

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

13 July 2022

The Mayor: Councillor Robert William Wood

The Deputy Mayor: Councillor Chris Williams

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, T.Bowen, W.Carpenter, H.C.Clarke, C.Clement-Williams, M.Crowley, A.Dacey, H.Davies, H.Davies, O.S.Davies, R.Davies, C.Galsworthy, N.Goldup-John, W.F.Griffiths, S.Grimshaw, J.Hale, S.Harris, M.Harvey, J.Henton, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, C.James, C.James, N.Jenkins, J.Jones, L.Jones, S.Jones, D.Keogh, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham, C.Lewis, D.Lewis, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, R.Mizen, K.Morris, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, D.M.Peters, C.Phillips, R.Phillips, S.Pursey, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards, P.D.Richards, P.Rogers, M.Spooner, D.Thomas, S.Thomas, D.Whitelock, C.Williams, L.Williams and R.W.Wood.

Officers in Attendance: K.Jones, N.Pearce, A.D.Thomas, A.Jarrett, C.Griffiths, M.Shaw, S.Curran, C.John and J.Woodman-Ralph.

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

It was with great sadness that the Mayor highlighted the recent death of former Councillor Stephen Williams who represented the Cimla Ward between 2002 and 2008. As a mark of respect Council observed a minutes silence.

Following on, the Mayor extended his congratulations to Dr Keith Reid, who received an M.B.E for services to the NHS during the Covid pandemic in the recent honours for the Queens Birthday.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

3. **Statement by Leader of Council**

Councillor S.K.Hunt, Leader of Council addressed Council:

“I would like to set out for Council this afternoon, details of how the Rainbow Coalition – Clymblaid yr Enfys – intends to work and our early areas of focus.

In terms of our initial programme, the Coalition has achieved a clear consensus on the things we intend to focus upon and how we want to work together.

As we begin our term of office we want to be clear that we intend to build on the strengths of this Council. We have a first class workforce. On behalf of the Rainbow Coalition I want to affirm our commitment to further developing the social partnership with the Council’s recognised trade unions. The Council’s workforce were extraordinary at the height of the pandemic and we are very conscious of the hard work being done across all services as we move from the pandemic into recovery. We will be giving the Chief Executive and her team our full support as we work through the transition that is taking place and will be giving early consideration to a Future of Work Strategy this autumn to ensure the Council is able to recruit and retain a happy and high quality workforce.

We will also be prioritising continuous engagement with our communities. As well as acting on what we heard on the doorstep during the election campaign, we will be further developing the Let’s Talk initiative developed through the cross party recovery work done last year. Hearing from residents and taking the time to clearly explain what we are doing, or not doing, will be at the centre of our work. We will be taking immediate steps to enhance the way the Council connects with its communities.

We will also be making a renewed commitment to working in partnership with others and look forward to meeting with partners from the community, voluntary, private and public sectors to discuss and agree where we have a shared agenda.

Mr Mayor, I hope that gives a flavour of the principles that will guide the way the Coalition will be working to deliver our very best for the people we represent.

This brings me to our early areas of focus.

I want to start by acknowledging the importance of our education and social services. Giving all children the best start in life whilst also safeguarding and supporting children and vulnerable adults are fundamental to the Council's work. We are confident that we have excellent leaders across our schools and services but we are also clear that the pandemic has left considerable challenges. We will make sure these services benefit from strong political leadership and support.

Whilst maintaining our commitment to the big statutory services, we intend to give greater priority to our visible services. These are services that have seen big cut backs because of the [] Westminster government austerity policies. But our residents may not be aware of all the reasons behind the reductions in service – they place that responsibility firmly at the Council's door. We will be making early provision in the Council's revenue and capital budgets to enhance our public realm and also initiating a series of policy and service reviews to strengthen the visible services in response to what our residents have told us matters to them.

We are also looking forward to making appointments to the Head of Housing and Communities post and the Head of Leisure, Tourism, Culture and Heritage post- these appointments, together with the new cabinet portfolios, will enable us to set a clear route map for the remainder of this term and beyond, whilst also completing the transfer of indoor leisure services back into the Council's direct control successfully. We will also be accelerating progress towards achieving the net zero carbon targets and completing a remodelling of the economic development function so we are better placed to secure the exciting private sector interest in the county borough, supporting social enterprises, strengthening our local economy in a sustainable way and also playing a strong role in regional arrangements.

As a council we are now recruiting for many posts in several departments. This gives an opportunity for local people to begin a career in local government and be part of the teams that are delivering our important services.

Mr Mayor, the Rainbow Coalition we have established has a shared view of where we need to focus our attention and how we will work together to improve life for all our residents. Serving our communities is the one thing that unites us all in this room - elected representatives and council staff alike. I know, from having worked with many of you over the past fourteen years that however much we may disagree at times, we are all here to do the best we can for the residents of NPTCBC, to deliver the quality services they want, they need, and they rightly expect.

I will finish Mr Mayor by saying that I am honoured, humbled and proud to lead Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. I look forward to the next five years, to working together across the council as members and officers and - by looking forwards not back - to delivering for our towns, delivering for our villages and, ultimately, delivering for our residents."

4. **Public Question Time**

No questions were received.

5. **NPTCBC Standards Committee - Appointment of Independent Member**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services give Members of Council an overview of the circulated report to advertise vacancies for independent members to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Standards Committee.

It was highlighted that a report would be brought back to Council confirming the successful applicants.

RESOLVED:

1. That two replacement independent members be recruited to serve on the Neath Port Talbot Standards Committee.
2. That an advisory panel of one lay panel member (Mrs Gaynor Richards), a member of the independent group who is also a town and community councillor (nominated by the Leader of Council), the Mayor and two Independent Members of the Standards Committee be convened to conduct any interview, with recommendations being brought back to Council.

3. That the suite of documents that are issued to any applicants who wish to apply for these two vacancies be approved.

6. **Changes to Political Proportionality and Committee Membership**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the Changes to Political Proportionality and Committee Membership as detailed in the circulated report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the proportional allocation of seats to the political groups as contained in Appendix 1 to the circulated report be approved.
2. That the changes to the membership of committees as detailed in paragraph 3 of the report be approved.
3. That the main and substitute town/community Councillor to the Standards Committee as detailed in the circulated report at paragraph 4 be approved.
4. That the Member Champions as detailed at paragraph 5 of the circulated report be approved.

7. **Notice of Motion under Section 10 of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) the Council's Constitution**

No Notice of Motions were received.

8. **Questions from Members, with Notice, under Rule 9.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules**

No Questions were received.

9. **Urgent Items**

No Urgent Items were received.

CHAIRPERSON