



**Council Leader
Andrew
Morgan Page 2**



**Fresh faces for
2017 RCT
elections
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Labour Herald

Pontypridd & Taff Ely

January/February 2017

THE UK'S MOST GENEROUS CHILDCARE OFFER

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council chosen to pilot Wales' new childcare scheme

RCT Council has been selected as a trial area for the Welsh Government's new childcare offer. With 30hrs of free childcare for 48 weeks of the year offered to working parents of 3 and 4 year olds, it will be the UK's most generous childcare package.

Deputy Council Leader, **Maureen Webber** told the *Labour Herald* "We're delighted to be involved in developing this exciting policy, which will make a huge difference to working parents across Taff Ely. Trialling the offer will allow the Welsh Labour Government to learn what works best, so that childcare delivers for all working parents. We'll be announcing the trial areas in early 2017."

Mick Antoniw AM said, "Parents regularly tell me that childcare costs are a real worry for them. Helping meet the cost of childcare reduces the strain on family incomes and helps ensure childcare is not a barrier to parents getting a job or continuing to work."



The Fildler Jones family from Hawthorn will be future beneficiaries of Welsh Labour's new childcare offer

**REGISTER
TO VOTE
TODAY!**

It only takes 5 minutes and you could help save our services

Next year's council elections will determine who is responsible for delivering core services to you, your family, friends and neighbours.

Local MP **Owen Smith** said: "Figures show that thousands of people aren't registered to vote in RCT and so won't have a say on the availability and quality of day-to-day services such as education, social care, condition of roads, recycling, street lighting, refuse collection and a range of other services."

Registering to vote only takes a few minutes and can be done online or over the phone. All you need to provide is your name, address, date of birth and national insurance number.

So, don't delay. Register to vote today!
Phone 01443 490100
or go to
www.gov.uk/register-to-vote



Council Leader Andrew Morgan

Building on strong foundations

Council Leader Andrew Morgan on the success of Labour's investment strategy and the challenges ahead

While we have needed to make difficult decisions in recent years, as a result of the savage cuts to public sector funding imposed in Wales by the Tories, we remain committed to being ambitious for our communities.

Thanks to our proactive response to the financial

challenges we face we are investing in key infrastructure to take our County Borough forward.

RCT Council is investing over £200M in key projects across the County Borough. This funding is supporting investment in new sporting facilities at Sardis Rd, Graig and

Tonyrefail.

11 new play facilities have been delivered across Taff Ely and our investment in Leisure is protecting these valued facilities from Tory austerity.

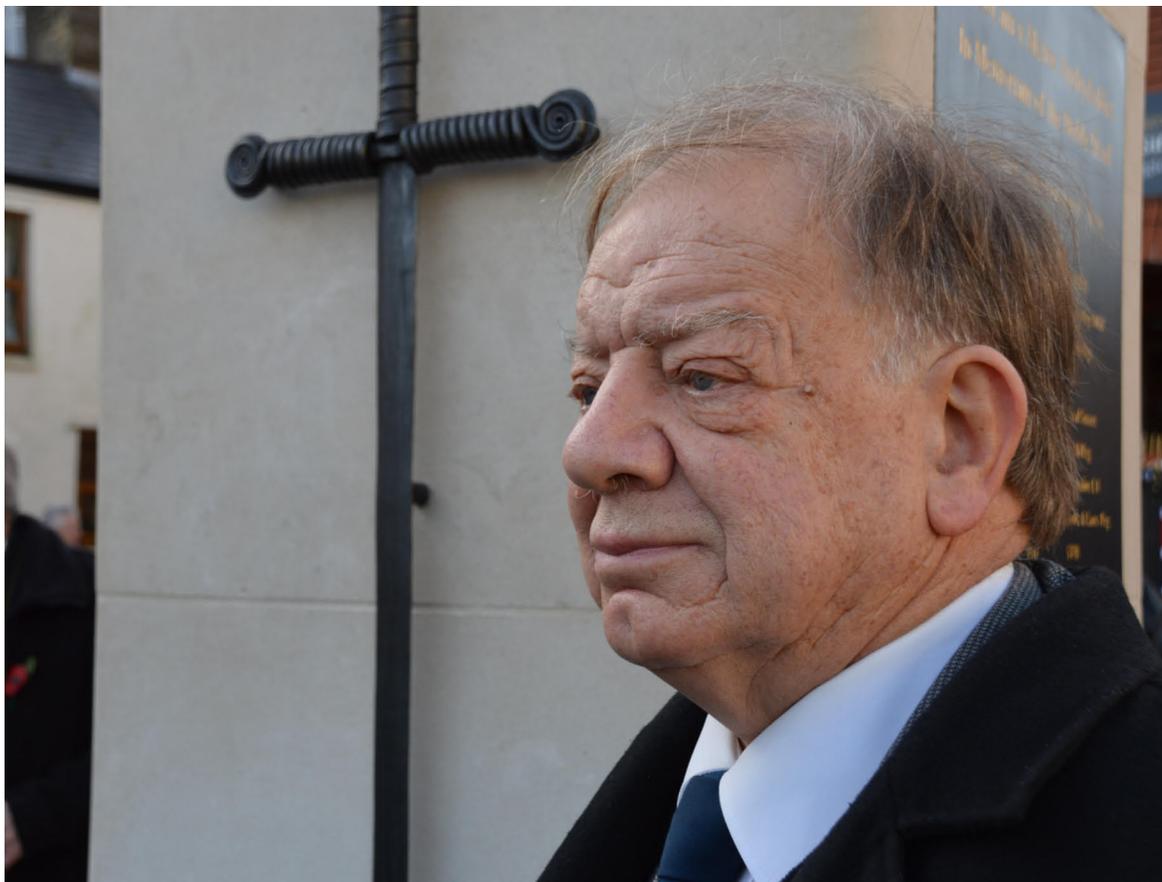
The Council is taking forward major highway improvements along the

