



MINUTES OF MEETING

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY, 2024

PRESENT: Councillors M Colbran (Chair)
J Thomas (Vice-Chair)

Councillors A Barry, B Carter, L Davies, E Galsworthy, K Gibbs, D Hughes, D Isaac, J Jenkins, C Jones, C T Jones, D Jones, M Jones, P Layton, G Lewis, L Minett-Vokes, L Mytton, G Richards, D Roberts, D Sammon, J Scriven, W R Smith, M Symonds, G Thomas, I Thomas, S Thomas, C Tovey and A Williams-Price

Officers:

E Cooper (Chief Executive), C Kennedy (Head of Legal and Governance Services - Monitoring Officer), A Owen (Deputy Chief Executive), L Hull (Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer), L Curtis Jones (Director of Social Services), S Walker (Director of Education), J Jones (Director of Neighbourhood Services), C Dinham (Communications, Consultation and Engagement Manager), H Brown (Head of HR and Organisational Improvement), A Taylor (Head of Democratic Services) and A Stephens (Cabinet Policy Officer)

E Galeozzie (Democratic Services Officer), O Moore (Democratic Services Officer) and M Phillips (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
666	Apologies for Absence	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Davies.
667	Declarations of Interest	Declarations of Interest were received from:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor David Hughes – Fostering Policies Report – has a personal interest and would leave the meeting when the item was discussed. • Councillor Lee Davies - Wellbeing Merthyr – has a personal and prejudicial interest and would leave the meeting when the item was discussed. • Councillor Michelle Symonds - Trades Union Facility Time – has a personal and prejudicial interest and would leave the meeting when the item was discussed. • Councillor Michelle Jones - Council Tax Premiums on Long Term Vacant and Periodically Occupied Dwellings - has a personal and prejudicial interest and would leave the meeting when the item was discussed. • Councillor Michelle Jones - Wellbeing Merthyr Update – is a council appointed trustee, so has dispensation to remain in the Chamber. • Councillor Claire Jones - Wellbeing Merthyr Update – is a council appointed trustee, so has dispensation to remain in the Chamber.
668	Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)	The Council approves as accurate (subject to any amendments) the Minutes of the following Meetings:
668a	Full Council: 17/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Full Council held 17 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668b	Cabinet: 17/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Cabinet held 17 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668c	Governance and Audit Committee: 15/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee held 15 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668d	Planning, Regulatory and Licensing: 24/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Planning, Regulatory and Licensing Committee held 24 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668e	Rights of Way: 24/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Rights of Way Committee held 24 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668f	Licensing Committee: 10/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Licensing Committee held 10 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668g	Scrutiny : Social	Resolved that:

	Services: 16/01/2024	The Minutes of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee held 16 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668h	Scrutiny : Learning and LGES: 22/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Learning and LGES Scrutiny Committee held 22 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668i	Scrutiny : Regeneration and Public Protection: 23/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Regeneration and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee held 23 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668j	Scrutiny : Corporate Support and Resources: 30/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Corporate Support and Resources Scrutiny Committee held 30 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668k	Scrutiny : Neighbourhood Services, Countryside and Planning: 29/01/2024	Resolved that: The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Services, Countryside and Planning Scrutiny Committee held 29 January 2024 be accepted as a correct record.
668l	Notice(s) of Motion - Number of Senedd Members	The Mayor notified the Council that the Notice of Motion had been removed and would not be discussed during this meeting.
669	Fostering Policies Report	<i>Declaration of Interest</i> Councillor D Hughes, having declared an interest in this item, left the meeting for the consideration of the item. Councillor J Jenkins led the Council through the 'Fostering Policies' report. The Leader noted the significance of the report and the importance of the fostering service to the children of Merthyr Tydfil. Resolved that: 1. The policies, to be implemented in March 2024, be approved.
670	2024-25 Fees and Charges	Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and asked the Chief Finance Officer to provide detail. The Chief Finance Officer asked the Council to consider deferring decisions rather than rejecting so that all proposals can be discussed in the upcoming Special Full Council. Councillor A Barry notified the Monitoring Officer that any deferrals would be accepted.

