

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK - County Hall on Thursday, 21st February, 2019 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor P. Clarke (Chairman)
County Councillor S. Woodhouse (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, L.Brown, A.Davies, D. Dovey, L.Dymock, A. Easson, D. Evans, M.Feakins, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, M.Groucutt, R. Harris, J. Higginson, G. Howard, S. Howarth, R.John, D. Jones, L.Jones, P. Jones, S. Jones, S.B. Jones, P. Jordan, P. Murphy, P.Pavia, M. Powell, J.Pratt, R.Roden, B. Strong, T.Thomas, J.Treharne, J.Watkins, A. Watts and A. Webb

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Matthew Phillips	Head of Law/ Monitoring Officer
Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Peter Davies	Chief Officer, Resources
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Frances Williams	Chief Officer, Enterprise
Mark Hand	Head of Planning, Housing and Place-Shaping
Matthew Gatehouse	Head of Policy and Governance
Mark Howcroft	Assistant Head of Finance

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors J.Becker, D. Blakebrough, R. Edwards, L. Guppy, M.Lane, V. Smith, F. Taylor and K. Williams

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. ADDRESSING OUR LACK OF A FIVE YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY: REVIEWING MONMOUTHSHIRE'S APPROACH TO UNALLOCATED HOUSING SITES

Council were presented with a report in order to seek Council's decision on its approach to tackling its housing land supply shortfall, specifically how we deal with planning applications for unallocated sites in advance of the new Local Development Plan being adopted in December 2021. Council were invited to review its decision taken on 20th September 2018 based on corrected data and consideration of updated national planning policy.

The decision relates to the Monmouthshire Local Planning Authority area only: it does not affect that part of the county falling within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The Head of Planning, Place Shaping and Housing highlighted that paragraphs 6.4 and 6.5 of the report set out the corrected data.

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The Monitoring Officer explained that the nature of the item will impact on future decisions, but also two decisions already made, specifically Church Road, Caldicot and Monmouth Road, Raglan. An email had been sent to Members of Planning Committee to provide advice on a strategic level, and advised that Council avoided reference to specific applications.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded.

The Leader of the Labour Group commended officers on meeting with the Labour Group to discuss the matter in full detail, and stated he fully supported the proposal.

A Cabinet Member raised a question in light of the report and asked if Planning Committee would be given the opportunity to reconsider the amended report on the site for 111 houses in Raglan, and if Planning Committee can request that Welsh Government put their Call-In enquiry on hold. The Head of Planning advised that applications would be presented back to planning for consideration.

County Councillor Howard wished that it be put on record that he had voted against the Raglan Scheme.

Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:

That, when considering planning applications for residential development on unallocated sites, the Council continues to give 'appropriate weight' to its lack of a five year housing land supply, insofar as those development proposals are otherwise acceptable in planning terms and that the 11 'ground rules' set out in paragraph 6.25 are met.

4. REGENERATION OF SEVERNSIDE - FUTURE ROLE OF CALDICOT TOWN TEAM

The primary purpose of the report was to explain the next stage of Severnside Regeneration and obtain the related Council approval to add the project to the 2019/20 Capital Programme.

Council received an update on Monmouthshire's South East Severnside Regeneration Scheme and a review of the Caldicot Town Team's activities to date, including the associated Section 106 spend against the anticipated outcomes.

It was proposed that Council approve recovery of any amounts of the unspent S106 for Town Centre Partnership activity from Caldicot Town Team and to use the remaining unallocated S106 funds to provide match funding for the wider Regeneration scheme.

Councillor P. Murphy seconded the proposal.

Councillor Easson noted that Caldicot Town Council had not been fully involved as a consultee.

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The Cabinet Member highlighted the role of the Town Team to this point, recognising them as the first Town Team to be established in Wales, stating they would continue to receive support in terms of enabling and facilitating.

The Leader welcomed the regeneration of Caldicot and added his appreciation of the work of the willing volunteers.

Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to agree the recommendations:

That Council endorses the next stage of Severnside Regeneration and the addition of the two projects totalling £1,241,194 to the capital programme, funded as described in Resourcing Section below.

That Council acknowledges the recovery of any unspent Section 106 allocation from Caldicot Town Team and allocates this to provide match funding for the Severnside Regeneration Scheme, alongside amalgamating area committee capital budget to the project (appreciating it is an annual award and has exhibited limited activity over the last 2 years), and the remaining unallocated section 106 Town Centre Partnership funds.

