

CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

25TH November 2014

Chairman: Councillor A.Jenkins

Councillors: Mrs P.Bebell, A.Carter, M.Harvey, Mrs.L.H.James, A.Llewelyn, Mrs.K.Pearson, Mrs.S.M.Penry, A.J.Siddley, J.Warman and I.D.Williams

Officers In Attendance S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, A.Evans, G.Nutt and Mrs.A.Manchipp

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.H.Thomas, M.L.James, E.V.Latham, P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor and A.N.Woolcock

1. **COUNCILLOR D.W.DAVIES**

Members stood for a moment's silence as a mark of respect following the death of the mother of the Chairman, Councillor D.W.Davies.

2. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND REORGANISATION**

Committee noted the report of the Chief Executive in relation to the Local Government Reform and Reorganisation. Members then raised the following points:-

- The future role of Community Councils following local government reorganisation;
- The lack of leadership from Welsh Government on the proposals contained in the Williams' report;
- The recent announcement that Welsh Government would possibly want to reduce the number of Welsh local authorities to 6-how would this be achieved? Authorities would no longer be "local";
- That local government appeared to undergo reorganisation approximately every 22 years. What services would be the responsibility of Welsh Government and what would be left for local

authorities? What would be the future for smaller communities, would they lose their identities?

- The Authority had not only a duty of care to its constituents but also to its staff;
- With uncertainty around their futures, staff may consider leaving the employ of the Authority resulting in a drain in professionalism with the organisation;
- The differences between service delivery in Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and the City and County of Swansea was raised and the need to undertake for example Council Tax Equalisation was discussed;
- The estimated cost of reorganisation across Wales was in the region of approximately £160m - £268m across Wales, which would include such things as redundancy payments and equalisation of pay grades- resulting in the region of £65m per annum savings.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet.

CHAIRMAN