



**CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**10.00 am WEDNESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2019**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER - PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE**

**Part 1**

1. Declarations of Interests
2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 10*)
3. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet agenda for pre-decision scrutiny (cabinet reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members)
4. To select appropriate items from the Cabinet (Finance) Sub Committee agenda for pre-decision scrutiny (Cabinet Finance Sub - Committee reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members)
5. Forward Work Programme 19/20 (*Pages 11 - 14*)
6. Urgent Items  
*Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972*

**S.Phillips**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre**  
**Port Talbot**

**Thursday, 24 October 2019**

## **Committee Membership:**

**Chairperson:** Councillor M.Harvey

**Vice  
Chairperson:** Councillor S.Rahaman

**Councillors:** S. ap Dafydd, S.E.Freeguard, N.T.Hunt,  
S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller,  
R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, L.M.Purcell,  
S.M.Penry, S.H.Reynolds and A.N.Woolcock

## **Notes:**

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.*
- (4) The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*
- (5) Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

## CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

**Members Present:**

**25 September 2019**

**Chairperson:** Councillor M.Harvey

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor S.Rahaman

**Councillors:** S.ap Dafydd, S.E.Freeguard, S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, L.M.Purcell, S.M.Penry and A.N.Woolcock

**Officers In Attendance** S.Phillips, G.Richards (NPTCVS), A.Evans, A.Jarrett, G.Nutt, K.Jones, C.Griffiths, Aleksanyan, V.Dale, C.Davies and T.Davies

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors D.Jones, L.Jones, R.G.Jones, E.V.Latham, P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor and A.Wingrave

**Observers** Councillor Charlotte Galsworthy

1. **RESPONSE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD**

The Chair of the Public Services Board (PSB) requested to delay reporting progress on Well-being Objective 4 - Well-being in the Workplace, as the lead officer had retired earlier this year and successor arrangements had not yet been made. An update would be arranged for the Committee in late autumn 2019.

Members had queried why a first class digital and transport infrastructure, was not currently a priority of the PSB even though this had been included in the vision of the Public Services Board. The Chair of the PSB explained that the vision was intended to cover a 30 year time period. The current well-being objectives covered an initial 5 year period and did not directly involve transport. However,

transport infrastructure was currently being addressed in other forums, such as the Swansea Bay City Region.

It was emphasised that although there was great sympathy for members of the public who were finding it hard to access public transport, the responsibility lay with bus operators. It was noted that bus routes were 'data driven', and that if there were not enough passengers on a route then changes would be made.

An All Member Seminar was scheduled for the end of November, to which the Managing Director of First Cymru Buses had been invited. All Members were encouraged to attend.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

2. **TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM THE LEAD OFFICERS ON WELLBEING OBJECTIVE 2 - BUILDING SAFE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES**

This item was scrutinised in conjunction with item 7 on the Cabinet agenda – Building Safe and Resilient Communities Grant Funding report.

Following scrutiny of the Public Services Board Annual Report 2018/19 on 10 July 2019, Cabinet Scrutiny Committee exercised their powers as set out in Section 35 of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (being the designated overview and scrutiny committee for this purpose, as approved at Council in May 2015), and invited the lead officers on Objective 2 – Building Safe and Resilient Communities to provide more in depth information to the committee.

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing and the Director of NPTCVS gave members a presentation on the Building Safe and Resilient Communities project, including the areas of the County Borough chosen to pilot the project, the basic strategic plan framework and the governance structure.

Members drew officer's attention to the report and explained that Cwmllynfell was in the upper Swansea Valley not the upper Amman Valley.

Discussion took place around how Communities First had not worked in certain areas, and did not leave much of a legacy in others, despite the amount of funding that had been involved in the project.

Members noted that the starting point, outcomes, objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Building Safe and Resilient Communities project, or the precise purpose of funding had not yet been identified, and would depend on suggestions and involvement from local community groups.

Members were concerned that the request for the grant of funding for the project had been submitted prematurely. Officers explained that funding for the Building Safe and Resilient project would be administered by NPTCVS by means of the 'innovate and create' grant scheme. The criteria for this type of funding was discussed, i.e. the need for sustainability going forward.

Members were pleased that both urban and rural areas had been chosen for the pilot, and felt this would be useful for comparison purposes. Members queried how officers would be able to tell whether a difference had been made or not. Officers explained that in addition from first-hand accounts from local residents, there would be a formal evaluation structure drawn up by Swansea University and its partners.

Members requested further clarity on the evaluation structure/framework, as well as the KPIs which would be used. Officers assured members that as soon as the evaluation structure had been written it would be brought back before the Committee.

Officers explained that people were strengths within communities, as well as services and buildings in those areas. The Committee emphasised the need for elected Members to be viewed as key community assets.

It was noted that timescales for the project were difficult to anticipate, but officers envisioned the pilot schemes taking a couple of years to establish and to ensure the project was working, before any sort of roll out would begin.

Other areas of discussion included:

- Listening to people, not telling them what they need,
- Community drivers,

- The language used in the presentation,
- Safeguarding concerns.

Notwithstanding the request for the evaluation structure and KPIs to be brought back before Committee for further scrutiny, the Committee noted the presentation and report.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 31 July, 2019, be approved.

4. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 19/20**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme 2019/20.

**CHAIRPERSON**

## **CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**(Council Chamber - Port Talbot Civic Centre)**

**Members Present:**

**2 October 2019**

**Chairperson:** Councillor M.Harvey

**Councillors:** S. ap Dafydd, S.E.Freeguard, N.T.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, L.M.Purcell, S.M.Penry, S.H.Reynolds and A.N.Woolcock

**Officers In Attendance:** S.Phillips, K.Jones, H.Jenkins, A.Evans, C.Griffiths, N.Pearce, C.Furlow-Harris, T.Davies and C.Davies

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors D.Jones, R.G.Jones, E.V.Latham, P.A.Rees and A.Wingrave

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1. **PROGRESS REPORT ON PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT CONTAINED WITHIN WALES AUDIT OFFICE - ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2017-2018**

The Committee was updated on the progress made to date, to address the proposals for improvement contained within the Wales Audit Office's Annual Improvement Report 2017-2018.

Members discussed the importance of widening the scope of scrutiny, including the public having more involvement and participation, by way of tweeting questions into meetings, for example. Public speaking was already a recognised form of public engagement in meetings of the Planning Committee.

In response, officers advised that the Democratic Services Committee had been commissioned by Council to take forward a project regarding webcasting, as well as public participation in the democratic process. Results would be fed back to all Council in 2020.

Training and development of Members was discussed. A yearly questionnaire is circulated to Members, asking for topics they would like training on. Additionally, training topics were identified through performance development reviews, officer input, committee discussions and external regulators. The topics for training were then prioritised at the Democratic Services Committee. A set of measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the training programme had also been identified.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

## 2. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following Cabinet items:

### Quarter 1 Key Performance Indicators

Members queried the increase in abandoned telephone calls in English to the contact centre, and noted that a number of strategies had recently been put in place to prevent this happening going forward. This included the employment of 6 new modern apprentices in the last 12 months, with transferrable skills across the contact centre and one stop shops.

Members sought assurances that suitable measures had been put in place to ensure flexibility, with reference to CP/101 – CS/002a (customer services – average time (seconds) to answer telephone calls in Welsh). It was noted that it had taken several attempts to recruit suitable Welsh speakers, in order to replace those lost through natural wastage. In addition there was now 50% less staff within the service than in previous years.

It was anticipated that the new voice and telephony service linked to the main council phone number would automate a percentage of call responses, and this would help to reduce the average time taken to answer calls, and also reduce the number of contact centre staff needed to route calls. Additional council services were going online, which would release employees' time to speak with callers with more complex queries.

Members were interested in receiving further information about regular queries which came into the contact centre and the one stop shops – for example, bus passes and disabled blue badges.

CP/015 (the percentage of schools that have adopted suitable programmes to address violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence) was discussed, in light of the 'red' (Red/Amber/Green – RAG) performance status. Officers from the Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (ELLL) directorate were working with schools and the youth service to put support mechanisms in place. The Director of ELLL would be engaging with LLAN (Primary Head Teacher Group) and NASH (National Association of Secondary Headteachers) in order for schools to be able to highlight where there was an issue.

Members discussed whether reference/incident numbers were given to callers in order to be able to track a query from start to finish. Officers advised Members to feed back any specific examples of callers' queries which they felt had not been followed through to an acceptable conclusion.

Members were pleased to note there had been a reduction in the number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee, when compared to the same quarter last year.

Despite trying to make online services easier for members of the public to use, the importance of face to face interaction was still important. An example of the need for face to face engagement was the number of older and disabled people unable to reapply for their bus passes online – an initiative by Transport for Wales.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### Corporate Plan 2018-22 Annual Report

Members queried the meaning of the term 'affordable housing' and noted that this referred to the Welsh Government's definition, as detailed within a Welsh Government Technical Advice Note. There was no scope for the Council to change this definition, which would be circulated to Members by the scrutiny officer following the meeting.

The following areas were also discussed:

- Strengthening Welsh education,
- The wait for a social care package following an admission to hospital.

The Welsh Government's postcode allocation for Flying Start areas was discussed. Officers highlighted a new joint project between Neath Port Talbot and Swansea, called the Pathfinder programme, which would look at how preschool provision could be provided in a more agile and responsive way.

It was confirmed that the performance monitoring information relating to education would be presented to the Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

The take up of sport by young people in Neath Port Talbot was discussed, and Members were pleased to note that this was above the national average. The large number of free parks (including skate parks) within Neath Port Talbot was noted, as well as facilities within schools being used by the local community, outside of school hours.

The national data on support for carers would be presented to Committee as soon as it was available.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

#### Chargeable Fees for Legal Work

Members noted that the report did not refer to requests from members of the public, but rather utility companies who may need to close or divert a public footpath for a period of time, in order to progress important works. The current policy and processes for special event notices would not be altered.

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

### 3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for 2019/20.

**CHAIRPERSON**

**Cabinet Scrutiny Committee  
Forward Work Programme 2019/20**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Officer</b>
29 May 2019		
19 June 2019		
10 July 2019	Public Service Board – Annual Report	Karen Jones
31 July 2019		
25 September 2019	Public Services Board – updates on Wellbeing Objective 2 (To build Safe and Resilient Communities)	Public Services Board

2 October 2019	Periodic report on the progress of work against the Wales Audit Proposals for Improvement	Karen Jones/ Caryn Furlow
30 October 2019		
20 November 2019	(Joint Meeting of Cabinet/Education Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committees to scrutinise the Margam park/Pontardawe Arts Centre Proposals, immediately before Cabinet Scrutiny)	
4 December 2019		

8 January 2020	Cancelled	
5 February 2020	Public Services Board – updates on Wellbeing Objective 4 (To support wellbeing through work and in the workplace).	Public Services Board
	To view the impacts of the decisions on the Valleys Action Plan (Included in Cabinet Board Report)	Karen Jones/ Fiona Clay-Pool
12 February 2019	Customer services report (from meeting of 2 <sup>nd</sup> October)	
19 February 2020		
1 April 2020		

29 April 2020		
27 May 2020		

**Items to be programmed in for future meetings**

- Evaluation Structure for Wellbeing Objective 2 – Public Services Board