5. CORPORATE PLAN: OBJECTIVES FOR 2019-2020

Council received the report to approve the continuation of the five goals set in the Corporate Plan in 2018 as the Council's objectives for 2019-20 to comply with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the following points:

- Goal C, 13 *the council keeps rural roads and areas safe* and questioned why Urban Areas had been excluded. The Leader considered this a fair challenge and terminology would be assessed.
- Goal D, 16 *the council delivers on social justice, better prosperity and reducing inequality* and what area of inequality is referred to. The Cabinet Member for Social Justice provided explanation that this relates to:
 1. Reducing child poverty and social isolation, and improving economic inclusion.
 2. Promoting equality and diversity, ensuring opportunities are available for all.
 3. Advancing social justice and well-being through asset based community development
- Goal A, 1 *the council invests in future schools*, and sought assurance regarding current schools. The Leader assured that there is always an eye on current schools as well as future schools. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People confirmed that we are investing in current schools also.

Councillor Groucutt commended Councillor Batrouni for the recent motion relating to the threat to withdraw the SENCOM service, noting Newport deferring their decision to withdraw the service.

Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:

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To adopt the goals contained in the Corporate Plan 2017-22, as shown in Appendix 1, as the Council's Improvement Objectives for 2019-20 in order

6. ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE - COMMERCIAL INVESTMENTS

Council were presented with a report to explore the definition of commercial investments and obtain approval to supplement traditional "bricks and mortar" acquisitions with consideration of other prudent and sensible investment types.

Members were advised that a further report regarding a development company would be brought to the April Council meeting

Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:

To approve a widened definition of Commercial Investment that allows Investment Committee to consider opportunities that meet return expectations not simply limited to land and building acquisitions.

To allow consideration of commercial loan facilities.

To allow consideration to use investment budget to build or renovate investment portfolio holdings.

To allow consideration of an equity or debenture interest.

7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME CONSIDERATIONS 2018-19 - CAPITALISATION OF REVENUE EXPENDITURE AND ADDITION OF SCHEMES

The Cabinet Member for Resource presented a report to explain the resourcing priorities associated with recent extra Welsh Government capital resourcing provided during 2018-19.

The Council's Constitution regards that any addition to the capital programme is a consideration of Full Council.

Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to approve the recommendations:

To approve a capitalisation of revenue expenditure totalling £444k as described in month 7 financial monitoring shared with Cabinet and 4 Select Committees and included below in resourcing section.

To endorse additional capital spending in relation to Highways maintenance (£150k) and classroom creation (£30k)

To endorse the balance of extra funding (£716k), be utilised to provide further capitalisation opportunities to assist with a beneficial outturn position and allow extra capacity to replenish reserve levels.

8. PUBLICATION OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT AS REQUIRED BY THE LOCALISM ACT

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Council received a report to approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.

Upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations:

That Council approves the Pay Policy for the year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

That Council approves to pay the nationally negotiated and agreed pay award of the Joint National Council (JNC) for Local Authority Chief Executive Officers. Chief Executive Officer terms and conditions of employment and pay are prescribed by the JNC for Local Authority Chief Executive Officers. The individual basic salaries of all officers within the scope of the JNC for Chief Executives of Local Authorities increased by 2% with effect from 1 April 2018 and 2% with effect from 1 April 2019. This pay agreement covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020.

That Council approves to pay the nationally negotiated and agreed pay award for those employees who come under the Joint National Council (JNC) for Chief Officers. Chief Officers' terms and conditions of employment and pay are prescribed by the JNC for Local Authority Chief Officers. The individual basic salaries of all officers within the scope of JNC for Chief Officers of Local Authorities increased by 2% with effect from 1 April 2018 and 2% with effect from 1 April 2019. The pay agreement covers the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020. The Council employs Chief Officers under JNC terms and conditions, which are incorporated into contracts of employment. The JNC for Chief Officers negotiates on national (UK) annual cost of living pay increases for this group, and any award is determined on this basis. Chief Officers employed under JNC terms and conditions are contractually entitled to any national JNC determined pay rises and this Council will therefore pay these as and when determined in accordance with contractual requirements.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified