



## **Radyr & Morganstown Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Radur a Threforgan**

### **Agenda Item 10**

**Meeting:** Council  
**Date:** 29 September 2022  
**Report Author:** Clerk to the Council

#### **Publicity & Communications**

##### **Introduction**

1. At a meeting held on 21 July 2022, Members approved a forward Work Programme for the Council as a whole. This followed suggestions made by Members and reports to each committee.

##### **Key Issues/Notes of Meeting**

2. The Work Programme addressed a number of strategic issues. Issues around publicity and communications were referred to the Publicity Group to consider.
3. The Group met to consider these matters at 6.30 pm on 18 August 2022 via Zoom.
4. The meeting was attended by Councillors J Charles, A Cook, T Davies, V Patel, and D Silver. The Clerk also participated. Councillor Silver was elected to chair the Group. No apologies for absence were submitted.
5. Councillor Cook declared a non-prejudicial interest in the Work Program of the Group as a Board Member and contributor to the "Radyr Chain." He remained in the meeting
6. Arising from the meeting, the following issues are reported to Council.

- ***Terms of Reference***

7. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference of the Group. Council is asked to approve the attached revised Terms of Reference. Council will observe that Members suggest amending the title of the Group to better reflect its work.

- **Review of the Council's website**

Members discussed the Council's site and its suitability for the work of the Council.

The Council's site was hosted using Weebly software. This low-cost option allowed the Council to publish documents to meet statutory requirements. The site featured information about Council meetings & policies and community information.

Members noted that some recent improvements had been introduced but there was consensus that the site needed root & branch review.

Issues raised included:

- a. the need for a professionally designed, impartial website which enabled the Council to meet its statutory obligations.
- b. the need to improve navigation around the site
- c. ensuring that the site was accessible across all digital devices.
- d. the potential for new photographs to improve the site.
- e. accessibility issues.
- f. Welsh language.
- g. links to other websites.
- h. links to the Council's social media pages to ensure an integrated approach to communications.
- i. the scope to access information which indicated the usage of the site.

It was **Recommended** that the Clerk make enquiries about the costs of engaging external advisers to produce a new website which addressed the above concerns.

- **Review of communications, including social media.**

Members noted that internal communications had been improved by changes in committee report formats and the recent introduction of the "Members Matters" newsletter. The newsletter streamlined and consolidated information sent to all Members, improving the flow of information with Members.

Issues raised by Members included:

- a. amendments to the Group's terms of reference (attached).
- b. options to improve greater integration between information published to the Council's website and across social media.
- c. the potential to open a Facebook account for the Council.
- d. the need to take care when sharing information from commercial organisations.
- e. the potential to improve document management by circulating website links rather than PDFs.

- **Review of feedback mechanisms and evaluation.**

The Smart Survey feature on the Council's website had not been used recently and the account had therefore been moved to a basic free plan.

Members acknowledged the advantage of obtaining the views of the public but underlined the need for a strategic approach. There was scope to use different platforms to undertake surveys.

It was **Recommended** that the approval of Council is required before any wide-ranging surveys are undertaken. The methodology should also be approved by the Council.

- ***Examine the feasibility of separate, dedicated email accounts for Clerk, Assistant Clerk, and all Members.***

Members noted that the Clerk and Assistant Clerk currently shared a single email address, [clerk@radyr.wales](mailto:clerk@radyr.wales). Members considered that this could lead to confusion and bring problems where sensitive emails were concerned.

Provisional costs had therefore been obtained for a second email address dated 25 May 2022. Details were reported.

It was **Recommended** that firm up-to-date costs are obtained for the creation of a separate email address to allow the Clerk and Assistant Clerk to have separate emails.

It was also **Recommended** that costs are obtained to provide dedicated Council email addresses for all Members.

- **Audit and review of existing IT/communications systems and equipment.**

Members considered some of the practical issues associated with staff using their own devices to work from home

It was **Recommended** that the Clerk obtain costs for the purchase of IT equipment for staff to use when working from home, including a simple mobile phone to avoid staff using their own phones for Council business.

It was also **Recommended** that the Clerk ascertain what level of IT support is provided to County Councillors by Cardiff Council, with a view to examining the potential for the purchase of IT equipment for use by Members.

- **Review of Welsh Language Scheme.**

Members considered advice about the application of Welsh Language Standards to the town & community council sector.

Since the meeting of the Group, clarification has been received from the Welsh Language Commissioner. The advice is attached.

It is **recommended** that the Council's existing Welsh Language Scheme is reviewed against the advice circulated by the Commissioner.

- **Review of Complaints Procedure**

The Council approved a Complaints Procedure on 12 May 2022.

Councillor Charles had applied to represent town and community councils on the Standards & Ethics Committee. She was to be interviewed on 28 September 2022.

