



## MINUTES OF MEETING

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

**TUESDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councillors G Lewis (Chair)  
K Gibbs (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Colbran, L Davies and S Thomas

**Co-optees:**

H Hopkins (Public) and M Ellis (Youth Forum Representative)

**Other Councillors in Attendance:**

G Thomas (Cabinet Member)

**Officers:**

A Owen (Interim Deputy Chief Executive), C Long (Economic Development & Strategic Tourism Manager), S Jablaoui (Performance Officer) and P Lewis (Trading Standards and Licensing Manager), S Hopkins (Environmental Health) and S Stephens (Housing)

M Morgan\* (Democratic Services Officer) and M Edmunds (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
60	Apologies for Absence	No apologies for absence were received.

61	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were made.
62	Draft Work Programme 2020-2021	<p>The Chair referred the Committee to the Draft Forward Work Programme 2020/21.</p> <p>The Committee were advised of the Committee scheduled for 1 December 2020 and it was proposed that the item on Homelessness proposed for 13 April 2021 be moved to the December Committee.</p> <p>This amendment was agreed by the Committee.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he had met with the Scrutiny Officer regarding possible topics and had highlighted five issues to focus on with three having a Covid theme during and post Covid, Public Protection Issues and Regeneration matters.</p> <p>A Committee Member then referred to the Third Sector and what was being done to support the Third Sector.</p> <p>Alyn Owen then referred to the topics for the Work Programme and the need to drill down and refine whilst taking into account the current work programme.</p> <p>It was then agreed that the Chair, Alyn Owen and the Scrutiny Officer discuss further the topic for the next Meeting prior to the Meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved subject to the foregoing that:</b></p> <p>The Draft Forward Work Programme 2020/21 be approved.</p>
63	Coronavirus Report – Response & Transition to Recovery	<p>The Chair referred the Committee to the ‘Coronavirus Update – Response and Transition to Recovery’ report</p> <p>A Committee Member then requested a brief update overview at each Meeting.</p> <p>Alyn Owen advised that key Officers could attend future Committee Meetings to give an overview of the current responses to Covid by the Directorate.</p> <p>The Committee then received an overview from the appropriate Officers of the responses previously and currently to the crisis and what was being done in terms of recovery</p> <p>Paul Lewis then gave an overview to the Committee in relation to the work undertaken by Public Protection</p> <p>Chris Long also gave an overview to the Committee in relation to the work undertaken by Regeneration</p> <p>The following questions were then raised by the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 4.10 – Town Centre Business Digital Project – Are there any plans for free wi-fi in the</li> </ul>

Town Centre

- Location of land for outdoor hospitality
- Paragraph 5.6 -
- Modular Homes – Explanation of Costs
- Neighbourhood Learning Centre – Update on this

Chris Long advised that a report on the Neighbourhood Learning Centre could be brought to Committee later in the year together with consultation being undertaken with the Ward Members.

- How many Cafes have closed or are temporarily closed in the Town Centre
- Has there been an increase in the number of visitors to Merthyr Tydfil in terms of staycations
- Is there funding available for out of Town Centre businesses – What businesses were unable to have outdoor furniture
- How is contact made with businesses
- Creative Freelancers Fund – How many would this fund assist in Merthyr Tydfil
- Could there be businesses who fell through a Covid gap
- How has Covid affected the day time economy in the Town Centre
- Update requested on Geosence
- Information requested on the Farmers Market

Sarah Hopkins then gave an overview to the Committee in relation to the work undertaken by Public Health.

The following questions were then raised by the Committee:

- Information requested on the Covid rate – Are there specific clusters
- Explanation of the figures as it applies to Merthyr Tydfil as the smallest Local Authority

Suzanne Stephens then updated the Committee in relation to Housing and Homelessness.

The following questions were then raised by the Committee:

- Paragraph 5.6 -
- Modular Homes – Details requested on the homes
- Neighbourhood Learning Centre – Update requested on the proposal
- Paragraph 5.7 – Homelessness – Were all rough sleepers able to be accommodated during Covid lockdown – Will there be a need for a Winter Night Shelter this year – Reasons for preclusion from the Night Shelter
- What is the role of the Castle Hotel

A Member then expressed thanks to the staff who had worked with homeless residents throughout the County Borough and these comments were endorsed by the Committee.

		<p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p>(a) The report be received and its content noted  (b) Committee Members explore the lessons learned and how these will support development of future plans to respond to the phased relaxation of lockdown and acknowledge how the Council will be required to work differently to meet the needs of the 'new norm'.</p> <p>The Chair then thanked the Officers for attending and the update to the Committee.</p> <p>Councillor L Davies and Councillor S Thomas left the Meeting at 3.26 pm.</p>
64	Scrutiny Referrals, Feedback and Follow Up Actions	<p><b>Self- Evaluation for Scrutiny Members</b></p> <p>Saeif Jablaoui outlined to the Committee the self-evaluation process for Scrutiny Committee Members and the process on completion of the self-evaluation</p> <p><b>Coronavirus Update</b></p> <p>The Committee agreed that an update report on Coronavirus be an agenda item on all Committee Meetings.</p>
65	Reflection and Evaluation of Meeting	The Chair and the Committee reflected in detail on the issues that had been considered in the Meeting.
66	Any Other Business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no business deemed urgent.