



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council

## MINUTES OF MEETING

# **SCRUTINY : REGENERATION AND PUBLIC PROTECTION MEETING**

**TUESDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councillors J Amos (Chair)  
G Lewis (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Colbran, L Davies, S Thomas and K Gibbs

**Coopteers:**  
H Hopkins (Public)

**Other Councillors in Attendance:**  
G Thomas (Cabinet Member)

**Officers:**  
A Owen (Interim Deputy Chief Executive), C Long (Economic Development & Strategic Tourism Manager), S Lewis-Abbott (Housing and Supporting People Manager), P Lewis (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager), C Clark (Housing Solutions Team Leader) and M Purnell (Performance and Scrutiny Officer)

M Morgan (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
617	Apologies for Absence	Apologies for absence were received from H Jackson and H Powell Co-opted Members.
618	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were made.

619	Homelessness Strategy Update	<p>Alyn Owen referred to the 'Homelessness Strategy – Update' report.</p> <p>Cerys Clark then led the Committee in detail through the report and together with Councillor G Thomas, Alyn Owen and Suzanne Lewis-Abbott responded in detail to the following questions raised by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 6.5 – Explanation requested of why the location of Chaplin's is no longer appropriate and information requested on alternative accommodation</li> <li>• Paragraph 7.0 – Increase in demand for single accommodation – Has anything been done in relation to underlying trends</li> <li>• Prison Leavers – Is there data available for release dates – Is there anything done by the Council prior to prisoners being released</li> <li>• Care Leavers - Is there a Strategy in place to prevent homelessness</li> <li>• Paragraph 4.13 – Are there enough placements available - HMO's</li> <li>• The effect of staff cuts on the Department</li> <li>• Further explanation requested on the role of the 'One Stop Shop' staff</li> <li>• Explanation requested on 'Psychologically Informed Accommodation'</li> <li>• Beneficial to have future updates on success stories in relation to support and accommodation</li> </ul> <p>(The Chair then proposed a report to the Committee on Case Studies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further explanation requested in relation to Homelessness figures</li> </ul> <p>(Cerys Clark advised that she would circulate the new figures to the Committee)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraphs 6.1 and 4.9 – Request for more detailed comparison figures for where we are</li> </ul> <p>(Suzanne Lewis-Abbott advised that an updated report would be shared with the Committee together with the inclusion of figures from all the other Local Authorities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the Council able to buy its own property and provide HMO's in suitable locations – If unable to purchase could properties be leased</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p>The content of the report be noted.</p> <p>The Chair then thanked Councillor G Thomas and the Officers for the update to the Committee.</p>
620	Corporate Self-Evaluation - Question 2 (Provision and Service Delivery)	<p>Alyn Owen referred the Committee to the 'Corporate Self-Evaluation – Question 2 (Provision and Service Delivery)' report.</p>

		<p>Maria Purnell then gave an overview of the process that had been undertaken in relation to the self-evaluation and the five key areas.</p> <p>Chris Long also gave an explanation of how the process had been undertaken and how it had been managed and how everyone had had an involvement.</p> <p>The following questions were then raised by the Committee and were responded to in detail by the Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Centre – What plans are in place to improve - The positive comments made by the Housing Officers regarding the Contact Centre</li> <li>• Staff Training – What support is in place – How long does training take – Training for front facing staff – Example given of three phone calls made to the Contact Centre and the responses received</li> <li>• Possibility of designated staff in each Department to issue social media updates to highlight departmental issues and share new information</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p>The evaluation judgements provided by Officers within the report identified through completion of the self-evaluation process be accepted.</p>
621	Work Programme 2019-2020	The Chair referred to the 'Work Programme 2019/20' report and the Committee agreed the schedule.
622	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow Up Actions	<p>The Chair advised that a referral had been received from Councillor C Jones on behalf of the Audit Committee in relation to the Wales Audit Office Report 'Delivering with Less – Environmental Health Services – Follow Up Review – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council' report.</p> <p>After consideration by the Committee it was</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p>A Special Committee Meeting be convened to consider this referral.</p>
623	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected in detail on the issues that had been considered at the Meeting with the Chair referring to the discussion in relation to the Contact Centre.
624	Any Other Business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.