A4119 to keep the County Borough moving and our ambitions plans to redevelop Taff Vale will offer a major boost to our local economy with construction activity already underway.

Work has recently begun on the £44M new 3-19 School in Tonyrefail and

pupils this month have moved into the new Y Pant school, which has been transformed thanks to £24M investment.

All this demonstrates the difference we have made over the last five years of this Council.



Councillor Glynne Holmes at Llantrisant's Memorial

NEW WAR MEMORIALS

A fitting tribute to those who have given so much

"This has been an extremely emotional day," said Llantrisant Councillor **Glynne Holmes**. He was talking to the *Labour Herald* shortly after the unveiling of the Llantrisant War Memorial in November.

"At last we have a permanent monument to the 92 people who gave their lives in the two world wars and other conflicts. It will be a focus for remembrance in our community for generations to come."

The war memorial, which is sited in the town's Bullring is the result of a community project which raised 50% of the funding. RCT Council agreed to fund the remaining 50% after an approach from Councillor Holmes.

Council Leader **Andrew Morgan** and Llantrisant's last surviving Korean War veteran, **Trevor Evans** unveiled the memorial at a well-attended community service on 11th November. RCT Council also financed the new Remembrance Stones in Taffs Well, with the project led by Councillor **Jill Bonetto** and the Friends of Taffs Well Park.

Speaking after the consecration service in November, Councillor Bonetto said, "It is important that communities have a place where they can remember those who have given so much and we have placed a special emphasis on getting local children involved."

"This project has drawn on the talents and energy of people from across the community and I look forward to this part of our beautiful local park being the centre for community remembrance for many years to come."

"This will be a focus for remembrance in our community for generations to come."

Fresh Faces for 2017 Council Elections

Introducing some of Welsh Labour's fresh, new candidates for this year's RCT elections



Martin Fidler Jones
Welsh Labour's candidate for Hawthorn

"I've been a community activist for a long time - but since my son was born this August I've wanted to build a better future for him, not just for me. With your support, we will build a better future for Hawthorn and Rhydyfelin."

"As a teacher, I've taught generations of children from the Graig. Now I'm hoping to represent them as their local Councillor."



Jayne Brencher
Welsh Labour's candidate for Graig



Stephen Powell
Welsh Labour's candidate for Talbot Green

"I live and work in Talbot Green with my family. I want to get to grips with the issues affecting residents and businesses and help restore a sense of community spirit to the area."

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

LOCAL PEOPLE, WORKING FOR YOU

- There are six Community Councils in our area: Llantrisant, Llantwit Fardre, Pontyclun, Pontypridd Town, Taffs Well and Tonyrefail.

