

CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

6 March, 2019

Chairman: Councillor A.N.Woolcock

Vice Chairman: Councillor S.Rahaman

Councillors: M.Crowley, M.Harvey, S.K.Hunt, L.Jones, S.A.Knoyle, S.Miller, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry and L.M.Purcell

Officers In Attendance S.Phillips, A.Evans, H.Jenkins, A.Jarrett, D.Griffiths, P.Jackson, M.Shaw, N.Chapple, C.Davies and T.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors C.Clement-Williams, D.Jones, R.G.Jones, E.V.Latham, A.R.Lockyer, P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor and A.Wingrave

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Committee held a minute's silence, as a mark of respect for Councillor Des Davies, who had recently passed away.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Committee held a minute's silence, as a mark of respect for Councillor Des Davies, who had recently passed away.

The following Member made a declaration of interest at the commencement of the meeting:

Councillor M.Harvey - Re: Report of the Director of Social Services, Health and Housing - Western Bay Youth Offending and Early

Intervention Service and Report of the Head of Legal Services - Consultation Response to Welsh Government – Improving Public Transport, as he is employed by South Wales Police.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Decision:

Subject to it being noted that Councillor L.M.Purcell was present at the meeting of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on 13 February, 2019, the minutes of the previous meetings of Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, held on 23 January and 13 February, 2019, be approved.

3. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

The committee scrutinised the following Cabinet items:

Western Bay Youth Offending and Early Intervention Service

The Director of Social Care, Health and Housing gave Members an overview of the circulated report. It was noted that the Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service had been the subject of a joint inspection led by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. Although the final report was not due for publication until late March 2019, the draft conclusions and recommendations indicated that it would not be in the best interests of the children and young people of Neath Port Talbot to wait in order to take remedial action.

It was noted that the Principal Officer post mentioned within the report would require agreement at the Personnel Committee. On costs for this role, and cost implications going forward were also discussed. Members queried the term 'market supplement' and noted that it was a payment in addition to the stated salary, made in order to recruit a suitable member of staff to a position.

Members discussed the relative merits of regional working, and the joint work around 'County Lines' (where criminal gangs set up a drug dealing operation in a place outside their usual operating area) was

used as a recent example of positive regional working. Officers felt that a further independent evaluation of regional working was necessary by the Welsh Government, since the Beecham Review back in 2006. It was felt that in the case of the Youth Offending Service, an in house service would be more manageable and easier to monitor.

Officers emphasised the need for the relevant Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the findings of the inspection report when it was published.

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

Consultation Response to Welsh Government – Improving Public Transport

The Head of Engineering and Transport gave Members an overview of the circulated report. Committee Members noted that only questions 1-21 of the consultation responses were relevant to the meeting today, as the rest of the responses (questions 22-38) related to non-executive functions, and had been discussed at the Registration and Licensing Committee as part of its remit.

Members agreed that the cross party issue of public transport affected all areas and that better connectivity was needed between rural communities. Adopting an in-house transport scheme as an income generation stream was discussed. Although it was felt that providing an in house service for public transport was currently not financially viable, Members did not want to rule this out entirely for the future. To this end, scrutiny committee members suggested the following re wording of question 16 to 'Yes. However...' and the response to question 17 be amended to 'Yes. This is...'

A ticketing scheme regarding concessionary fares/passes, which could be relevant to trains and taxis as well as buses, was discussed.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that Cabinet Board be asked to consider the following recommendation:-

1. That the response to question 16 be amended to 'Yes. However...' and the response to question 17 be amended to 'Yes. This is...'

4. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 18/19**

The committee noted the forward work programme for 2018/19.

5. **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 item 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.

6. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF PRIVATE ITEM**

The Committee scrutinised the following private Cabinet item:

Material Recovery and Energy Centre (MREC) – In-House Services

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services gave Members an overview of the private, circulated report.

In response to Members queries, Officers gave details of the number of directors and secretaries per company, as well as the redundancy payments that would need to be awarded. There would be no financial implications to the Council. Members noted that consultation with employees would need to take place as well as moving the licence to the Council, so winding down the companies could take up to 12 weeks.

Discussion took place around the following areas:

- Plant and machinery
- Scrappage
- Future use of buildings and land
- Consultation with staff

Members noted that a further report concerning the future of the service would be brought to Cabinet shortly.

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

CHAIRPERSON