



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 17TH JULY 2018 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor M. Adams - Mayor

Councillors:

Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C. Andrews, A. Angel, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, C. Bezzina, L. Binding, A. Collis, S. Cook, D. Cushing, C. Cuss, W. David, D.T. Davies, M. Davies, K. Dawson, K. Etheridge, M. Evans, A. Farina-Childs, Miss E. Forehead, Ms J. Gale, N. George, C. Gordon, R.W. Gough, L. Harding, D. Havard, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, Mrs B.A. Jones, S. Kent, Mrs A. Leonard, Ms P. Leonard, C.P. Mann, Mrs P. Marsden, B. Miles, S. Morgan, T. Parry, Mrs L. Phipps, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Ridgewell, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Scriven, G. Simmonds, S. Skivens, Mrs E. Stenner, J. Taylor, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, L.G. Whittle, T.J. Williams, W. Williams, B. Zaplatynski

Together with:

C. Harrhy (Interim Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director - Education and Corporate Services), M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities), R. Kyte (Head of Regeneration and Planning), N. Scammell (Head of Corporate Finance and Section 151 Officer), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer), J. Carpenter (Council Tax & NNDR Manager), D. Lucas (Team Leader Strategic and Development Planning), K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), D. Marr (Deputy Monitoring Officer - Cardiff Council), L. Lane (Interim Monitoring Officer), C. Forbes-Thompson (Interim Head of Democratic Services) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

1. **WEB-CASTING FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Interim Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be made publicly available in live and archive form via the Council's website. She advised that decisions would be made by a show of hands for agenda items 5-9 and by way of the electronic voting system for items 10-11.

2. **WELCOME – NEW APPOINTMENTS**

The Interim Chief Executive referred to the recent appointment of Richard (Ed) Edmunds as Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services, and Robert Tranter as Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer, and welcomed them to their first meeting of Council.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N. Dix, C. Elsbury, Mrs C. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, A. Gair, D.T. Hardacre, D. Harse, A. Higgs, M.P. James, V. James, G. Johnston, G. Kirby, Mrs G.D. Oliver, B. Owen, Mrs D. Price and J. Simmonds (Deputy Mayor).

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the many events and visits and the Deputy Mayor have undertaken since the last meeting, including a number of concerts and the Armed Forces Day 2018 commemorations. Members were invited to let the Mayor know of any forthcoming events that may be of interest, and he expressed his pleasure at meeting local residents and carrying out his mayoral duties on behalf of the Authority.

5. PETITION

The Mayor received a petition presented by Councillor K. Etheridge, on behalf of local residents of Blackwood, which requested that enforcement action be taken in respect of unauthorised parking in the area. The Mayor advised that enforcement action is currently within the remit of Gwent Police and indicated that it would be referred to the appropriate section of the force for action.

6. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Commonwealth Games Athletes

Members were informed of the successes of several athletes from across the county borough who represented Wales at the recent 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia. Hollie Arnold from Ystrad Mynach won the gold medal in the F46 javelin event, Lauren Price from Bargoed won the gold medal in the women's 75KG boxing final, and Peter Creed from Caerphilly competed in the first round of the men's squash event. Marc Wyatt from Caerphilly took the gold medal at the Games with his bowls pair partner Daniel Salmon, and Kyran Jones from Pengam competed in the boxing event.

All the participating athletes were congratulated on their inspirational achievements. Marc Wyatt and Kyran Jones, who were in attendance on behalf of their teammates, came forward in order for their success to be recognised by Council.

Fochriw Primary School

Members were informed of several recent awards achieved by Fochriw Primary School. Mrs Sharon Pascoe (Headteacher) was recently awarded 'Teacher of the Year' at the Primary Science Teacher Trust Awards, which recognises her innovation and creativity in teaching science, her contribution to developing science in the school and beyond, and the support she offers to colleagues across the borough in this regard.

Additionally, in 2017 Fochriw Primary was the first school in Wales to receive the Primary Science Quality Gold Mark for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths curriculum and were recently Regional Welsh Government Enterprise Troopers winners and national finalists for the school's entrepreneurial work, 'The Worry Dolls of Fochriw Primary School.' As well as receiving these many awards Fochriw Primary have also produced a book "The Boy Who Rode a Sheep to School".

Mrs Pascoe, together with a selection of governors and pupils from Fochriw Primary School came forward to be congratulated by Members on their achievements, and for their commitment and dedication to be recognised by Council.

Caerphilly Youth Service – Youth Work Excellence Awards 2018

Members were informed that two projects within the Caerphilly Youth Service were recently shortlisted for Welsh Government's Youth Work Excellence Awards 2018. The Youth Service's Basement project were runners-up for the Promoting Equality and Diversity Award for their work with the Authority's Young People's LGBTQ+ group. Meanwhile, the Youth Service's Targeted Outreach Team won the Making A Difference award for their work with young people, which is of particular note as the winner is decided by a specially constituted group of young judges from across the country.

Representatives from the Caerphilly Youth Service came forward to receive the award and were congratulated by Members on their achievement.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In referring to Agenda Item No. 10 (To Reaffirm Council Tax Determinations to Disapply Discount in Respect of Unoccupied Dwellings), the Interim Monitoring Officer advised that any Member with a current interest in an unoccupied and furnished/unfurnished property may wish to declare a personal and prejudicial interest and leave the meeting during consideration of the item.

Councillors Mrs E. Stenner and Mrs T. Parry declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 10 on this basis. Details are minuted with the respective item.

8. ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL – 10TH MAY 2018

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Annual Meeting of Council held on 10th May 2018 (minute nos. 1-22).

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

9. NOTICE OF MOTION – THE POTENTIAL OF HYDROGEN IN THE DECARBONISATION OF TRANSPORT IN WALES

Consideration was given to the report, which detailed the following Notice of Motion received from Councillor P.J. Bevan and supported by Councillor C.P. Mann. In accordance with Rule 11 (3) of the Constitution, the Mayor had agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with at Council, without being first discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee.

Councillor Bevan requested in his Notice of Motion that:-

- (i) Council note the report 'The Potential of Hydrogen in the Decarbonisation of Transport in Wales', which was published by Simon Thomas AM (as appended to the Notice of

Motion);

- (ii) Council note the Welsh Government's stated intention to build on existing skills and expertise to lead in the UK in hydrogen research and development and investment;
- (iii) Council calls on the Welsh Government to hold discussions with local authorities, businesses, researchers and bodies about holding a key event to convey Wales's ambition in relation to the hydrogen economy to a worldwide audience and to trigger the development of a comprehensive hydrogen economy strategy.

Members considered the reasons for the Motion, and the information provided by the Member in support of the motion, and following due debate, it was moved and seconded that its content be supported. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the Notice of Motion be supported.

10. NOTICE OF MOTION – ROYAL BRITISH LEGION ‘THANK YOU’ AND ‘EVERY ONE REMEMBERED’ CAMPAIGNS

Consideration was given to the report, which detailed the following Notice of Motion received from Councillor A. Whitcombe (Armed Forces Champion) and supported by Councillor J. Bevan and Councillor J. Simmonds. In accordance with Rule 11 (3) of the Constitution, the Mayor had agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with at Council, without being first discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee.

Councillor Whitcombe requested in his Notice of Motion that:-

“Caerphilly County Borough Council confirm their support for the Royal British Legion Thank You Campaign in remembrance of the 1.1 million Service men and women who gave their lives in World War 1 by highlighting the ‘Every One Remembered’ initiative to commemorate every one of them by the end of 2018”.

Members considered the reasons for the Motion, and the information provided by the Member in support of the motion, and following due debate, it was moved and seconded that its content be supported. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the Notice of Motion be supported.

11. APPOINTMENT OF CADET REPRESENTATIVES

Consideration was given to the report, which asked Council to consider the appointment of three Cadet Representatives, one from each of the Army Cadet Force, Royal Air Force Air Cadets, and Royal Navy Sea Cadets, for the remainder of the 2018 calendar year.

