



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

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

TUESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 2024

PRESENT: Councillors L Davies (Chair)
D Sammon (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C T Jones, J Thomas and A Williams-Price

Other Councillors in Attendance:

G Thomas (Cabinet Member)

Officers:

A Owen (Deputy Chief Executive), S Lewis-Abbott (Housing and Supporting People Manager), S Stephens (Housing), L Whiteley (Estates), A Richards (Procurement and Payments), L Simmonds (St Tydfil's Centre Manager) and N Howells (Performance and Scrutiny)

M Morgan (Democratic Services Officer) and O Moore (Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
613	Apologies for Absence	Apologies for absence were received from H Jackson Co-opted Member and Councillor M Symonds Cabinet Portfolio Member.
614	Declarations of Interest (including whipping declarations)	No Declarations of Interest were made.

615	Housing and Homelessness	<p>The Chair referred to the Housing and Homelessness report and welcomed Councillor G Thomas Cabinet Member, Alyn Owen, Suzanne Lewis-Abbott and Suzanne Stephens to the Meeting.</p> <p>Suzanne Stephens and Suzanne Lewis-Abbott led the Committee in detail through the report and together with Councillor Thomas and Alyn Owen responded to the following questions raised by the Committee on the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 5.1 – What is the number as of today • Paragraph 5.9 – Update requested on the 11 January 2024 Meeting and the understanding of Welsh Government on the potential impact at local level • Paragraph 5.12 – What is the number of complex cases • Paragraph 5.16 – What is the Authority doing regarding this – Pressure on staff who should be protected • Paragraph 5.18 – What are the actual numbers not the percentages – Other Refugees throughout the UK – How many Refugees so far have come to Merthyr Tydfil – Are Ukraine families still living with families in Merthyr Tydfil or have they moved on – Is the financial support continuing • Paragraph 5.22 – Update requested on the review – Where is Springfield and the number of properties • TACP 2023/24 – Examples requested on the buying back of void properties and further information on this • Marsh House – Clarification on the date • Extra Care – Update on this project • Paragraph 7.3 – What are the numbers not percentages • Paragraph 7.4 – Should read March 2024 • How likely will people with complex needs be allocated a property and will they need help • Clarification requested in relation to Paragraph 2.2 and Paragraph 5.11 • Has there been a financial shortfall over the past two years and how has this been met • Prior to Covid there was a homeless provision above the bus station for 10-12 people in cold temperatures – ‘No One Left Out’ – How did this change – the number of Homeless pre Covid to the numbers now – Where did the extra numbers come from – Is it in relation to rents – Do we have any rough sleepers now – Behaviours – Paragraphs 5.7 and Paragraph 5.9 – Is there any feedback • Paragraph 5.19 – How many properties in Merthyr Tydfil were provided to people outside the UK • Paragraph 5.14 – Staff welfare in the Department – How recent was this – Social Media – Is there anything more that Corporate Communication could do to support the Housing Department • Paragraph 5.17 – Private Rent Sector – Landlords leaving – Can more details be provided on how this
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		<p>is evidenced in Merthyr Tydfil and how evidenced by Rent Smart Wales – Can evidence be provided on how many families are affected by 'No fault evictions' – How many Landlords are not regulated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HMO – D2PropCo – Has their ability to purchase properties been affected by rising prices • How many properties have not passed through the protocol • No fault evictions and Unregulated Landlords – Does this affect tenants to get on the property ladder • Paragraph 5.6 – When will the outcome of the Consultation be known • Is the 31 March 2024 still the same – How much notice will be given for contingency • Paragraph 5.22 – Are all the units full – Is there any feedback • TACP – What is the number of voids – How quickly are they turned around – Is there enough housing for the need • Paragraph 5.4 – Clarification requested in relation to costs and what is included in the cost per person – What do people get for this • Is the Authority obliged to redecorate when people leave • Update requested on the former Tregenna Hotel <p>Councillor G Thomas and the Members then expressed their thanks to the staff of the Housing Department.</p> <p>The Chair then thanked the staff and the Officers for attending and the update to the Committee.</p>
616	St Tydfil's Shopping Centre	<p>The Chair referred to the St Tydfil's Shopping Centre report and welcomed Lance Whiteley, Adam Richards and Lee Simmonds to the Meeting.</p> <p>Lance Whiteley then led the Committee through the report and gave an update on the report and together with Councillor G Thomas and the Officers responded to the following questions raised by the Committee on the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 5.1 – • Structural Survey – Is this the same as the Condition Survey • Update requested on the Maisonettes – Where will the funding come from • Clarification requested on UK Funding and can the Authority access this – Has any Authority received any money yet • Vacant Retail Units – Is this still the same figure • Possible return to the UK of Woolworths • How to attract businesses • The wider plan – possible redevelopment to include the indoor market • Current Budget - Update on this – Clarification on payments when businesses leave

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions on every high street is tough – Cost of a new roof – Is this an opportunity to bring forward plans for the Town Centre • What is the cost of borrowing – is it still the same as detailed in a previous report • What is the cost for repair and maintenance over the past twelve months • If a large business came to the Centre could they have naming rights • Are there any drawbacks to creating a Local Authority Trading Company – When will it be concluded and when will it be decided if this is the right model • Long term plans – Competition from on line shopping – Hospitality and not just retail – Residential use - Update on opening of Haystacks • Would residential preclude late night retail opening – The gated area • Is the Energy Officer involved in the Condition / Structural Survey • Possibility of recouping monies • Request to keep all indoor market traders updated <p>The Chair then thanked Councillor G Thomas and the Officers for attending and the update to the Committee.</p>
617	Forward Work Programme 2023-2024	<p>The Chair referred the Committee to the Forward Work Programme 2023/24.</p> <p>Reference was made to the following for inclusion the Work Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty Homes update • Transport • Hoovers Re-development <p>The Chair then suggested that a Workshop be convened in relation to Transport and re-development of the Hoovers site and this was supported by the Committee.</p>
618	Scrutiny Referrals	There were no referrals.
619	Report Recommendations	The Chair and the Committee agreed that the items on the agenda had been addressed and fully discussed.
620	Feedback on Scrutiny Activities	There was no feedback on Scrutiny activities.
621	Any Other Business deemed urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no other business deemed urgent.