

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 March, 2019

- PRESENT:** Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Chair)
Councillor Ieuan Williams (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Richard Dew, Carwyn Jones, R. Meirion Jones,
Alun Mummery, Dafydd Rhys Thomas, Robin Williams
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Assistant Chief Executive (Partnership, Community & Service Improvement)
Head of Function (Resources) & Section 151 Officer
Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer
Head of Service (Housing Services)
Head of Children and Families' Services
Head of Learning
Interim Head of Highways, Waste and Property
Head of Democratic Services
Principal Development Officer (Housing) (for item 9)
Supporting Families Unit Manager (for item 10)
Committee Officer (ATH)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor R.G.Parry, OBE, FRAGS
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Glyn Haynes, Eric Jones (from item 13), Dylan Rees
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1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard Dew declared a personal and prejudicial interest with regard to 13 on the agenda.

Councillor Dylan Rees (not a member of the Executive) declared a personal interest with regard to item 13 on the agenda.

2. URGENT MATTERS CERTIFIED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR HIS APPOINTED OFFICER

None to report.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on 18 February, 2019 and 7 March, 2019 (extraordinary) were presented for the Executive's consideration.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on 18 February, 2019 and 7 March, 2019 (extraordinary) be confirmed as correct.

4. THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democratic Services incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period from April, 2019 to November, 2019 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Head of Democratic Services updated the Executive as follows –

Items new to the Work Programme -

- Item 3 – Waste Management Contract (approval of the timetable, process and budget for the delivery of the Waste Management Service from April, 2021 onwards) to be considered at the Executive's 29 April, 2019 meeting.
- Item 11 – Waste Management Contract (Final approval of the service delivery method for the delivery of the Waste Management Service from April, 2021) to be considered at the Executive's 17 June, 2019 meeting.
- Items 12 and 19 - CIW Inspection of Children's Services – Improvement Plan Quarterly progress report to be considered at the Executive at its 17 June and 16 September, 2019 meetings respectively.
- Item 21 - 2020/21 Budget (initial draft Budget proposals for consultation) to be considered at the Executive's 11 November, 2019 meeting.
- Item 23 – Corporate Scorecard Quarter 2 2019/20 to be considered at the Executive's 25 November, 2019 meeting.
- Item 24 – 2019/20 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 2 to be considered at the Executive's 26 November, 2019 meeting.
- Item 25 – Learning Disabilities: Transformation of Daytime Opportunities to be considered at the Executive's 25 November, 2019 meeting.

The Officer said that subject to confirmation, new items pertaining to the Schools' Modernisation Programme may have also to be scheduled within the Work Programme.

It was resolved to confirm the updated Forward Work Programme for April to November, 2019 as presented.

5. SCORECARD MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 3 2018/19

The report of the Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Corporate Transformation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 3 2018/19 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Corporate Business reported that the performance against the majority of Performance Indicators at the end of Quarter 3 is to target and is especially good in comparison with that of Quarter 3 2017/18. Three PIs are recorded as underperforming two of which are in Adults' Services – PM20a: the percentage of adults who completed a period of re-ablement and have a reduced package of care and support 6 months later and PAM/025 (PM19): the rate of people kept in hospital while waiting for social care per 1,000 population aged 75+, and one - PAM018 - is in the Regulation and Economic Development Service and relates to the percentage of all planning applications determined in time. The report outlines the main reasons for the below target performance in these areas and the mitigating actions that are being taken to remediate the situation in each case.

For attendance at work, Quarter 3 showed a score of 2.69 working days lost per FTE which is a near identical score to that of Quarter 3 2017/18. Performance in relation to sickness absence in the primary schools sector is showing as RED on the Scorecard; targeted support is being provided by the Learning Service and Human Resources for the 10 primary schools with the highest level of sickness absence.

With regard to Customer Service the provision of written responses to complaints within timescale in Children's Services remains an issue although the Service has put in place specific measures to improve performance in responding to complaints. The Council's social media presence increased once more in Quarter 3 to 29k followers as did the number of registered users of AppMôn which has increased by over 1,700 users from the end of Quarter 2 to 6,607 at the end of Quarter 3. No data can be provided for customer complaints outside of Social Services or for FOI for the quarter because of the long-term sickness absence of the data collating officer. The challenge remains to ensure that the positive performance of most of the Council's services is maintained into Quarter 4 and that the areas of underperformance are addressed.