It was noted that the appointment of Cadet Representatives will recognise the historic centenaries occurring this year; the RAF100 celebrations, commemorating 100 years since the inception of the RAF, and 100 years since the end of conflict in the First World War. The Cadet Representatives will be invited to attend events at the request of the Mayor and will be supported in their role by the Armed Forces Champion. The appointments will allow the Authority to recognise the contributions made by the armed forces, and young people, to community life in the county borough.

Members voiced their support for the proposals and suggested that subject to approval of these positions, the representatives be invited to a future meeting of Council in order to be formally recognised for their efforts. It was confirmed that suitable arrangements could be made in this regard.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the appointment of three Cadet Representatives (one from each of the Army Cadet Force, Royal Air Force Air Cadets, and Royal Navy Sea Cadets as nominated by their respective force) for the remainder of the calendar year, to time with the 2018 centenary celebrations be endorsed on the following basis:-

- (a) Cadet Representatives be invited to attend events at the request of the Mayor, who will be supported by the Armed Forces Champion;
- (b) Cadet Representatives be asked to attend in the company of a parent/guardian or adult volunteer representative of the relevant cadet force for safeguarding purposes;
- (c) Cadet Representatives be provided with braids or badges as appropriate to their branch of the services;
- (d) The Gwent Armed Forces Liaison Officer to assist with liaison with the cadet forces in the selection process;
- (e) The Mayor's Office to assist with invitation to relevant events.

12. CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL – JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the report, which outlined proposals to establish a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRC), and had been presented to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 26th June 2018.

Members were advised that the CCRC Joint Cabinet recently agreed draft terms of reference for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and equal representation from all 10 local authorities, with one member plus a substitute from each authority. It was also agreed that Bridgend Council would host the JOSC. Details of the proposals for establishing the Joint Scrutiny Committee, together with details of the draft terms of reference, were appended to the report.

Council were also referred to the covering report which outlined the recommendations of the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee in regards to the establishment of the JOSC, nomination of a non-executive Member and substitute Member to represent the Authority on this committee, whether to consider if a senior salary should be applied if the nominated Member were to be appointed as Chair of the JOSC, and to note that it will be a decision for each of the ten authorities if it wishes to establish the proposed JOSC.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's covering report be approved, subject to an amendment to nominate Councillor J. Ridgewell as the non-executive Member to represent the Authority on the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and Councillor C. Elsbury as the substitute Member,

and to recommend that a senior salary payment not be applied if the nominated Member were to be appointed as Chair of the JOSCS.

Members welcomed the proposals in view of the growing momentum surrounding the City Deal, but suggested a need for greater cross-party involvement in the JOSCS in order to provide consistency across the lifespan of the project. Clarification was sought on the scope to apply a senior salary payment and it was explained that the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) states it is a matter for constituent councils to decide if a salary will be paid to chairs of JOSCSs (which will be the responsibility of the respective local authority).

Following discussion of the report, and subject to the foregoing amendments and by a show of hands, it was unanimously agreed that the following recommendations be approved.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) the proposal to establish a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal be supported;
- (ii) Councillor J. Ridgewell be nominated as the non-executive Member to represent the Authority on the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, and Councillor C. Elsbury be nominated as the substitute Member;
- (iii) a senior salary payment not be applied if the nominated member is appointed as Chair of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (iv) Council note that it will be a decision for each of the ten authorities if it wishes to establish the proposed Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

13. TO REAFFIRM COUNCIL TAX DETERMINATIONS TO DISAPPLY DISCOUNT IN RESPECT OF UNOCCUPIED DWELLINGS

Councillors Mrs E. Stenner and Mrs T. Parry declared a personal and prejudicial interest, (being the owner or executor of an unoccupied dwelling) and left the meeting during consideration of the item.

Consideration was given to the report, which sought Council approval to reaffirm two council tax determinations in respect of unoccupied dwellings: one made by the Council's Finance Committee on 7th April 1998, and the other made by Cabinet on 18th May 2004.

