletsoe D Harrison
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

68. Declarations of Interest

Decision Made	<p>The following declarations of interest were made:-</p> <p>Councillor R Williams Agenda item 9, personal interest as the Pencoed Road bridge is mentioned in the report, which is something he had been campaigning for, for a number of years.</p> <p>Councillor E Winstanley Agenda item 4, personal interest as she is an employee of Halo Leisure and Agenda item 9 personal interest, as she works for Awen Cultural Trust who manage the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl.</p> <p>Councillor M Evans Agenda item 9, personal interest as a Pencoed Town Councillor, a School Governor at Croesty Primary School and having campaigned for some considerable time for the Pencoed Road Bridge.</p> <p>Councillor J Gebbie Agenda item 9, personal interest as a School Governor at Mynydd Cynffig Primary School</p> <p>Councillor H Bennett Agenda item 8 personal interest as she works in the third sector and has commented previously on advance payments to third sector organisations.</p> <p>Councillor Amanda Williams Agenda item 9 prejudicial interest as Chairperson of Coety Primary School where reference is made in the report to there being further financial commitment to the scope of this project. Councillor Williams left the meeting during consideration of this item.</p>
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Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

69. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of a meeting of Council dated 23 October 2024, be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

70. Presentation to Council by the Chief Executive of Halo Leisure

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Executive presented a report, that introduced Scott Rolfe, Chief Executive Officer of Halo Leisure, who gave a resume of the work of the organisation, in its support of health and leisure facilities available to the public.</p> <p>He advised that he would give some background on how Halo Leisure and BCBC initially collaborated their resources and give an overview of the partnership and when/how it came about. The presentation would concentrate on the 8 core life centres in Bridgend; outline some key performance data, give a flavour of the size of the service and the impact it has within the County Borough, particularly in relation to supporting the local authority's wellbeing objectives.</p> <p>The presentation would also outline some successes of the service in the way it has impacted on communities that comprise BCBC and give examples of future options being considered, in order to build upon current service provision.</p> <p>Following Mr. Rolfe's submission, the Mayor opened up questions and example of which were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is noted that you have reduced the consumption of carbon emissions by 12%. Are there any further strategies or proposals being considered to reduce these further;• A member wished to reiterate some of the 'Feel Good for Life' sessions that took place in Bridgend, Ogmere Vale and Cornelly as well as on-line. She felt these were worth visiting.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the cost to empty the Halo swimming pools of water and re-fill/re-heat these?• Could you expand upon the type of works that had been required to the roof and cladding at the Bridgend Life Centre recently?• Does Halo encourage people to subscribe to membership at Life Centres etc, through offering discount services, including to those public who were young, pensioners, those on benefits or veterans;• Could Halo consider expanding by taking over some community assets under something similar to the Council's Community Asset Transfer scheme?• There needs to be more of a community focused provision provided at life centres in the valley areas of the Garw and Ogmore Vale;• Have Halo any intention of expanding their service outside the areas of Hereford and Bridgend?• What would be the most efficient method for Councillors to make referrals to Halo on behalf of their constituents – is there a specific contact officer or way to do this?• Are Life centres required to meet a minimum temperature when it came to heating the water in their swimming pools. <p>The questions and queries raised above (as well as any others) that Mr. Rolfe could not sufficiently respond to, he confirmed that he would follow-up and respond to outside of the meeting.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That the report of the Chief Executive and the presentation by the Chief Executive of Halo Leisure, be noted.</p>
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

71. To receive announcements from:

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the following dignitaries (no decisions required/made):- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mayor;• Chief Executive
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

72. To receive announcements by the Leader

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the Leader (No decisions required/made)
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

73. Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Principles 2025-2028

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report, the purpose of which, was to seek Council approval of the publication of the Council’s Statement of Licensing Principles for the next triennial period 2025 to 2028.</p> <p>In April 2023 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published its gambling white paper which included proposals for modernising regulation of the land-based sector.</p> <p>Following a public consultation with a range of stake holders, on 16 May 2024 the Government published its conclusions and proposals that will impact the sector throughout Great Britain.</p> <p>The proposed changes were detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the report, however the Licensing Authority proposed that no policy changes be made to its Statement of Licensing Principles at this time.</p> <p>Appendix B to the report, outlined a response from GamCare to the statutory consultation which had been published on the Council’s website for a period of a month in the summer period.</p> <p>A member asked if there would be any limitations proposed on using cashless payments for gambling purposes, for example, in respect of gaming machines.</p> <p>The Operational Manager – Neighbourhood Services (SRS) Management Team confirmed that there will be appropriate player protections introduced when these have been framed and formulated by government, around issues such as limiting age restriction and restricting upper limits to levels that can be gambled, with processes also being put in place in conjunction with this, to monitor these.</p> <p>A member raised some concerns over the growth of advertising of gambling on television/social media etc and asked, if local authorities could do anything to reduce this.</p>
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	<p>The Operational Manager – Neighbourhood Services (SRS) Management Team stated that licensing authorities could not regulate the above as this was regulated by the Gambling Commission. However, when there were any changes relating to gambling, local authorities were a consultee and could therefore give their feedback including any concerns to the changes so proposed.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council approved the proposed Statement of Licensing Principles as attached at Appendix A to the report, for publication in accordance with the relevant regulations.</p>
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

74. Amendments to the Constitution

Decision Made	<p>The Monitoring Officer presented a report, seeking approval from Council to a series of suggested amendments to the Constitution.</p> <p>These related to the Council's Financial Procedure Rules (FPR's) as referenced to in paragraph 3.1 of the report. At a meeting of Cabinet yesterday, the amendments to the FPR's as tracked changed in Appendix 1 to the report before members today, were approved.</p> <p>The report also requested changes to the composition of the Rights of Way Sub-Committee and to Special Procedures under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, governed by the Licensing Committee, as detailed in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5 of the report inclusive. These recommended changes necessitated amending the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>There were further grammatical changes proposed to the Constitution, however, these could be made under delegated authority by the Monitoring Officer.</p> <p>Members made a number of points primarily in relation to the FPR's:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There needed to be included as part of the FPR's third sector advance payments, ie that each payment would be considered on their merits and in-line with the third sector scheme and funding Code of Practice.• Reference was made fairly frequently in the FPR's to approval being given for delegated authority
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<p>Decision Made</p>	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report that confirmed that paragraph 3.5.3 of the Financial Procedure Rules require that she shall report quarterly to Cabinet and Council with an update on the Capital Strategy and the Prudential Indicators. This report fulfilled that requirement.</p> <p>The report therefore provided an update on the quarter 2 spend and projected spend for 2024-25 as at 30 September 2024, the revised capital programme for 2024-25 to 2033-34 and the projected Prudential and Other Indicators for 2024-25.</p> <p>Appendix A of the report showed the budgets, spend to date and projected year end spend as at 30 September 2024 for the individual schemes in 2024-25.</p> <p>Appendix B included the revised capital programme for 2024-25 to 2033-34, while Appendix C gave details of the actual Prudential and Other Indicators for 2023-24 and projected 2024-25.</p> <p>Table 1 in the report detailed the capital programme for each Directorate from the July 2024, approved Council position to Quarter 2</p> <p>Table 2 summarised the current funding assumptions for the capital programme for 2024-25. The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change explained that capital resources are managed to ensure that maximum financial benefit for the Council is achieved. This may require the realignment of funding to maximise government grants.</p> <p>The remainder of the report gave details of the schemes pending, including also, details of any further allocation of funding to some of these, for varying reasons so outlined in the document.</p> <p>Members asked some questions of the Cabinet and Corporate Management Board, which were responded to by these Councillors and Officers.</p> <p>The Leader advised that there were some amazing projects included in the programme, including for example, the refurbishment of Heronsbridge school and the inaugural opening today of Maesteg Town Hall, which was an excellent facility for the people of Maesteg, the wider County Borough and visitors to the area.</p> <p>Some Members were concerned that certain projects had been delayed and were therefore slipping from this quarter of the capital programme to the next and that the delay of some of these had resulted in resources having to be committed to them.</p>
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The Leader advised that as members were probably aware, a Capital Programme Monitoring Board had been established within the last 12 months and the Board was looking in more detail at estimated costing of projects going forward, to ensure wherever possible, that they remained upon construction within estimated budget.