Councillor Dylan Rees, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the Committee's meeting of 19 March, 2019 at which the Quarter 3 Corporate Scorecard Monitoring report was considered reported that the Committee had noted that performance during Q3 against national performance indicators was generally good with a few areas requiring further attention - in Planning, Learning and Adults' Services. The Committee also noted the sickness absence levels with the SLT recommending that priority be given to improving attendance at work in Adults' Services, Highways, Waste and Property Services and within primary schools within the Learning Service. Whilst the Committee was concerned about the time taken by Children's Services to respond to formal complaints it noted the positive impact of the mitigation measures that had recently been put in place. The Committee had resolved to note the areas which the Senior Leadership Team is managing to secure improvements into the future as outlined in the report and to recommend the mitigation measures for those areas as set out in the report.

The Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth in accepting that there has been an issue with sickness absence in primary schools, confirmed that a sickness improvement plan is being implemented; with regard to the below target performance of the Planning Service in determining planning applications within time, the Portfolio Member for Planning and Public Protection said that as the report indicates, there are specific factors which account for this drop in performance.

The Head of Children and Families' Services explained the steps being taken to ensure that Children's Services provide a timely written response to all complaints received. The Service has amended its complaints response procedures and this is beginning to yield results. A more rapid response to complaints resolution has reduced the number of complaints and, where a response within timescale is not possible, the Service seeks to provide an explanation, to secure the complainant's agreement to a time extension and to maintain contact with the complainant. Three complaints received more recently have all been responded to within time.

It was resolved to accept the Corporate Scorecard report for Q3 2018/19, to note the areas in which the Senior Leadership Team is managing to secure improvements into the future, and to accept the mitigation measures in relation to those areas as outlined therein.

6. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' SERVICES PROGRESS REPORT

The report of the Head of Children and Families' Services documenting progress to date against the Service Improvement Plan was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Chair and Portfolio Member for Social Services reported that moving forward it has been agreed to close down the current Service Improvement Plan (SIP) and to produce a Service Development Plan for 2019-22. This will incorporate the two amber areas that have not been fully completed from the SIP along with the 14 areas for development identified

the CIW's re-inspection report of December, 2018. In addition, the Service will also be taking the steps described in the report in relation to promoting looked after children and young people's participation; reviewing policy and quality assurance; continuing to hold Laming visits and strengthening relationships and joint-working arrangements.

The Head of Children and Families' Services said that work is progressing apace on developing Small Group Homes and the new Foster Carers' package both of which are designed to increase placement choice. The Foster Carers' package which offers enhanced benefits to the Authority's Foster Carers is currently being marketed with the changes coming into effect in April, 2019.

Councillor Dylan Rees reported from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's meeting of the 19 March, 2019 at which the Children and Families' Services Progress report was discussed. The Committee in noting the replacement of the Service Improvement Plan with a 3 year Service Development Plan acknowledged the significant progress made during the lifetime of the SIP noting also that the momentum of improvement needs to be sustained over the course of the Service Development Plan. The Committee further noted the developments with regard to Small Group Homes and the Foster Carers package, and with Tuesday 19 March being designated World Social Work day, the Committee's Members expressed their gratitude to the Authority's Social Workers for their efforts and commitment in what can often be a challenging environment. The Committee confirmed that it was satisfied with the steps taken to progress implementation of the Service Improvement Plan and the pace of progress with this and with implementing improvements within Children's Services, and that it was satisfied also for the Service to move forwards with a new Service Development Plan.

The Executive in noting that bringing the Service Improvement Plan to a close marks the end of a significant phase for Children's Services at the Council, acknowledged the improvements achieved during this period and the work of the Service's staff in making that possible. The Executive noted further that the progress made over the course of the SIP provides a sound foundation for taking the Service Development Plan forwards thereby maintaining the process of improvement into the future.

It was resolved to confirm –

- **That the Executive is satisfied with the steps taken to progress implementation of the Service Improvement Plan and the pace of progress, and that it is also satisfied for the Service to move forward with a new Service Development Plan that will replace the current Service Improvement Plan.**
- **That the Executive is satisfied with the pace of progress and improvements made to date within Children and Families' Services.**

7. DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS POLICY (DHP)

The report of the Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer seeking the Executive's approval for a revised Local Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Scheme for 2019/20 was presented for consideration. The report provided information on the operation of the DHP during 2018/19 and whether on that basis, any changes are necessary for the future.

The Portfolio Member for Finance reported that DHPs provide claimants with "further financial assistance" to meet their housing costs on top of any other welfare benefits they may receive, where the Local Authority considers that such additional help is necessary. All DHP awards must be made within the overall cash limits as determined by the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). The DWP will award the Local Authority an annual sum

towards the administration of the scheme with local authorities being able to top up the Government's contribution by an additional 150% maximum; however top-ups would have to come from the Council's own funding. Following the welfare reform measures of April, 2013, demand for DHP increased substantially but now appears to be reducing. The DWP grant to the Council for DHP in 2018/19 was £153,307 of which £142,432 has been spent as of 1 March, 2019. There was an underspend on the grant in 2017/18 for which the Authority received some negative publicity as under the rules of the scheme, any unspent allocation must be returned to the DWP. To ensure the most effective use of the DHP budget including full allocation of all the budget and to respond to any revisions of the guidelines by the DWP, the Council reviews and where necessary, amends its DHP policy annually.

