

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

**(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot and
Microsoft Teams)**

Members Present:

28 July 2022

Chairperson: **Councillor P.Rogers**

Councillors: C.Clement-Williams, J.Henton, R.G.Jones,
C.Lewis, S.Paddison, C.Phillips, R.Phillips,
S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards and M.Spooner

**Officers In
Attendance** K.Jones, A.Thomas, N.Pearce, C.Griffiths,
H.Jones and J.Woodman-Ralph and A.Thomas

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors S.Hunt, A.Llewelyn, S.Knoyle,
N.Jenkins, M.Peters, J.Hurley, S.Harris, J.Hale,
W.Griffiths and S.Jones

1. Chairs Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interests

The following declarations of interest were received:

Cllr M Spooner Item 10. Personal – Chair of Rhos Primary School
Governing Body. Cllr Spooner has dispensation to
speak and vote on this item.

Cllr S Reynolds Item 7 – Personal.
Item 16 – Personal.

Cllr S Jones Item 7 and 10 – Personal, Prejudicial – remunerated
Director of two of the childcare settings. Cllr Jones
will leave the room when the items are discussed.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2022 were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. **Pre-decision Scrutiny**

Flying Start Expansion - Phase 1

Cllr Scott Jones reaffirmed his interest and left the room for this item.

Members were presented with information relating to Flying Start Phase One Expansion, as detailed in the report circulated.

Officers advised that the expansion of Flying Start would go into three areas. The areas were chosen based on robust data provided by Welsh Government and also Neath Port Talbot's own vulnerability and deprivation data. The expansion is very small and is extended to an additional 127 children. With 32 of those children falling within the outreach programme.

Members queried what discussions and work had begun on considering and planning the rollout of the scheme expansion, in particular with Welsh Government. Members recognised the large amount of work that would need to be undertaken to promote the expansion.

Officers confirmed that they are in discussions with Welsh Government who have indicated that further information is planned to be released over the summer, before phase 1 begins. Planning for phase 2 is underway in the best way it can be, until further information is realised from Welsh Government.

Members asked officers to consider attaching an appropriate glossary to future reports, where technical abbreviations are used.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

Cllr Jones returned to the room.

Insourcing of Leisure Services

Members were presented with information relating to the insourcing of leisure services, as detailed within the report circulated.

The report provides a detailed timescale and the various steps required for the insourcing of the service and the Project Board that has been set up to undertake this task.

Officers confirmed that a series of meetings has already taken place with Heads of Services colleagues from other directorates and colleagues from Celtic Leisure to allow for information to be shared between the two organisations.

Members queried if officers were working together with other directorates to explore a holistic approach to ensuring sustainability of the service. For example, links with mental health services and also social prescribing with the health service.

It was confirmed that currently NPTCBC officers are responsible for the National Exercise Referral Scheme. Officers work closely with the Health Board and Public Health Wales. The Council have drawn down an additional £100,000/year to be able to deliver on behalf of the Health Board. Officers confirmed that when the transfer of Celtic Leisure is complete it will become part of the new Leisure Services. Officers will be working with the newly formed leisure services to ensure that links are formed to deliver services.

Officers confirmed that a business plan would be placed before members in the autumn which will detail the links to be formed.

Members queried under 5.11 what would be lost and deprioritised under the increase in workload. Members expressed their concerns and queried what action has been undertaken to ensure that there is no damage to services in the current year.

Officers advised that there is an external consultant working with the Council throughout the transfer process. A consultancy will be appointed to assist with the preparation of the forthcoming business plan. Officers also confirmed that as the process of transfer has just started, no specific burdens have come been identified. It is understood that IT and HR are likely to accumulate the largest amounts of work as part of the transfer. Regular contact will be maintained with the appropriate officers to ensure that any increases

in workload are identified and appropriate measures can be considered.

Officers outlined that a communication strategy has been put in place which will be presented to members for information in September. The Chief Executive of Celtic Leisure will be updating employees monthly with updated information. The unions are also aware of this. The communication will be led by NPTCBC.

Members noted the financial support that has been given to Celtic Leisure and queried what continued support would be provided to Celtic Leisure until the transfer has been completed. Officers outlined the current Indemnity Agreement to indemnify Celtic Leisure against any losses over the management agreement which is £1.5million. It was confirmed that currently Celtic Leisure trade at around £2.5millions. Celtic Leisure have benefitted from the Welsh Government loss of income COVID fund and have a management agreement of £1.5million in place. It is estimated that this financial year NPTCBC will need to indemnify Celtic Leisure £600,000.

Members expressed their concern at the £3.1million funding gap identified in the report.

Members noted that trends within health and fitness will frequently change and that it is important to keep up to date with the trend to ensure that facilities remain attractive to its clients. Officers confirmed that the business plan will contain ideas which identify the most commercially driven investment opportunities that will drive the income generation as much as possible.

Members queried if there would be opportunities for voluntary redundancies. Officers confirmed that if there were redundancies then legally voluntary redundancies would need to be offered first.

Following discussion, the following amendment to recommendation 2 contained within the circulated report was proposed and seconded: "That the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning in consultation with the Leader and the *relevant Cabinet Member* be granted delegated authority to make initial decisions required to present a full business case to Cabinet/Cabinet Board in October/November 2022 to achieve the delivery of the insourcing of leisure services by the 1st April 2023 (providing that such delegation shall not be utilised where there is a proposed change in service delivery and or significant cost to service delivery).

Following discussion the committee were in support of the amendment to be considered by cabinet.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet, with the amendment included.

Additional Capital Programme Allocations

Members were presented with information relating to additional capital programme allocations, as detailed within the report circulated.

Members queried what sort of investments are being considered and whether there is any further information on the level and type of investments being considered. Officers confirmed that this level of detail would come back to cabinet boards in the autumn.

Officers confirmed that that £1.5million referred to within the report is part of the Capital Programme base budget that was approved by Council. The £3.5million is a one off specific capital grant which doesn't form part of the base capital budget so doesn't require consideration by Council. Officers can make recommendations for Cabinet Boards to consider in relation to this funding.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

Childcare in Schools and Education Buildings: Temporary Changes to Current Rent Arrangements

Cllr Scott Jones reaffirmed his interest and left the room for this item.

Members were presented with information relating to temporary changes to current rent arrangements as detailed within the report circulated.

Members acknowledged that the report outlined the temporary changes however did not outline the current arrangements that are in place. Further, members queried if a survey had been conducted across the borough to confirm what childcare arrangements were

required or if the scheme was particularly weighted towards Welsh medium schools.

Officers confirmed that there's a plethora of arrangements currently in place across schools, and a detailed breakdown has not yet been able to be obtained by officers.

A childcare sufficiency audit has recently been completed, which is currently out for consultation. The consultation has identified a significant gap in Welsh language provision and also after school clubs.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

Cllr Scott Jones returned to the room.

Housing Renewal and Adaptation Service (HRAS) - Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy

Members were presented with information relating to the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy as detailed within the report circulated.

Officers advised that the changes will have a big financial impact in that the current funding will be exhausted sooner, as the means testing of some grants will be removed.

Members queried if officers were working with Tai Tarian to ensure that any items that were placed in properties as part of the scheme are being recycled. Officers confirmed that the scheme mostly operates within the private sector, however where Tai Tarian do have items in place, they try to ensure that suitable persons are placed in their properties.

Officers outlined the consequences of the new policy, including the likely increase in applications for funding, the increase in time to deliver funded items and possible delays in discharge from hospitals due to waiting for suitable equipment.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Officers provided members with a brief presentation, outlining what the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is. It is a capital and revenue fund based on local allocations. The fund is based around three priority areas – communities and place, supporting local business and people and skills.

Officers provided information relating to the identified areas within the priorities and also a projected timeline with regards to the application process.

Officers confirmed that the fund is not yet opened for projects. The document to be submitted by 1st August, is a high level strategy document.

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

Castle Drive Culvert Reconstruction

There were no questions.

Members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

5. **Forward Work Programme 2022/23**

To note for information.

6. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

7. **Access to Meetings**

To resolve to exclude the public for the following item/s of business pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001

No.2290 and the undermentioned exempt Paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

8. **Pre-Decision Scrutiny of Private Item/s**

Panteg./Cyfyng Road, Landslip

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet.

Provision of a Welcome Centre

Following scrutiny, members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by cabinet.

CHAIRPERSON