About Community Councils

- Community Councillors are unpaid and are responsible for managing a range of resources.

Providing key services

- Community Councils are responsible for managing services ranging from providing bus shelters to looking after grave yards; they support community projects and bid for funding.

A voice for the community

- Community Councils have a voice in the planning process and are able to formally represent the community in consultations.

Support your Community Council

- Vote for your local Labour candidates on Thursday May 4th 2017

Working Families Lose Thousands In Tory Cuts



Owen is always available to help local residents

Labour Pledge to Stand Up For Working Families

Four thousand working families in Pontypridd are set to lose thousands of pounds a year from shameful Tory cuts to in-work support. That's after Theresa May refused to fully scrap cuts to Universal Credit, which will be replacing tax credits over the next few years. Some families will be up to £2,400 a year worse off with the Tories telling full-time workers they should work an extra 200 hours a year not to lose out.

"But by refusing to fully reverse cuts to in-work support, she's shown it's the same old Tories. Looking after big business and the rich while penalising the majority of workers. "As a result, 4,000 families in Pontypridd are set to lose out by thousands of pounds a year. If you're concerned about the impact Universal Credit might have on you, get in touch."



Local MP **Owen Smith** led the campaign that defeated cuts to tax credits. Commenting on cuts to Universal Credit, he said: "Theresa May had a golden opportunity to show she was serious about supporting families who work hard and struggle to make ends meet.

"By refusing to fully reverse cuts to in-work support, Theresa May has shown it's the same old Tories."

NEW FACES MEAN A FRESH START FOR TONYREFAIL

Fresh faces will be working alongside established Labour councillors to contest the 2017 RCT elections, including two new candidates in Tonyrefail.

Alex Davies-Jones, a Community Councillor who has lived in Tonyrefail all her life will be the Labour candidate in Tonyrefail West,

which includes Penrhiwfer and Edmonstown. Alex told the *Labour Herald*, "I would be honoured and privileged to represent the residents and businesses of Tonyrefail. I want to be a fresh voice for the area and am ready to take on that challenge."

Dan Owen-Jones is well

known in the Community, where he's currently chair of the Community Council. Dan will contest Tonyrefail East. Speaking after his selection, Dan said, "It's a privilege to be selected to contest the seat in which I work and live. Tonyrefail means a great deal to me and I want to see it thriving in the future."



Tories continue to make a mess of Brexit

Theresa May's government is still making a complete hash of Brexit, refusing to publish a proper plan for Britain's departure from the EU, or to acknowledge the economic cost that will accompany a so-called 'hard' Brexit in which we leave the single market.

Pontypridd's Labour MP **Owen Smith** said: "The independent Office for Budget Responsibility has already said Brexit is going to cost £2000 for every family here in Pontypridd and across the country. That's why we need the Tories to spell out how they are going to avoid making people poorer as a result of the Brexit vote."



Owen Smith MP



Mick Antoniw at the Supreme Court in his role as Counsel General for Wales

MAKING BREXIT WORK FOR WALES

In December 2016, Mick Antoniw AM, in his role of Counsel General, intervened on behalf of the Welsh Government on the Article 50 case before the Supreme Court. At the time of going to press, the court's verdict wasn't available, but here Mick Antoniw answers the key questions about the intervention:

Is the Welsh Government trying to stop Brexit?

Absolutely not. The referendum result was clear and Labour respects the decision of the British people.

So why is the Welsh Government intervening?

Article 50 starts the process for leaving the EU. The Welsh Government believes that this requires approval from our sovereign UK Parliament and from the Welsh Assembly. We need to ensure that the terms of withdrawal benefit Wales and protect Welsh laws.

What terms does the Welsh Government want?

The terms on which we leave the EU will have a major impact on Wales' future prosperity and the life chances of our children. Thousands of jobs are dependent on exports to the EU. We know the Tory Government will look after

the interests of bankers in the City of London, but the Welsh Government's job is to look after Welsh jobs and investment. That's why our priority is for the terms to include tariff-free access to the single market.

What happens next?

Whatever the Supreme Court's decision, the Welsh Government believes that we can only progress by consensus. That means the UK Government must work with Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to ensure that Brexit works for every part of Britain.