It was **Recommended** that the Complaints Policy is reviewed to reflect Best Practice, to include clear advice for complainants about complaints would be dealt with.

It was also **Recommended** that the definition of a complaint is amended as follows:

*A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action taken or the service was provided by the council itself, a member acting on behalf of or could be perceived as acting on behalf of or a body acting on behalf of the council.*

- **Purchase of equipment to facilitate hybrid meetings.**

Council meetings were currently held remotely via Zoom under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Under the 2021 Act, community and town councils in Wales may meet online but if they meet face to face they must provide for people to attend virtually.

The press and public had the legal right attend council meetings and under the 2021 Act have great rights to speak and be heard.

It was **Recommended** that the Clerk continue to examine the potential to hold face to face meetings, including the use of equipment such as the Owl audio visual equipment.

### **Financial Implications**

8. The Council has set aside £20,000 within Earmarked Reserves to help meet new IT challenges and pressures.

### **Links to Corporate Objectives**

9. The Council's Annual Report confirms that the Council's objectives include delivering:  
A Prosperous Community. A Resilient Community. A Healthier Community.  
A More Equal Community. A Cohesive Community. A Community of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language. A Globally Responsive Community.
10. The issues described in this report will help the Council deliver these Wales-wide sustainability goals.

### **Staffing Implications**

11. There are no direct staffing implications though some of the measures described above will improve the service which staff are able to provide to the Council and community as a whole.
12. The Council's limited staff resources may bring the need to work in partnership with other bodies to deliver these objectives.

### **Risk Management Implications**

13. The Council's Risk Register includes measures to manage information, improve communication and review arrangements for meetings.

### **Legal Implications**

14. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes provision for improved digital communications and arrangements relating to holding meetings.

### **Recommendation**

15. It is **recommended** that

- (1) the revised Terms of Reference of the Group are approved.
- (2) Council considers the issues and recommendations referred to in this report.

### **Publicity and Communications Group: Terms of Reference**

1. To ensure that the community served by Radyr and Morganstown Community Council is kept informed about the Council's work - and other issues that may affect the community.
2. To maintain editorial control over the Council's website's content and structure. To maintain editorial control of the Council's Twitter feed and any other social media outlets used by the Council (such as Facebook and Instagram).
3. To draft news stories, reports, feature articles and similar material drawing attention to the Council's work - and other issues that may affect the community.
4. To commission and edit, as necessary, publicity material from other Council Members (which can include news stories, reports, feature articles and similar material).
5. Apart from items which simply inform the public about things that are happening in Radyr and Morganstown (such as roadworks, festivals, AM or MP surgeries, or opening and closing of businesses) - the Group must ensure that items which can normally be considered to represent the Council's views about specific issues (such as planning applications or road safety) represent those views accurately.
6. To ensure that the Council is able to respond quickly and appropriately to developing stories or issues, if need be. To do so in liaison with other Council members and/or the Council's Clerk as appropriate.
7. To use our website and social media outlets - along with other outlets (such as the Radyr Chain and other websites) to facilitate the Council's communication with the public.
8. To keep the Council's website and social media outlets fresh, with new stories published as often as possible to generate and maintain interest and understanding of the Council's work.
9. Group members may publish news items directly to the Council's website and social media outlets but should consult the other Members of the Group (48 hours' notice) before publishing any significant items which contain opinions or policy implications to seek their views with regard to style, accuracy, and content.
10. The Group will seek to ensure that material published by the Council is clear, concise, accurate, interesting, and professionally written.
11. Any material published by a Group member can be edited or removed, if the other members of the Group agree that it should be (whether or not that decision is prompted by other Councillors).
12. The Publicity Group will consist of those Members appointed at Annual Council, currently:

Councillor T Davies (Chairman of the Council),  
Councillor V Patel (Vice Chair of the Council),  
Councillor J Charles (Chair, Finance Committee),  
Councillor A Cook (Chairman Environment Committee),  
Councillor D Silver.

The Clerk will also attend meetings of the Group.

## Appendix: Welsh Language Scheme

The Welsh Language Act 1993 places a duty on the public sector to treat both languages equally when providing services to the public. Since the 1993 Act, the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 has been published.

The Measure also names, within Schedules, the organisations, or the types of organizations on which the Commissioner may set standards in relation to the Welsh language including community and town councils. The Commissioner may do anything he thinks appropriate to:

- promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language
- work towards ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favorably than English.

While the Commissioner has given compliance notices to county councils and county borough councils listing the duties they have in relation to the standards of the Welsh language, the Commissioner has decided to continue with the language plan procedure for community and town councils. Welsh language schemes existed before the Welsh language standards and are the result of the Welsh Language Act 1993.

In order to facilitate the formation of a plan, the Welsh Language Commissioner has created guidelines and a Word template for community and town councils. Copies are available from the Clerk.