

POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

24 January 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.N.Woolcock

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman

Councillors: C.Edwards, S.E.Freeguard, M.Harvey,
S.K.Hunt, S.Miller, S.M.Penry, J.Warman and
S.Paddison

Officers In Attendance D.Rees, S.John, Mrs A. Hinder and C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors R.G.Jones, C.Clement-Williams and
D.Jones

1. **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2017**

The committee noted the minutes

2. **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2017**

The committee noted the minutes

3. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18.**

Members noted the Forward Work Programme.

Members asked that training venues in Council Buildings be looked at and included on the Forward Work Programme. The Leader of the Authority highlighted that there are proposals to close the Mayors Parlour in Neath Civic Centre to turn it in to a new Members room, to then utilise the old Members room in to a training/meeting room.

Members asked that a report be brought back to a future meeting on the progress of these proposals.

4. **TELEPHONY SYSTEM PRESENTATION**

Members received a presentation on the implementation of the new Telephony System.

Officers confirmed that they will provide updates at future meetings.

Members asked that there would need to be an increase in charging points located in the Councils Civic Buildings. Officers highlighted that they are considering having charging points located on desks.

Members asked if the back up of files are stored through the cloud. Officers highlighted that they are currently discussing this with corporate managers and directors and can report back to a future meeting.

Members were concerned about officers being able to swipe calls to different devices and highlighted that this service may put pressure on staff to answer all calls, it was noted that officers don't avoid calls on purpose, officers on occasions can't take calls as they are working. It was raised by officers that it is important for staff to abide by call management.

It was noted that this technology will be used through Microsoft Outlook.

Members asked how much this new software would save the Council. Officers highlighted that there would be a reduction on mobile traffic and a reduction in travelling costs as you are able to answer the phone mobile.

Members noted the presentation.

5. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

5.1 Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2017-2018

Members received a brief overview on the treasury management action and information.

Members queried about the two investments that are maturing this year and asked whether it was going to be reinvested. Officers confirmed that these form part of the long term Treasury Management Strategy.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

5.2 Income Generation Margam Park and Princess Theatre

Members received information on the proposal to transfer £100k over the next 3 financial years from the Income Generation Reserve to the Princess Royal Theatre budget to part fund the establishment of a Marketing and Promotion Team that will serve Margam Park, the Orangery and the Princess Royal Theatre for a three year period.

Members were in favour of the income generation proposal.

Cabinet Members highlighted to the committee that if members have any income generating ideas, to put them forward to the Income Generation Group.

Members highlighted the importance of this report in highlighting tourism. It was noted that the Tourism group may be reinstated.

It was raised that there was some concern that the Gnoll was being overlooked. The Leader of the Authority highlighted that it's not about excluding it's about taking it one step at a time.

Members queried about the marketing of the trees and venison in Margam Park, it was noted that Swansea are able to sell their trees in Margam and queried why Margam Can't sell their own trees. The Leader highlighted that Venison is sold in Margam Park, however, there are legal reasons why Margam Park can't cut their own trees and sell them. It was noted that Swansea rent the Ground in Margam and gain an income via that process.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board

5.3 Hackney Carriage Fare Increase

Members were provided information on the request from Neath Port Talbot Proprietors Association, for a hackney carriage fare increase.

The Chair of Registration and Licensing Committee commended the Licensing officer on the report and highlighted that when the Licensing committee looked at this report they felt that a pay rise was deserved, however, felt that they should go with the outcome of the consultation.

Members raised that when officers go out to consult to include the trade union. Officers confirmed that they were included in the main consultation.

Members raised that the font on the Equality Impact Assessment was faint. Officers confirmed that they would address that issue.

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

6. ACCESS TO MEETINGS

RESOLVED: that pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

7. PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

7.1 Council Tax Write Offs

Members received information on the proposals and were provided with case studies that are detailed in appendix 2 to the private circulated report.

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

CHAIRPERSON