STANDING UP FOR CAVITY WALL INSULATION VICTIMS

Local Assembly Member **Mick Antoniw** is working on behalf of dozens of residents in Rhydyfelin who have been mis-sold cavity wall insulation.

Speaking to *the Labour Herald* after a public meeting held in November, Mick Antoniw said: "People have been encouraged to insulate their homes and have had this work carried out under a UK Government-backed scheme in good faith. It is appalling that in many instances the work was either unnecessary or

not completed to the appropriate standard."

Mick Antoniw, who has been working closely with Councillor **Maureen Webber** and **Pauline Saunders** of the Cavity Insulation Victims Alliance added: "This is a complex issue, but I'm pleased to have helped find a resolution for a number of residents. I am determined to pursue a fair resolution for all those affected locally."



RCT Labour Investing In Your Priorities

Huge Infrastructure Programme Rolling Out to Taff Ely

Over 100 streets and roads have already benefited from Labour-led RCT Council's Highways, Transportation, Infrastructure and Strategic Projects programme. The £23m fund takes the total investment to over £76m since 2011.

Allen Bevan,

Labour's candidate in Trallwng, told *The Labour Herald*:

"Despite savage cuts to public spending by the Tory UK Government, Labour in RCT has prioritised investment in infrastructure across the county borough.

"Since the programme began, over £3.5m has been invested in our highways – including the resurfacing of West Street parking area and South Street in Trallwn."

Beddau Councillor, Ricky Yeo, added:

"Beddau is one of many wards that has seen road improvements. Whilst the Tories are willing to see our roads crumble, it is a Labour council that is investing to ensure that our roads are safe and reliable for the years ahead."



Owen is Pontypridd's voice in the House of Commons

Tories Changes Rules to Cling to Power

Conservative plans to reduce the number of MPs could see the Pontypridd constituency split in two. The proposals take no notice of historic communities and would see communities divided between Rhondda and Cynon Valley.

The electoral register used to decide the new boundaries was significantly out of date; using data from December 2015. The boundary review did not take into account the large number of people who registered to vote ahead of the EU referendum.

Speaking to *The Herald* Owen Smith MP said: "This Tory government claim they want equal size constituencies, then neglect 1.9 million voters who registered before last June.

"They claim they want to save money but have been forced to admit the cost of government will remain unchanged. This attack on democracy is nothing less than an attempt to make Tory rule a near certainty."

Our Welsh NHS: Investment, Innovation & Improvement

Healthcare in Wales continues to be strengthened and improved under the Welsh Labour Government. For example, figures published toward the end of 2016 showed that ambulance response times have improved dramatically.

Local AM Mick Antoniw said, "We have seen a sustained improvement on ambulance response times and have now reached a tipping point where Wales is the only part of the UK where response times are improving."

The future direction of the Royal Glamorgan was also underlined in late 2016, with a £6m investment in our local hospital's diagnostic hub. Mick Antoniw said, "This announcement is great news and establishes our local hospital as a centre of excellence in the field of diagnostics."

The improving trend in Healthcare also extends to innovations such as the new Welsh Organ Donation system which, 1 year after its launch, is helping to save more lives.



Pontypridd Hard Hit by Tory Austerity



Writing for *The Herald*, MP Owen Smith reacts to the Tory Autumn Statement.

Tory austerity since 2010 has hit communities across Pontypridd hard. Cuts to support for working people through reducing Tax and Universal Credits has left thousands of our friends and neighbours worse off by thousands of pounds a year. Women and disabled people have been hit hardest of all. I hoped that there would be a reversal of the punitive

cuts to Universal Credit for working families on low and middle incomes, and the reinstatement of the £30 a week cut to Employment Support Allowance for Disabled People.

Apart from a minor change to universal Credit, the new Chancellor, Phillip Hammond showed no more sense of the damage austerity is doing than did his predecessor, George Osborne.

DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES. QUICKLY.

Thousands in Taff Ely to benefit from 'Best in UK' policies from the Welsh Labour Government

The Welsh Labour Government has moved swiftly to implement a range of policy promises from its 2016 manifesto. As well as a new childcare offering (see Page 1), announcements on residential care and student finance, will benefit thousands of local people.

Mick Antoniw AM said, "People tell me that they are worried about having to use their life savings to pay for care when they get older. It's right that those who have played fair and paid in, get a better deal and are able to pass on something to their families."

