

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

15 March 2023

The Mayor: **Councillor**

The Deputy Mayor: **Councillor**

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, T.Bowen, H.C.Clarke, M.Crowley,
A.Dacey, H.Davies, H.Davies, O.S.Davies,
R.Davies, S.E.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy,
N.Goldup-John, W.F.Griffiths, S.Grimshaw,
J.Hale, S.Harris, J.Henton, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley,
C.James, C.James, N.Jenkins, J.Jones,
L.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.Jones, C.Jordan,
D.Keogh, E.V.Latham, C.Lewis, D.Lewis,
A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig, R.Mizen,
K.Morris, S.Paddison, D.M.Peters, C.Phillips,
R.Phillips, S.Pursey, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes,
S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards, P.Rogers,
D.Thomas, S.Thomas, D.Whitelock, C.Williams,
L.Williams and R.W.Wood

Officers in Attendance: N.Blackmore, C.Frey-Davies, C.Griffiths,
A.Jarrett, C.John, H.Jones, K.Jones, C.Owen,
N.Pearce, S.Rees, M.Shaw, A.Thomas,
K.Warren and J.Woodman-Ralph

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

Council were informed that the simultaneous Welsh translation technology was unable to be utilised during the meeting.

It was with great sadness that the Mayor announced the recent death of David Davies, the former Chair of NPTCVS. Council extended their condolences to the family during this time.

For the first time since the pandemic, it was explained that three young people from Neath Port Talbot had passed the Duke of Edinburgh gold award; and had been invited to Buckingham Palace,

to be presented with the award on 15 May 2023. It was added that the Mayor was intending on inviting them to the Parlour, for a celebration of their achievement, in the near future.

2. **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader had no announcements to make.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services made reference to Agenda Item 5, Pay Policy Statement 23/24. It was noted that Standards Committee had granted dispensation for all Elected Members, who had family members working within the Authority and Neath Port Talbot schools, to speak and vote on the matter. However, Elected Members were advised to declare any interests, in order for them to be noted.

The Chief Executive declared an interest on behalf of all Officers in relation to Agenda Item 5, Pay Policy Statement 23/24; Chief Officers would be withdrawing from the meeting for the duration of the item.

The following Declarations of Interest were received from Elected Members:

Cllr T Bowen	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his wife is the supervisor at Gnoll Café and his son works for the Streetscare Team in Pontardawe
Cllr P Rogers	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his brother works for the Survey Team
Cllr A Llewelyn	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his wife is employed as a teacher
Cllr R Mizen	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his wife is a cook in Ysgol Bro Dur
Cllr C Jordan	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy

	Statement 23/24 as his is a school cook as Crynallt Junior School, Cimla
Cllr E Latham	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his grandson is employed as an apprentice electrician
Cllr M Crowley	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as he has family working in schools Agenda Item 6 – Mayoral Arrangements 2023/24 as he is nominated as Deputy Mayor for 2023/24
Cllr P Richards	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his daughter in law is a TA at Blaenbaglan Primary School
Cllr R Jones	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his daughter works for Ysgol Maes Y Coied
Cllr S Harris	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as her daughter teachers at Ysgol Cwm Brombil
Cllr S Hunt	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his daughter works at YGG Castell-Nedd
Cllr S Jones	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as he has family members who work for NPTCBC
Cllr W Carpenter	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his daughter is a member of staff at Cefn Saeson School
Cllr W Griffiths	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy

	Statement 23/24 as he has relations working for the Authority
Cllr R Davies	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as her nephew is a teacher at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Bro Dur
Cllr J Hurley	
Cllr S Freeguard	
Cllr C Lewis	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as her sister works at a school within NPTCBC
Cllr S Pursey	
Cllr L Jones	
Cllr A Dacey	Agenda Item 5 – Pay Policy Statement 23/24 as his daughter works as a Teaching Assistant

4. **Public Question Time.**

No questions were received.

5. **Pay Policy Statement 23/24**

Chief Officers withdrew from the meeting for this item only

The Leader of Council introduced the report which sought approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/2024, and for it to be publicised on the Council's website.

It was explained that the Localism Act 2011 required that Local Authorities produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year; a Pay Policy Statement was first developed and approved by Neath Port Talbot Council in March 2011. The Leader highlighted that the statement was reviewed on an annual basis, and brought before Council for approval and publication prior to 31 March each year.

The circulated report contained the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/2024, which had been updated to take account of any national or local pay related developments. It was noted that the Localism Act 2011 required that the statement set out the Councils policy in regards to a range of issues relating to the pay of the workforce, particularly focusing on senior staff and how their pay related to the lowest paid within the workforce; the aim of this was to increase

accountability, transparency and fairness within Local Government in Wales.

