

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

26TH APRIL 2023

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – MR C GRIFFITHS

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected – All Wards

Shadow Cabinet Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to members to endorse the terms of reference for the creation of a Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meeting and to agree an amendment to the Schedule of Remuneration for Elected Members to allow the attendance at a Liaison Meeting to be classified as an approved duty for the claiming of travelling expenses.

Background

2. On the 27th October 2022, the Chief Executive received notification from the Welsh Labour group that they had a formed a shadow cabinet to match the cabinet portfolios that had been adopted by the Rainbow Coalition (the members of which being included at Appendix 1)
3. On the 21st November 2022, the Chief Executive received a request from the Welsh Labour group that provision be made for formal recognition of the Shadow Cabinet, with a request that shadow cabinet members have access to officers to receive information once policies have been announced or issues arising from current policies in existence, and any national changes to policy and how it will affect the County Borough

4. Accordingly, it would be proposed a Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meeting be convened pursuant to the terms of reference included at Appendix 2 of this report.
5. As this will be classed as an official meeting, it would be proposed that an amendment to the Schedule of Remuneration for Elected Members be made to allow the attendance at a Liaison Meeting to be classified as an approved duty for the claiming of travelling expenses.

Financial Impact

6. Any additional financial expenses incurred as a result of the amendment to the Schedule of Remuneration will be met from existing budgets.

Integrated Impact Assessment

7. There is no requirement for an integrated impact assessment in respect of this item as this report relates to governance related matters only.

Valleys Communities Impacts

8. There are no impacts in respect of this item.

Workforce impacts

9. There are no workforce impacts in respect of this item.

Legal Impacts

10. There are no legal impacts in respect of this item.

Risk Management

11. There are no risk management issues in respect of this item.

Consultation

12. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that members:
- (a) Endorse the terms of reference of the Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meeting as set out Appendix 2
 - (b) That attendance at Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meetings be identified as an approved duty pursuant to the Schedule of Remuneration for Elected Members and that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to update the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot Council to reflect this amendment.

Reason for Proposed Decision

14. To enable Full Council to endorse the terms of reference for the creation of a Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meeting and to agree an amendment to the Schedule of Remuneration for Elected Members to allow the attendance at a Liaison Meeting to be classified as an approved duty for the claiming of travelling expenses.

Implementation of Decision

15. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendix

16. Appendix A – Shadow Cabinet proposed by Opposition Group
Appendix B – Terms of Reference for Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meeting

Background Papers

17. None

Officer Contact

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Appendix 1

Proposed Shadow Cabinet – Neath Port Talbot Labour Group

Leader, Community and Strategic Leadership and Housing and Community Safety	Cllr Rob Jones	
Deputy Leader and Education, Skills and Training	Cllr Sonia Reynolds	
Finance, Performance and Social Justice	Cllr Carol Clement Williams	
Economic and Community Regeneration	Cllr Sharon Freeguard	
Climate Change and Wellbeing	Cllr Cathy James	
Children and Family Services	Cllr Angharad Aubrey	
Adult Social Services and Health	Cllr Peter Richards	
Strategic Planning, Transport and Connectivity	Cllr Suzanne Paddison	

Streetscene

Cllr Mike Harvey



Appendix 2

Terms of Reference

- (a) That six weekly Liaison Meetings with members of the opposition group's spokespersons ("the Shadow Cabinet") be scheduled into the Council diary for the purpose of briefing the Shadow Cabinet on matters within the Council's Forward Work Programme.
- (b) Meetings will take place in a hybrid manner unless otherwise agreed by the Chief Executive and Leader of the opposition group
- (c) The Leader of the opposition group will identify the members of the Shadow Cabinet to the Chief Executive and only those members may attend meetings. The number of the Shadow Cabinet, including the Leader and Deputy Leader of the opposition group is not to exceed the number of members on the council's executive. No substitutions will be allowed.
- (c) An agenda for each meeting will be drawn up by the Chief Executive or her nominated representative, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leader of the opposition.
- (d) The meetings will not function as another scrutiny committee and shall have no decision-making functions.
- (e) The agenda will include topical items on which the Cabinet/Cabinet Boards are to receive/ or have received reports. The Chief Executive, Directors or Heads of Service on certain occasions would present factual reports and be able to provide background information. (Clearly officers would not be in a position to explain why the Cabinet had taken a particular course of action, as this would quite properly be a matter for the Leader or other Cabinet member.)
- (e) A brief note of the matters discussed at the Liaison Meetings will be maintained by an officer nominated by the Chief Executive and be available for inspection by other members.
- (f) These arrangements will replace all other official briefings between the Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service and all other senior officers in regard to the provision of information to the Shadow Cabinet

save for any meetings which are able to take place as referenced in the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

- (g) Attendance at the Liaison Meetings will be considered to be an approved duty for the payment of expenses.
- (h) The Chief Executive will draw up guidelines for officers in respect of the operation of these arrangements.
- (i) These terms of reference shall be reviewed on a six monthly basis by the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and Leader of the opposition group