

POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

Members Present:

18 April 2018

Chairperson: Councillor A.N.Woolcock

Vice Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman

Councillors: M.Crowley, J.D.Morgan, M.Harvey, S.K.Hunt,
H.N.James, S.M.Penry, J.Warman and
S.Paddison

Officers In Attendance K.Jones, D.Rees, N. Jones and C.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors R.G.Jones and D.Jones

1. **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7TH MARCH 2018**

The committee noted the minutes.

2. **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 31ST JANUARY 2018**

The committee noted the minutes.

3. **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2018**

The committee noted the minutes.

Members requested that it be highlighted that some Members were not present at the meeting, due to road closures.

4. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee chose to scrutinise the following Cabinet Board items:

Cabinet Board Proposals

4.1 Welsh Language Standards

Members were updated on the Welsh Language Commissioner's proposed determination in relation to the nine standards subject of the Council's continuing Challenge and on the proposed response.

Members were informed that in a previous meeting where discussions took place on the challenge of the nine standards, the officers had provided very good support, it was noted that if this approach had been applied at the beginning, this could have been finalised earlier.

Members discussed the following standards to provide a response.

Standard 22

Members noted that some external phone companies that the council currently use as a provider don't provide bilingual options, and therefore is not within the councils control to provide that function.

Members asked that when the phone contracts expire, could the authority look to purchase contracts with companies that do provide a bilingual option.

Standard 41

Members noted that in the event that minutes of the Council are challenged, it will only be the original minute that will be used for legal circumstances, whether that original minute was written in English or Welsh. It was noted that on the translated version of the minutes there will be a disclaimer at the top notifying public that the original minute will be used as the reliable source when in a challenge.

It was noted that there would be a significant cost in translating council minutes in to Welsh, it was highlighted that a budget was set for it when the members approved the budget earlier this year.

It was highlighted that in any further recruitments within the Democratic Services team, that a fluent welsh speaker and writer would be required.

Standard 61 and 62

It was noted that for any street signs that will need to be replaced with a Welsh translation will be on a replacement basis and not all changed at one time.

Members highlighted that some street names, whether they are in English or welsh can't always be translated into the other language. It was noted that the Welsh Language promotion Task and Finish Group would provide ideas within the strategy that is produced from that group.

Standard 64

It was noted that the Council will be in a position to provide a Welsh spoken Member of Staff available at all times in customer services; it is worked on a rota basis.

Standard 84 and 86

It was highlighted that the Authority utilises external training companies to provide training to staff, it was noted that those training companies may not be able to provide a bilingual tutor and therefore can't guarantee training would be provided in English and Welsh.

Standard 99 and 100

Members noted that Contracts of employment should be provided in Welsh and English. It was highlighted that each contract is tailored to each members of staff and therefore would not be just a case of translated 1 contract which would suit all. Therefore members of staff that have been identified as Welsh speakers have been asked whether they would like a Welsh version of their contract. It was noted that only 8 had

confirmed that, that would be their preferred option. It was highlighted that the contracts will be treated the same as the record of minutes where by the original document would be the version that would be used if in a challenge.

Members highlighted that the preferred option would be to have a bilingual version and not an option of receiving the Contracts in Welsh or English.

Members highlighted their support in the proposed response.

Members highlighted that the Welsh Language Standards have been discussed in great length. Members wished to thank the officers for the work that they have accomplished.

Members asked whether a bilingual response could be sent back to the Commissioner. Officers highlighted that they had not been requested to do it that way in the past and the Commissioner has been content receiving previous responses in English.

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

4.2 Treasury Management Monitoring 2017/18

Members received a brief overview of the treasury management actions and information.

It was highlighted in point 5 of the circulated report that the investment income achieved by Council had slightly exceeded the budget. It was noted that there had been no long term borrowing since the previous report.

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

CHAIRPERSON