The Portfolio Member for Finance said that last year, the Authority's policy was changed to provide assistance with clearing rent arrears where this was a barrier to moving to more suitable accommodation. Experience during the year has shown that the policy needs to be developed further in this respect to assist people to stay in their properties, where the tenancy is deemed sustainable, by contributing to pay rent arrears where beneficial to the claimant. This is the only change proposed for 2019/20 and is detailed in paragraph 2.10 of the policy.

The Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that based on the latest information, approximately £150k of the 2018/19 DWP grant has now been spent.

It was resolved to approve the revised Local Discretionary Housing Payment Policy (DHP) Scheme for 2019/20 and for subsequent years as Appendix A to the report, noting that the approved scheme will apply for subsequent years and will only be brought back to the Executive if future amendments are required.

8. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan for 2019 to 2049 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Housing and Supporting Communities reported that the HRA Business Plan forms the primary tool for financial planning for the delivery and management of the Council's housing stock. In particular the Business Plan demonstrates how the Council brings all its stock to Welsh Housing Quality Standards (there remains some properties that are classified as "acceptable fails"); how the Council intends to maintain and exceed WHQS and the investment needed to increase the housing stock. The Council, through its HRA, owns and manages 3,819 properties and just over 700 garages across the Island. Over the course of the Business Plan, the stock will increase to over 5,000 units.

The Portfolio Member said that the HRA Business Plan puts forward a positive vision for the future of the Council's housing stock and he commended the Business Plan to the Executive.

The Head of Housing Services updated the Executive by confirming that there had been some changes in the figures with these having been circulated to Members during the week. The first year of the Business Plan is based on the 2019/20 budget which was approved by the Council in February, 2019. In the period since February a reconciliation of the figures has shown that some elements have slipped resulting in some changes specifically to the figures for new build in Year 1 of the Plan resulting in the inclusion of an additional £2m for Year 1. This has entailed a slight increase in the level of borrowing which in Year 1 will be covered by the HRA reserves. The Business Plan is intended to demonstrate the viability of the Housing Revenue Account over the 30 year period with the priority being to maintain and

surpass the Welsh Housing Quality Standards and to increase the housing stock thereby providing a boost to the local economy as the Council puts into effect its housing development programme.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2019-2049, and in particular, the HRA Budget for 2019-20 for submission to Welsh Government.**
- **To approve the proposed Housing Capital Programme for 2019-2020 as stated within the Capital Budget.**
- **To delegate to the Housing Portfolio Member, the Head of Housing Services and the Head of Function (Resources)/ Section 151 Officer the authority to agree the format and final wording of the 2019-2049 Business Plan, prior to its submission to Welsh Government.**

9. APPROVAL OF THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME COMMISSIONING STRATEGY AND GRANT EXPENDITURE SCHEME

The report of the Head of Housing Services seeking the Executive's approval for the Supporting People Programme Commissioning Strategy and Grant Expenditure Scheme 2019/20 was presented for consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Housing and Supporting Communities reported that the Supporting People Programme is a policy framework and funding initiative by the Welsh Government which provides Housing-related support for a variety of groups of people who are equally vulnerable. The services do not include the funding of accommodation costs or the provision of health or care costs. Following the Welsh Government's decision to combine the Supporting People Programme Grant, the Homelessness Prevention Grant and the Rent Smart Wales (Enforcement) Grant, all three grants will be provided under the name of the Housing related Support grant from April, 2019 onwards. The Welsh Government has also combined another 7 individual grants under the name Children and Communities Grant Programme which from 1 April, 2019 will combine the individual grants listed in paragraph 1.4 of the report.

The Portfolio Member emphasised the importance of this grant continuing at the same, if not increased level in order to maintain support for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families within the Island's society.

The Principal Development Officer (Housing) said that the current climate is challenging financially, and there is also uncertainty regarding the formula for redistributing Supporting People funding. When the formula was reviewed in 2012/13 and 2013/14 the funding for the North Wales authorities subsequently decreased by 23% over the course of the following 6 years. The Welsh Government is again considering revising the formula and Anglesey has to be alert to a potential loss of funding. For Anglesey the grant is essential to the Council's preventative programme enabling it to provide for the needs of 650 individuals on the Island on a weekly basis. Any further reduction in the grant funding would have a serious impact potentially putting the future of some schemes within the Supporting People Programme at risk.