Reference was made to the Pay Multiples set out in the report; since the publication of the first Pay Policy in 2012, the gap between the lowest paid employees and the highest paid employee had reduced. It was noted that in 2012 the Chief Executive earned 11 times more than the lowest paid employee, and it had now reduced to just over seven times more; the average Chief Officer in 2012 earned 7 times more than the lowest paid employees, which had now reduced to four times more.

Members were pleased to see that over several years the gap has continued to close, and highlighted the importance of this in regards to promoting fairness within Local Government.

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/2024 be approved for publication on the Council's website

6. Mayoral Arrangements 2023/24

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the report which was to nominate a Mayor elect and Deputy Mayor elect for the civic year 2023/2024.

It was explained that each year the Council elected a Mayor and Deputy Mayor to preside over Council proceedings, and discharge the duties of the First Citizen. Members were informed that during its annual meeting in May 2024, formal appointment will take place pursuant to the Council's Constitution; however, to assist in preparation, and following discussions between political group leaders, Full Council were asked to approve that Cllr Chris Williams be nominated as Mayor, and that Cllr Matthew Crowley be nominated as Deputy Mayor for the 2023/2024 civic year.

Cllr Chris Williams and Cllr Matthew Crowley gave thanks for their nomination and looked forward to serving their time as Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Chris Williams be nominated Mayor for the civic

year 2023/24 pursuant to Section 23(1) of the Local Government Act 1972;

That Councillor Matthew Crowley be nominated Deputy Mayor for the civic year 2023/24 pursuant to Section 23(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

7. **West Glamorgan Safeguarding Annual Report**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services presented Members with the West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board Annual Plan and Annual Report.

Council were informed that the West Glamorgan Safeguarding Annual Report 2021/22 provided an overview of the work that the Regional Safeguarding Board had undertaken over the last 12 months, in relation to its Annual Plan.

The Safeguarding Board objectives were noted to be the following:

- To protect children and adults at risk within the Region, who were experiencing, or were at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm
- To prevent children and adults at risk within the Region, from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect of other kinds of harm

Over the course of the year, it was explained that the Safeguarding Board focused on ensuring that there was a robust resilience, and consistent approach to safeguarding practices during the Covid 19 pandemic.

Reference was made to some of the work undertaken across the partnership, which included:

- Developing the response of child sexual abuse in line with the National Action Plan
- Working on Liberty Protection Safeguards (Elected Members would be receiving an All Member Seminar on this matter on 16 March 2023)
- Receiving assurances from all partners and agencies in respect of their safeguarding duties and responsibilities

- Further development and oversight of the rapid response to suspected suicide
- Ongoing work with the Junior Safeguarding Board

A discussion took place in relation to the Safeguarding Annual Plan, which set out the proposed strategic priorities:

1. Learn from experience to improve how we work
2. Improve awareness of safeguarding across all communities and partner organisations
3. Develop and deliver citizen-led approaches to safeguarding
4. Develop and deliver regional approaches to safeguarding practice

It was noted that the Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Board had sight of the circulated report on 9 March 2023.

Members mentioned that there were various elements of this work that was not directly under the Councils control, and instead the Council had to rely on partners to take some of the work forward. It was queried if Officers were aware of any challenging areas, with regards to safeguarding, that would be integral going forward with the Annual Plan, for example discharges from hospitals and waiting times for ambulances.

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing confirmed that there were risks and particular issues to be aware of; one example being the additional pressures in regards to mental health. It was noted that substance misuse was a particular issue in Neath Port Talbot, and it would be vital to create a plan for this matter going forward, given the number of drug related deaths in the County Borough. Council were informed that Officers were working with the Health Board in order to resolve some of the issues in regards to unsafe hospital discharges.

Following on from the above, it was explained to Members that there were a number of challenges that the introduction of the Liberty Protection Safeguards will bring to the Local Authority; the issues around this were reflected in the Strategic Risk Register, and Members will be updated on these during the All Member Seminar. Assurances were provided in that Officers were responsive, and had a mature partnership arrangement in order to be sighted on concerns arising across the wider partnership; the quality assurance framework was

also in place to assist Officers in identifying wider issues beyond the day to day safeguarding practice.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

8. **Notice of Motion under Section 10 of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) the Council's Constitution**

No notices of motion were received.

9. **Questions from Members, with Notice, under Rule 9.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules**

No questions were received.

10. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

CHAIRPERSON