A member proposed a vote upon the recommendations of the report, as he was not sufficiently informed by the report of how much financial contingency was held in the capital programme to support the individual projects it contained, from project level up to programme level.

The above motion was duly seconded.

The result of the vote was as follows:-

<u>For (the recommendations of the report)</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>
39	2	0

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- Noted the Council's Capital Programme 2024-25 Quarter 2 update to 30 September 2024 (Appendix A to the report referred).
- Noted the slippage of £12.643 million to 2024-25, as detailed in Appendix B of the report.
- Approved the virements between schemes as detailed in Appendix B.
- Approved the new additions/reductions to the capital programme in 2024-25, totalling -£3.831 million as outlined in Appendix B.
- Approved the new additions to the capital programme between 2025-26 and 2027-28, totalling £19.520 million as detailed in Section 3.3.
- Noted the actual Prudential and Other Indicators for 2023-24 and projected for 2024-25 (at Appendix C of the report).

Date Decision Made	20 November 2024
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76. Treasury Management Half Year Report to September 2024

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a financial report on the above matter.</p> <p>She advised that paragraph 22.5 of the Financial Procedure Rules required the Chief Finance Officer to report quarterly to Cabinet, summarising borrowing and investment activity and indicating compliance with any statutory or Council approved guidelines, together with a half yearly and an annual report to Council.</p> <p>The report before Members provided an update of Treasury Management activity for the half year period 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024.</p> <p>As at 30 September 2024, the Council had £99.58 million of long term debt, £15.32 million of other long term liabilities and an overall net debt position of £69.90 million.</p> <p>The average interest rate for debt was 4.69% (excluding Salix borrowing which is interest free) and for investments it was 5.09%.</p> <p>She highlighted that the Council had a manageable maturity structure of borrowing, with its current debt repayable at various points over the next 30 years.</p> <p>The Council had also she confirmed, complied with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management Code and Welsh Government Investment Guidance.</p> <p>A member stated that he felt reassured to note from the top of page 128 of the report, that the overall interest that the Council had received from Treasury investments from the period April to September 2024, amounted to £2.31m. He felt that this confirmed how competent the Council's Finance team were when it came to the management of BCB's finances.</p> <p>A Cabinet member for Resources noted that the Public Accounts Committee had recently confirmed that debt within local authorities in Wales stood at £5.6m, which was lower than in local authorities both in England and in Scotland. Also, of the 22 welsh local authorities, Bridgend had lowest amount of debt aside of Merthyr Borough Council, however, if this was calculated on a 'per head' basis, then BCBC was actually the lowest in Wales.</p>
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	<p>Finally, a member asked in relation to the transition to an Annuity based MRP method, what measures had the local authority put in place to ensure that our future generations don't bear any excessive financial burden due to the fact that model had been changed. The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change, gave a suitable response to this question.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the Treasury Management activities for 2024-25 for the half year period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024. • Further noted the Treasury Management Indicators for the half year ending 30 September 2024, against those approved in the Treasury Management Strategy 2024-25.
Date Decision Made	20 November 2024

77. Council Tax Base 2025-26

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report, in order to seek Council approval for the estimated council tax base for 2025-26, as required by legislation. This also included approval of the individual tax bases for the town and community areas, as detailed in Appendix A to the report.</p> <p>The estimated net council tax base is 55660.20 based on a collection rate of 97.5%, which takes into account the current economic climate.</p> <p>She added that Council was also required to approve the tax bases for the individual town and community areas for 2025-26.</p> <p>A member referred to page 139 of the report and stated, that on the estimated collection percentages, we have used the same figure for all the town and community areas. He wondered however, if there was any significant divergence between these areas based upon previous collection rates.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance Housing and Change confirmed that the Council used that average rate, as BCBC collected such monies on behalf of all town/community council areas and then sent these allocations on to each of them. If there was a reduction in the collection area within one area, the</p>
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The meeting closed at 18:45.