

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

24 March 2021

The Mayor: Councillor J. Warman

The Deputy Mayor: Councillor J.D.Morgan

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, S.Bamsey, D.Cawsey, H.C.Clarke, C.Clement-Williams, M.Crowley, A.P.H.Davies, N.J.E.Davies, O.S.Davies, C.Edwards, J.Evans, S.E.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy, W.F.Griffiths, J.Hale, M.Harvey, N.T.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, C.James, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, J.Jones, L.Jones, D.Keogh, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, J.Miller, S.Miller, S.Jones, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, D.M.Peters, M.Protheroe, L.M.Purcell, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards, P.D.Richards, M.Spooner, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, D.Whitelock, C.Williams, A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock

Officers in Attendance: K.Jones, A.Evans, A.Jarrett, H.Jenkins, N.Pearce, S.Rees, C.Griffiths, M.Shaw, S.Curran and J. Woodman-Ralph

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

It was with great sadness that the Mayor advised Council of the death of former Councillor Malcolm Isaac Jones, who represented Tonmawr Ward and was Mayor of the County Borough from 1998 to 1999. He was also a County Councillor for the previous West Glamorgan County Council prior to reorganisation.

The Mayor also reminded Council that yesterday was the National Day of Reflection and asked Members to remember the many lives that had been lost to the Covid 19 pandemic. Council's thoughts were with friends and families of those who had lost their lives.

As a mark of respect Members observed a minute's silence.

Council also wished Councillor Rhydian Mizen a speedy recovery from his recent period of ill health.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The Chief Executive explained that the Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and Officers present at the meeting today, had personal and financial declarations of interest in relation to the Pay Policy Statement 2021/2022 and would all have to leave the meeting for this item. The Chief Executive added that the Head of Human Resources (with his consent) would remain to answer any questions from Members that might arise concerning the report. Also, the Democratic Services Officer would also remain in the meeting.

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

Councillor N.T Hunt Re: Pay Policy Statement 2021/2022 as
 he has trading premises within Port Talbot
 Town Centre.

3. **Pay Policy Statement 2021/2022**

Councillor Doreen Jones, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Equalities introduced the report and recommended it to Council for approval for publication on the Council's website.

Members queried why the Council only paid 47% of its gross expenditure on salaries where other Councils, as advised in the Local Government Association, Guidance for Councillors that Councils can spend in excess of 50% of the gross revenue expenditure. Officers explained that this would be raised with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, but that the rates of pay are paid in line with the nationally agreed set of pay scales. Councils do agree terms and conditions on an individual basis with trade unions. This Council reduced its terms and conditions in 2018 as an alternative to redundancies which was negotiated with trade union colleagues. The size of the workforce would also impact on the expenditure that each Council has in regard to salaries.

It was highlighted that some other Councils offer discount schemes to employees. Does this Council have any similar schemes? Officers explained that there are a variety of schemes available to staff. The Health and Wellbeing Group was established to offer employees the opportunity to join the group to access a variety of benefits one of which was discounts at high street stores. Employee also are able to access Celtic Leisure at discounted prices. The Council also has a Cycle to Work initiative which allows staff to access cycles and equipment and pay for it via a salary sacrifice scheme. The remuneration package offered to employees was based on the recommendation based on the national pay bargaining which is set for the Council at a national level.

Members were pleased to see that the gap between the lowest and highest pay was reducing taking into account responsibilities of roles. Members asked that in future consideration could be given on a national level to award pay rises via monetary value rather than percentage which would be of advantage to the lower paid.

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/2022 be published on the Council's website.

4. **Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee 2019/2020**

Councillor D. Morgan, Chair of Democratic Services introduced the report and recommended it to Council for approval.

Confirmation was received that the implementation of the recommendations from the Disability Audit Group, ratified by Council, was paused due to the Covid 19 pandemic but as soon as possible it would be progressed by the Democratic Services Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2019/2020 be approved.

5. **Urgent Items**

The Leader advised Members that this was the last meeting of Council that Mr. A.Evans, Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning, would attend due to his impending retirement. The Leader and Members paid tribute to the work undertaken and commitment Mr. Evans has made to the lives of the young people and children of Neath Port Talbot while he was Director and wished him a long and happy retirement. Mr Evans, responded, thanking Members, colleges and staff for all the support he had received while in Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

CHAIRPERSON