It was noted that the determinations made were in respect of a discretionary power provided by Section 12 of The Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992. This power enables local authorities to remove the statutory default 50% discount on the amount of council tax payable that would otherwise apply to unoccupied dwellings which are not exempt (i.e. to charge 100% rather than 50% of the standard amount). Members were asked to note that Section 12 does not relate to any premium legislation in respect of council tax that was recently introduced by Welsh Government.

Officers explained that correspondence was recently received from a council tax payer which led to a review of the decision-making processes undertaken in 1998 and 2004. External legal advice was sought which noted that the determinations were not made by full Council and, in order to remove any ambiguity, recommended that full Council should reaffirm the decisions. As a result of that advice, Council were asked to reaffirm the determinations as detailed in the report.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By way of the electronic voting system this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, the determinations to allow a nil discount to continue to be applied in respect of each of the prescribed classes of dwellings contained within The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998 (as amended), be reaffirmed, namely:-

Class A, which comprises every dwelling –

- (a) of which there is no resident;
- (b) which is substantially furnished; and
- (c) the occupation of which is prohibited by law for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.

Class B, which comprises every dwelling –

- (a) of which there is no resident;
- (b) which is substantially furnished; and
- (c) the occupation of which is **not** prohibited by law for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.

Classes A and B do not include:

- (a) any dwelling which consists of a pitch occupied by a caravan or a mooring occupied by a boat;
- (b) in relation to which a person is a qualifying person (liable for council tax) in his capacity as a personal representative if –
 - i. no person is a qualifying person in any other capacity, and
 - ii. either no grant of probate or letters of administration has been made, or less than 12 months have elapsed since such a grant was made; and
- (c) where a qualifying person in relation to that dwelling is a qualifying person in relation to another dwelling which is, for him, job-related.

Class C, which comprises every chargeable dwelling –

- (a) which is unoccupied; and
- (b) which is substantially unfurnished.

14. CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH DRAFT REGENERATION STRATEGY – A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS 2018-2023 SUPPLEMENTED BY THE DRAFT CAERPHILLY BASIN MASTERPLAN

Consideration was given to the report, which sought Council approval of 'A Foundation for Success as the Regeneration Strategy for the period 2018 to 2023, and the Caerphilly Basin Masterplan as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Council Local Development Plan up to 2021 and as a tool for guiding regeneration activity in the wider Caerphilly Basin area.

Members were reminded that on 14th March 2018, Cabinet resolved to approve the draft version of 'A Foundation for Success and the Draft Caerphilly Basin Masterplan for the purposes of a formal six-week public consultation process, which was carried out between 26th March and 9th May 2018. In total, 22 representations were received for 'A Foundation for Success' and 422 representations were received on the Draft Caerphilly Basin Masterplan.

The responses raised a wide number of issues and their consideration along with an officer view on recommendations for change were set out in the Combined Report of Consultation appended to the report. As a result of responses received, a number of changes to both documents were proposed, which were set out in the Combined Report of Consultation and

also the amended versions of 'A Foundation for Success' and the Draft Caerphilly Basin Masterplan appended to the report.

The report sought the Council's agreement on the proposed changes to both documents and also sought approval of the amended 'A Foundation for Success' as the Council's Regeneration Strategy and the Draft Caerphilly Basin Masterplan as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted Local Development Plan up to 2021. Subject to these documents being approved, both the previous Regeneration Strategy (People, Business, Places) and the Caerphilly Town Centre Action Plan 2011 would be superseded.

It was explained that in order to make bids for funding and to deliver projects the Council will need to assess and prioritise proposals in a fair and equitable manner. To assist in this a Project Prioritisation Assessment Toolkit has been prepared which assesses how projects meet the strategic objectives of City Deal. The Toolkit, which has been considered by the Regeneration Project Board, was also appended to the report. Decisions on the prioritisation of projects need to be made swiftly and governance procedures need to reflect this, with the proposed governance procedure for the consideration and prioritisation of projects set out in the report.

It was noted that the Regeneration Strategy, which is underpinned by the Draft Caerphilly Basin Masterplan, will identify how to make the county borough more prosperous, healthier, resilient and equal, and will set priorities that align and enhance regional work and are readily capable of being realised. This will include harnessing the many opportunities arising from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal to strengthen the economy, reduce poverty, and raise levels of prosperity across the county borough.

It was moved and seconded that recommendations 10.1 to 10.5 of the report be approved, with the inclusion of an additional recommendation 10.6, in that the Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass included in the Regeneration Strategy proposals be reconsidered at the appropriate time under the review of the Adopted Local Development Plan or the Strategic Development Plan (whichever is applicable).

During the course of the ensuing debate, clarification was sought on the monitoring of regeneration strategies and how their outcomes are identified. It was explained that the Regeneration Strategy is part of a set of regeneration plans for the county borough that form part of the City Deal regeneration scheme, which is monitored via reviews carried out by a number of bodies including Welsh Government and HM Treasury. It was confirmed that at a local level, any regeneration strategies would be considered by the relevant scrutiny committee and any recommendations thereafter forwarded to Cabinet/Council for approval. A Member referred to child poverty levels across the county borough and Officers emphasised that it will take time to address this particular area but that it will be collectively tackled via a regional approach as part of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

Discussion took place regarding the Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass and several Members voiced their opposition to its inception. In response to a Member's query, it was confirmed that any revision of the Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass would take place upon the review of the Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) or production of the Strategic Development Plan. Members debated the merits of the proposed additional recommendation to review the inclusion of the Bypass in the Regeneration Strategy moving forward and a request was initially received for the addition to be withdrawn. However a recorded vote for the additional recommendation was subsequently requested in accordance with Rule of Procedure 15.5 (1) and, in view of this, the motion to withdraw the additional recommendation was retracted.

A query was received on the feasibility of removing the proposed Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass in its entirety from the Regeneration Strategy in light of the consultation results and level of public opposition to its creation. Officers explained that the Regeneration Strategy

has been written in the context of the Adopted LDP, which remains as Council policy until 2021 or until superseded by a regional Strategic Development Plan. The Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass is also contained in local transport plans and the Air Quality Action Plan. Therefore the appropriate mechanism for reviewing the Bypass in through the Adopted LDP. It was explained that withdrawing the proposed Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass at this time could be misguided, because the Adopted LDP remains Council policy in regards to safeguarding travel routes, and therefore it would be more prudent to review this during the Adopted LDP review.

Members welcomed the proposed Regeneration Strategy and Caerphilly Basin Masterplan and the range of economic and health benefits and investment opportunities that these will potentially bring to the county borough. Members also placed on record their thanks to the Officers involved in developing the Regeneration Strategy and Caerphilly Basin Masterplan and acknowledged the extensive level of work involved in the preparation of these documents.

Following consideration and discussion of the report, and having moved and seconded that recommendations 10.1 to 10.5 be approved, the vote took place by way of the electronic voting system, and in noting there were 2 against, the motion was declared carried by the majority present.

Having moved and seconded additional recommendation 10.6, the recorded vote requested in accordance with Rule of Procedure 15.5 (1) was then taken by way of the electronic voting system.

FOR THE MOTION

Mrs E.M. Aldworth, M. Adams, C. Andrews, J. Bevan, C. Bezzina, A. Collis, S. Cook, C. Cuss, W. David, D.T. Davies, K. Dawson, M. Evans, Miss E. Forehead, N. George, C. Gordon, L. Harding, D. Havard, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, Mrs B.A. Jones, Mrs A. Leonard, Ms P. Leonard, Mrs P. Marsden, B. Miles, S. Morgan, Mrs L. Phipps, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, J. Pritchard, R. Saralis, Mrs E. Stenner, J. Taylor, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, T.J. Williams, W. Williams, B. Zaplatynski (38)

AGAINST THE MOTION

A. Angel, M. Davies, K. Etheridge, A. Farina-Childs, Ms J. Gale, R.W. Gough, C.P. Mann, T. Parry, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Scriven, G. Simmonds, S. Skivens, L.G. Whittle (13)