"That's why Welsh Labour's decision to raise the capital limit in charging for residential social care

from £24,000 to £30,000 from April this year as a first step to more than doubling the limit to £50,000 is so important."

"Similarly, we must ensure that we treat our young people fairly too. So, Welsh Labour's plans for the most generous package of student support in the UK is great news. The average Welsh student will receive £6,500 a year, with pro-rata support available to part-time students, which will help widen access for students from deprived backgrounds."

"These policies are about fairness," adds Mick Antoniw. "I'm proud to be a member of a Welsh Government that is moving quickly to deliver on its promises to the people of Wales."



Mick Antoniw AM is part of the Welsh Government that is delivering for Wales



Welsh Labour Llafur Cymru
DOUBLE THE CAPITAL ALLOWANCE FOR THOSE GOING INTO RESIDENTIAL CARE
DYBLU'R TERFYN CYFALAF AR GYFER Y RHEINY SY'N MYND I OFAL PRESWYL



Welsh Labour Llafur Cymru
FREE CHILDCARE FOR WORKING PARENTS
GOFAL PLANT AM DDIM AR GYFER RHIENI SY'N GWEITHIO



Council Gives Jobs Boost to Taff Vale Site

Exciting plans to redevelop the Taff Vale precinct site in Pontypridd have been approved by the council's cabinet.

Speaking to *The Labour Herald*, local Councillor **Steve Carter** said: "The redevelopment of this key site will be a huge boost for Pontypridd and the

surrounding area. "The initial £1.5m investment will support the major development of the town centre site for a three-building, office-led development which will include food and drink use.

In December, the council's Labour cabinet approved a further £2m to help speed

progress. "With our excellent transport links and proximity to other Valley communities and Cardiff, this major investment will bring jobs and improve the local economy. This long-awaited development has only been made possible with the support of our Labour-led RCT Council."

Get in touch



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Member of Parliament for Pontypridd

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Jean Hutchinson and Ray Butler are Welsh Labour's candidates in Tonteg

MASSIVE INVESTMENT IN PARKS & PLAY AREAS HELPS RCT WIN AWARD

Nearly 50 parks and play areas will have been upgraded and improved by the end of 2016/17 with more planned in the future, with Labour-led RCT Council allocating £1.7m towards the playground investment programme.

Community Councils are also playing their part in ensuring that our green spaces and

play areas are well equipped, safe and enjoyable places for the whole community.

RCT's investment in parks and play areas has seen our local Council winning Green Flag awards for both Ynysangharad War Memorial Park and Taffs Well Park. This international benchmark recognises the best green spaces in the country.

A number of new play areas have been introduced and even more have been upgraded, with others planned.

Commenting on the new play area in Nantgarw, Councillor **Jill Bonetto** said: "The play area has delighted local children and their parents. It's a great environment for

kids to have fun and for parents to meet up."

Tonteg Community Councillor **Ray Butler** said: "Children's play is very important to Llantwit Fardre Community Council. We currently look after thirteen play areas and during 2017 we plan to replace the swings at Woodlands, Llantwit Fardre and the Dell, Tonteg."

Promoted by Jill Bonetto on behalf of Pontypridd Labour Party, both at 12 West View, Taffs Well, CF15 7SF Printed by Trinity Mirror Printing Ltd, Tidal Sidings, Portmanmoor Industrial Estate, Carfidd, CF24 5HD

I want to know about your priorities for our area.

What could Labour do to improve things in our area?

My priorities are:

- Health & Social care
- Education
- Jobs and the economy
- Local Government services
- Other
- Didn't Vote

In 2017 I'm voting:

- Welsh Labour
- Tory
- UKIP
- Plaid Cymru
- Lib Dem
- Don't Know/Don't vote

Could you help us stay in touch by delivering leaflets in your street?

Yes No Maybe

I'd like to vote by post, please send me a postal vote form

I'd like to register as a Labour supporter

name

phone

email

address

Please return the completed form to:
12 West View, Taffs Well, CF15 7SF

Welsh Labour **Llafur Cymru**

The Labour Party may contact you from time to time using the details you have supplied. If you do not wish to receive information from the Labour Party please write to 12 West View, Taffs Well, CF15 7SF

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