

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

26 April 2023

The Mayor: Councillor R.Wood

The Deputy Mayor: Councillor C.Williams

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

Officers in Attendance: S.Curran, V.Dale, C.Furlow-Harris, C.Griffiths, A.Jarrett, K.Jones, N.Pearce, S.Rees, M.Shaw, A.Thomas, Thomas and J.Woodman-Ralph

Representative of the Wales Audit Office G.Gillett

Representatives of the Translation Service: N.Hurford

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

It was with great sadness that the Mayor informed Council of the death of ex Councillor Jane Jones and Mr Clive Howells, the former Chief Executive of Lliw Valley Borough Council.

Council stood to observe a minute's silence.

Sincere congratulations were offered to the local young people who were appointed as cadets to the Lord Lieutenancy, namely:

Leading Cadet Jessica Flynn, Swansea Sea Cadets

Cadet Sergeant Maddison Chaplin, Gwent and Powys Army Cadets and lives in Seven Sisters

Corporal Mackenzie Bryan, Dyfed and Glamorgan Army Cadets, lives in Cimla, goes to St Joseph's School

Cadet Flight Sergeant Ioan Osborne, 360 (Llwchwr) Squadron

The Mayor also offered congratulations to Father Paul Bigmore who has been awarded the Freedom of the City of London.

2. **Leader's Announcements**

The Leader of Council was pleased to inform members that Neath Port Talbot Council is the first Local Authority in the South Wales police force area to sign up to an employer supported policing scheme. Members heard how employees will get paid time off if they become special constables or police support volunteers, which will assist with boosting police numbers to make communities safer. The Leader made reference to Council employee Wayne Curtis, who trained to become a Special Constable last year.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting/s of Council**

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

5. **Public Question Time.**

No public questions were received,

6. **Audit Wales - Annual Audit Summary 2022 and Presentation**

Members received a remote presentation from Gillian Gillet (Financial Audit Manager, Audit Wales) on the Annual Audit Summary 2022.

RESOLVED: That Council note the content of the Annual Audit Summary 2022.

7. **2023-2024 Strategic Change Programme Working in Partnership for Our People, Our Places and Our Planet. (Contained within the Corporate Plan 2022-2027)**

Members were presented with an updated Strategic Change Programme, as contained within the Corporate Plan for the period 2023-2024. Members were reminded that an updated version had been circulated by supplement, taking into account changes requested by the recent Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

Officers were thanked for the updated version, taking into account the changes requested at Cabinet Scrutiny and was pleased to see the updated actions on Active Travel.

He reiterated concerns raised in Cabinet Scrutiny, particularly that Active Travel is currently contained in Strategic Objective 2 alongside leisure and culture items and not led in the corporate plan by a responsible director and in order to give it appropriate status it was felt Active Travel needs to be included in specific transport related objectives and led by the appropriate officer.

It was also mentioned that there are no specific performance measures attached to Active Travel, but members were pleased with the commitment to do so and with the commitment from the Chief Executive to review the structure of the plan going forward.

RESOLVED:

i) That Council adopt the updated Strategic Change Programme section of the Corporate Plan for the period 2023-2024.

ii) The Head of People & Organisational Development be given delegated authority in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive to make any further changes that are necessary prior to final publication and which do not materially change the content of the Programme.

9. **Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan**

The Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board's Wellbeing Plan 2023-2028 was presented to Council for approval.

RESOLVED: That having had regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment provided, the Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-2028 be approved.

10. **Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028**

Members were presented with the Public Participation Strategy for 2023-2028, and reminded that an updated version was sent by a supplement.

RESOLVED: That having had due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment, Council adopts the Public Participation Strategy for the period 2023-2028.

11. **Standards Committee Annual Report**

The Chair of the Standards Committee, Mrs Louise Fleet presented Council with the Standards Committee Annual Report.

Members were reminded that there is now a legal requirement for Standards Committees to make an annual report to the full Council on the standards regime within Neath Port Talbot.

The requirement to make an annual report is intended to ensure there is a regular and consistent approach to the reporting and consideration of standards of conduct by elected members and to promote local ownership and collective responsibility by all 60 members for ensuring high standards of conduct within the authority.

The Chair was pleased to note that all 60 members elected in May 2022 have completed the Code of Conduct training provided by the Monitoring Officer following the May 2022 elections.

In particular, members were informed that the Standards Committee have welcomed the new powers conferred regarding group leaders taking steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of their members. The duty recognises those in positions of leadership and influence within a principal council should have responsibility for combating bullying and harassment amongst elected members and council staff, and must act as a positive role model. The Standards Committee has met with the group leaders to discuss how this

important function can be discharged and more information on this is to be found in the annual report.

Members were asked to take particular note of the future priorities that the Standards Committee will focus on in 2023 and 2024 as well as recommendations that members and group leaders are encouraged to take on board.

Members were urged to remain mindful of the fundamental importance of high standards of conduct in order for members of the public to maintain their trust and confidence in local democracy.

RESOLVED: That members note the Standards Committee Annual Report 2022-2023 and the recommendations included therein.

12. **Shadow Cabinet**

Members were presented with the terms of reference for the creation of a Shadow Cabinet, to match the Cabinet portfolios adopted by the Rainbow Coalition as contained within the circulated report.

Members asked if other Local Authorities in Wales had Shadow Cabinets, and were informed that several do including Camarthenshire, and it is their Terms of Reference which have been used as a guide.

Members were assured that there is no additional remuneration involved other than travel expenses, although it is intended that the meetings are virtual only, taking place mainly via Microsoft Teams.

The Chief Executive clarified the intention that draft agendas for the next cycle of committee meetings would form the basis of the Shadow Cabinet meetings whereby they would be briefed on the upcoming business. It is not intended that any reports be brought to the meetings, and they will be diarised to follow on from the Cabinet briefings and minuted.

RESOLVED: That members:
a) Endorse the terms of reference of the Shadow Cabinet Liaison Meeting as set out Appendix 2 of the circulated report.

- 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.

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

No notices of motion were received.

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

No questions were received.

15. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

CHAIRPERSON