		<p>Councillor A Barry proceeded by restating the recommendations and noting an amendment to the second bullet point of Paragraph 5.2 which reads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing non-statutory Pre-application enquiry fees (Planning) by between 45% and 95% above inflation. <p>An amendment was also made to Recommendation 2.2 which reads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing non-statutory Pre-application enquiry fees (Planning) by between 45% and 95% above inflation, be approved. <p>A question was asked in relation to the protocol of the fees and charges policy.</p> <p>Following further discussions, it was agreed that the following recommendations be deferred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation 2.1 - Increasing all Cemeteries fees by an additional 3% above inflation be approved. • Recommendation 2.5 - Increasing Lifeline weekly charge by 40% (note this includes the cost of sim card needed for digital switchover) be approved. <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing non-statutory Pre-application enquiry fees (Planning) by between 45% and 95% above inflation, be approved. 2. Increasing some Registrar fees by between 4% and 15% above inflation be approved. 3. Increasing some Highways & Engineering fees by up to 200% (note these are not fees incurred by residents) be approved. 4. Maintaining Car Park fees and charges at current rates be approved. 5. Maintaining Engineering fees and charges for CCTV surveys be approved. 6. Maintaining licensing fees and charges at current rates be approved.
671	Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23	<p>Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and restated the recommendations.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2022/23 be received, noted and approved. 2. The actual 2022/23 Treasury Indicators be received, noted and approved.
672	Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2023/24	<p>Councillor A Barry advised that this was the last Full Council Meeting for Adele Lewis and extended very best wishes for the future and thanked her for her work.</p>

		<p>Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and restated the recommendations.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Treasury Management Half Year Review Report for 2023/24 be received, noted and approved.
673	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council - Events Policy 2024	The Chair noted that Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council – Events Policy 2024 be deferred.
674	Trades Union Facility Time	<p><i>Declaration of Interest</i> Councillor M Symonds, having declared an interest in this item, left the meeting for the consideration of the item.</p> <p>Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and restated the recommendations.</p> <p>Comments were raised regarding the involvement of trade unions during the budget setting process.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The growth required for 5 days permanent Trades Unions facility time for both Unison and GMB, be approved.
675	Pay Policy Statement 2023/24	<p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The Pay Policy Statement 2023-2024 be approved.</p>
676	Council Tax Premiums on Long Term Vacant and Periodically Occupied Dwellings	<p><i>Declaration of Interest</i> Councillor M Jones, having declared an interest in this item, left the meeting for the consideration of the item.</p> <p>Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and restated the recommendations.</p> <p>Questions were raised relating to the impact on collection rates in regard to other authorities, and whether any long-term empty properties have been brought back into use.</p> <p>Comments were made in reference to the impact of second homes and the concern of residents.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The charging of a 100% Council Tax Premium on Section 12(A) long-term empty properties, that have been empty in excess of 12 months, with effect from 1st April 2023 be approved to continue into the new financial year 2024-2025. 2. The charging of a 100% Council Tax Premium on Section 12(B) periodically occupied properties

		<p>(Second Homes) was approved by Full Council on 8th March 2023 with an effective start date of 1st April 2024 be approved into the new financial year 2024-2025.</p> <p>3. Introduce a local council tax exception Class 8 (see Appendix 1) to assist new owners of properties undergoing renovation and not charge a premium for up to 12 months and in addition not to charge a council tax premium on the domestic element of qualifying composite properties be approved.</p>
677	Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order	<p>Councillor M Symonds provided a summary and background to the report and restated the recommendations.</p> <p>Questions were raised regarding PSPOs and whether any other PSPOs were considered.</p> <p>Questions regarding enforcement were also raised, and what methods would be used to monitor and enforce the orders.</p> <p>A further question was asked in relation to the revenue referred to in point 6.3 of the report and whether the money could be used for dog waste prevention.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>1. A statutory and public consultation be undertaken on the proposal to introduce a County Borough Wide PSPO to reduce dog waste nuisance in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil, be approved.</p>
678	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000	<p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The report for Information be received.</p>
679	To deal with any other urgent business or correspondence	The Mayor advised that there was no other urgent business or correspondence.
680	To receive communications from Their Worship the Mayor	No Communications were received from Their Worship the Mayor.
681	Exempt	<p>Resolved that:</p> <p>The public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under Part 4 of Schedule 12A of Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
682	Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2027/28	<p>Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and read out the recommendations.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p>

		(a) The recommendations as detailed in Paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 be approved.
683	Wellbeing Update Merthyr	<p><i>Declaration of Interest</i> Councillor L Davies having declared an interest in this item, left the meeting for the consideration of the item.</p> <p>Councillor M Symonds provided a summary and background to the report and read out the recommendations.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The recommendations as detailed in Paragraphs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 in the report be approved. 2. The amendment made to 2.6 be approved. 3. A further recommendation at 2.7 be approved.