ABSTENTIONS

L. Binding, S. Kent, J.E. Roberts (3)

The motion was declared carried by the majority present.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) the contents of the Combined Report of Consultation be noted and the resultant proposed changes recommended in Appendices 2 and 3 to both 'A Foundation for Success' and the Caerphilly Basin Masterplan be agreed;
- (ii) the 'A Foundation for Success' as the Regeneration Strategy for the County Borough for the period 2018 to 2023 (which will supersede the previous regeneration strategy, 'People, Business, Places' that expired in 2013) be approved;

- (iii) the Caerphilly Basin Masterplan as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up To 2021, and as a tool for guiding regeneration activity in the wider Caerphilly Basin area (which will supersede the Caerphilly Town Centre Action Plan adopted by the Council in June 2011), be approved;
- (iv) the Project Prioritisation Assessment Toolkit set out at Appendix 6 be approved as the basis for the assessment of regeneration projects and assigning their relative priority;
- (v) the governance procedure for the prioritisation of regeneration proposals contained in paragraph 4.32 of the Officer's report be agreed;
- (vi) the Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass included in the Regeneration Strategy proposals be reconsidered at the appropriate time under the review of the Adopted Local Development Plan or the Strategic Development Plan (whichever is applicable).

15. QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(2)

Consideration was given to the following Question under Rule of Procedure 10(2). In accordance with the revisions to the constitution, the answer is also provided.

(i) TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

To the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability from Councillor Kevin Etheridge.

- (1) To ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with the recent unfilled and deletion of the Assistant Town Centre Manager Post would he provide re-assurance and detailed reasons that all the front line services to all the Town Centres, High Street and Retailers will not be reduced and each town will be protected equally.
- (2) To ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member to provide the terms of reference, timescale and implications of any re-structure in regard to the Town Centres, and how this will affect retailers, and define what consultation has been undertaken with Town Centre Management Committees in each location in this regard and in relation to question 1.
- (3) To ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member to provide a list of services he proposes to reduce, and stop following the removal of one full time post, and will he reconsider this decision within the interests of our Town Centre, and list the consultation undertaken with the local elected members in the Towns and Wards affected prior to this decision being implemented.

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR SEAN MORGAN, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY.

Question 1 – Answer

There has been no decision taken at this time to delete the post of Assistant Town Centre Manager. As any post becomes vacant a decision must be taken in terms of whether or not to fill that post as part of the ongoing work on the Medium Term Financial Plan. The current post holder is in post until 5th August 2018. With regard to the services delivered to all of the Town

Centres this question is far reaching as our services are provided by a multitude of staff across many service areas and are not restricted to the work of the Town Centre Management Team (e.g. street cleansing, waste collection, highways maintenance)

Question 2 – Answer

The restructure that is being undertaken is for the whole of Regeneration & Planning and will be undertaken in order to be implemented in readiness for the next financial year. There will not be any consultation with retailers or the town centre management committees concerning the Planning & Regeneration Restructure.

It is worth noting however that the dynamics of town centres are altering from what was once almost a purely retail function to a much greater mixed tenure of lifestyle café/bars, bespoke service centred businesses, entrepreneurial start-ups and offices. This change in dynamic will have to be reflected in the reorganisation of the business team structure.

Question 3 – Answer

At this point in time a decision has not been taken to delete the post. I would however make the point that many difficult decisions will have to be made moving forward if we are to meet MTFP obligations.

The Town Centre Manager has been in discussion with the Head of Service and additional resources within Planning & Regeneration have been identified to take on some of the functions currently undertaken by the Assistant when that post becomes vacant. I would however request that Members be mindful that the Town Centre Management Team will reduce in the short term, although I am confident that we will continue to provide an excellent service, as far as we are able, given the reduced resources for this service.

16. COUNCILLOR ARIANNA LEONARD

Prior to closing the meeting, the Mayor gave a warm welcome to Councillor Arianna Leonard on her return to Council following a period of maternity leave.

The meeting closed at 6.37 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2018, they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR