

## COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

**Members Present:**

**30 January, 2019**

**The Mayor:** Councillor D.Keogh

**The Deputy Mayor:** Councillor S.Jones

**Councillors:** A.R.Aubrey, S.Bamsey, D.Cawsey, C.Clement-Williams, S. ap Dafydd, A.P.H.Davies, O.S.Davies, C.Edwards, J.Evans, S.E.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy, W.F.Griffiths, J.Hale, S.Harris, M.Harvey, N.T.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, C.James, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, H.Jones, J.Jones, L.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, A.McGrath, J.Miller, S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, D.M.Peters, L.M.Purcell, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, A.L.Thomas, J.Warman, D.Whitelock, A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock

**Officers in Attendance:** S.Phillips, G.Nutt, A.Evans, A.Jarrett, K.Jones, C.Griffiths, H.Jones, C.Furlow and A.Manchipp

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### 1. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

It was with great pleasure that the Mayor announced the following recipients in the New Year's Honours:-

#### **Members of the Order of the British Empire**

Melanie Louise Davies: Sister at Morriston Hospital for services to patients with Learning Disabilities from Neath

Robert Vernon Harris: Deputy Launching Authority, Port Talbot Lifeboat Station, Royal National Lifeboat Institution for services to charity from Port Talbot.

## 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Members made declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting:-

Councillor A.Llewelyn	Re the presentation by the Chief Fire Officer as he is a Member of the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.
Councillor J.Warman	Re the presentation by the Chief Fire Officer as he is a Member of the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.
Councillor A.N.Woolcock	Re the presentation by the Chief Fire Officer as he is a Member of the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

## 3. **PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

Council welcomed Chief Fire Officer Chris Davies and Iwan Cray to the annual meeting with Council. Members were reminded of the demographic of the Fire Authority's area which covered two thirds of the landmass of Wales and was the third largest in the UK, apart from Scotland.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that a White Paper Consultation was due to close on 5 February and that the Paper had proposed that the number of Councillor representatives on the Fire Authority should be reduced from 25 to 6 ie one Cabinet Member from each constituent Authority.

Members noted that between 2006 and 2016 the Fire Authority had cut its budget by £9m (20%) and had reduced staff by 15%. The 2019/20 budget would be finalised on 4 February, with a proposed increase of 2.4%, which represented a stand still budget. Going forward, there remained 2 outstanding issues, namely the

national pay dispute and fire fighters pensions. Depending on the outcome of these issues the Fire Authority may make further approaches to the Authority.

The Fire Officer then gave Council a brief outline of the type and number of incidents attended by the Fire Authority, which included grass fires, flooding, road traffic accidents, etc.

Council noted that the use of drones by the Fire Authority had changed the way that fire fighters were mobilised, providing live links to incidents. The Fire Authority was also exploring the use of wearable IT technology which would monitor the health of its fire fighters.

The Chief Fire Officer stressed that the service was risk based and not demand led. A public opinion survey was now running and Members were encouraged to take part.

Following the presentation, Members raised the following:-

- Members asked which of the services the Fire Authority collaborated on or purchased from and were advised that it co located with both the Police and Ambulance services.
- The anticipated cost of the pension deficit was requested and Members noted that for 2019/20 there was a £1.88m burden. Welsh Government had indicated verbally that it would support it.
- Members asked that communication between the Fire Authority and the Council, in particular Local Members, was important and that Members be kept informed of any proposed changes.
- In relation to drop-in sessions run by the Fire Authority, Local Members expressed concern that none had been organised in Pontardawe. Fire Officers would meet with the relevant Members to discuss this further.
- In relation to part time fire fighters, Members asked about any delay in response times and were advised that the Employment Tribunal had ruled against this model.
- In relation to attendance at RTA's, Members asked whether insurance companies were recharged for their attendance? The Chief Fire Officer advised that this was not possible as it was a Statutory Function of the Fire Service. The Fire Authority did however recharge the ambulance service as this was not a Statutory Function on a pay as you go basis based on the salary of 3 fire fighters.

- Members asked whether the budget was wage driven and were advised that 84% of the budget related to staffing costs. Retained Fire Stations were good value as they cost the service £150k per annum and would therefore be the least likely to close.
- Members asked for an update on the RTA Taskforce referred to in previous meetings and were advised that there had been no progress, to date, but that this would be progressed going forward.
- Members suggested that, where there were incidents of arson should a Notice be erected asking for witnesses, In response the Chief Fire Officer advised that in areas where there were cases of arson there would be increase police and fire presence, however he would feed the suggestion into the Joint Arson Group for its consideration.
- In relation to the White Paper Consultation, Members asked whether the Authority had responded? In addition it was important to note that generally the public was not aware that the Fire Service received funding via the Local Authority.

The Leader of Council then summed up and advised Members that, in relation to the White Paper Consultation, he had written requesting a meeting with the Minister, as the relevant WLGA spokesperson.

As a result of comments made at previous meetings the Leader confirmed that included in the Council Tax bill would be a reference to the funding provided to the Fire Authority.

The Leader advised that while the Fire Authority aimed at a standstill budget, with a proposed 10% increase in its precept, the Council would have a further cuts.

The Leader then thanked both Mr Davies and Mr Cray for their attendance at today's meeting.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF COUNCIL**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 19 December, 2018, be confirmed as an accurate record.

5. **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2019/20**

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 as further amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019, be adopted;
  2. That the retention of the existing discretionary elements in relation to the Prescribed Scheme, be approved;
    - (a) That no increase in the backdate period for all claimants be applied from the standard 3 months contained in the Prescribed Scheme,
    - (b) That no increase in the extended reduction period for all claimants be applied from the standard 4 weeks currently contained within the Prescribed Scheme,
    - (c) Apply a 100% disregard for War Disablement Pensions, War Widows Pensions and War Widower's Pensions for all claimants.

6. **EXECUTIVE DECISIONS OF CABINET AND CABINET BOARDS 2018/19**

**RESOLVED:** That the undermentioned Minutes be noted:-

Cabinet	5 December, 2018
Cabinet	17 December, 2018
Cabinet	16 January, 2019
Education, Skills and Leisure	29 November, 2018
Streetscene and Engineering	11 January, 2019

7. **NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF PART 4 (RULES OF PROCEDURE) THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION, PROPOSED BY CLLR.D.CAWSEY AND SECONDED BY CLLR.A.THOMAS AS FOLLOWS:-**

**RESOLVED:** That Council noted:

1. Though slavery was abolished in 1833, there were more slaves today than ever before in human history. Figures from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) suggested that there were more than 40 million people in modern slavery across the world, with nearly 25 million held in forced labour;
2. There were 3,805 victims of modern slavery identified in the UK in 2016. A rising number but still well below the 10-13,000 potential victims estimated by the Home Office;
3. Modern slavery was happening nationwide. Traffickers and slave masters used whatever means they had at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. This could include sexual and criminal exploitation;
4. The Welsh Government had been at the forefront of ensuring the £6bn spent in the public sector in Wales did not support illegal and unfair employment practices including Modern Slavery, through its Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Code of Practice;

This Council believed:

5. That actions needed to be taken to raise awareness of modern slavery and the fact that it was happening all over the UK including Wales;
6. Those Councils had an important role to play in ensuring their contracts and supplies did not contribute to modern day slavery and exploitation;

This Council agreed:

7. To support the Welsh Government's Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Code of Practice and insert provisions where appropriate in contracts ensuring our potential suppliers fulfil commitments contained within the Code;
8. To create a Modern Slavery Statement that set out how the Council would seek to tackle Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. A report would be put to Cabinet and Cabinet Scrutiny Committee setting out the content of this statement and proposals for implementation for Members' consideration and approval;
9. To receive a public report annually on the work being done by the Council to tackle modern day slavery and on the implementation of the Welsh Government's Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Code of Practice

**CHAIRPERSON**

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