The Head of Function (Resources)/Section 15 1 Officer said that Welsh Government Officials addressed a recent meeting of Local Government Treasurers in Wales on changes in the way the grant is distributed across Wales. A sub-group of Local Government Treasurers in Wales is being set up to look at the issue in tandem with Welsh Government in order to find a way of protecting authorities that will be affected the

most by changes in the funding formula. As these are more likely to be in North Wales, one Treasurer from the six North Wales authorities will be a member of the sub-group.

The Executive was agreed that Supporting People funded services are vitally important in helping provide support for a variety of groups of vulnerable people over a wide range of programmes whose needs would otherwise have to be met from the Council's own core budget. The Executive noted that any further reduction in funding as a result of changes to the funding formula could have an adverse impact on provision where ideally, stability in the form of funding assurance over the long-term is required.

It was resolved to approve the following –

- **The recommendations of the Supporting People Commissioning Plan 2019-20.**
- **The funding allocation for every Service area as outlined on Page 13 of the Supporting People Commissioning Plan.**

10. CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES GRANT 2019/20

The joint report of the Head of Learning, Head of Children and Families' Services and the Head of Housing Services incorporating the Children and Communities Draft Plan 2019/20 was presented for the Executive's approval.

The Supporting Families Unit Manager reported that as from April, 2019 Welsh Government will be combining the 7 individual grants listed in the report under the Children and Communities Grant Programme. Whilst each programme continues to plan, and to report independently to the Welsh Government, in accordance with the new Flexible Funding initiative, the Authority now has to submit one grant application for these grants. The 2019/20 financial year is seen as a transition year with further work being undertaken to map and align services to improve customer focus and outcomes. The Executive's approval is sought for the 2019-2020 Plan with a view to then returning with a plan for 2020 onwards which will see grant programmes better align and target specific groups/ provide certain services in accordance with local demographics.

The Executive noted that the Authority has to be alert to any reduction in funding as a result of the amalgamation of the 7 individual grants.

It was resolved to approve the Children and Communities Draft Plan for 2019-20.

11. SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating a revised School Transport Policy was presented for the Executive's approval.

The Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth reported that whilst no fundamental changes to the eligibility criteria for school transport are proposed (these are outlined in section 1.2.1 of the report) the revised policy provides detailed clarification on the areas set out in section 1.2 of the report. The Portfolio Member referred to the comments of the Finance Scrutiny Panel which gave detailed consideration to the financial impact of the reformed transport policy at its meeting on 14 February, 2019 noting the reconciliation work on taxi routes that had taken place to confirm eligibility for the service; the resulting reduction in the number of children receiving the service; the inadequacy of the historical budget to meet demand cost for services and the development of partnership work in this area between the Learning, Highways and Resources Services.

The Head of Learning said that the current School Transport Policy has been reviewed to fulfil the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 and to provide

stakeholders with a comprehensive understanding of transport eligibility. The revised policy will also ensure that the Education and Highways Departments act effectively to provide the service and it will confirm their transport provision procedures. Also, the policy will ensure value for money and a quality service for stakeholders.

Councillor Dylan Rees reported from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's meeting of the 19 March, 2019 at which the Revised School Transport Policy was discussed. In recommending adoption of the policy to the Executive the Scrutiny Committee had noted that the revised policy is a clarification of the current policy and does not introduce anything new and that it is fully compliant with the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. The Committee had also recommended that where practicable, consideration be given to the timing of school transport to ensure that pupils who need to can access transport to attend breakfast clubs.

It was resolved –

- **To adopt the revised School Transport Policy with effect from the beginning of the new academic year (September 2019).**
- **To note the comments of the Finance Scrutiny Panel.**

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the discussion on the following item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the said Act and in the Public Interest Test as presented.

13. MODERNISING ANGLESEY SCHOOLS – FULL BUSINESS CASE (FBC) FOR A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL TO REPLACE YSGOL BODFFORDD AND YSGOL CORN HIR

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating the Full Business Case for a new primary school to replace Ysgol Bodffordd and Ysgol Corn Hir was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, Councillor Richard Dew withdrew from the meeting during the consideration and determination thereof.

The Head of Learning reported that the Full Business Case sets out the strategic, economic, commercial, financial and managerial justification for the proposal. Also included are the specifications for the new school and the project management and completion timescale. Welsh Government approval of the Full Business Case will secure 50% of the finance for the project. The Officer said Ysgol Henblas was part of the decision taken by the Executive on 30 April, 2018 to approve Option 2 whereby a new school for Bodffordd and Corn Hir schools would be built and an educational provision would be maintained in Llangristiolus either by maintaining Ysgol Henblas in its current form or by merging it with the new school to form a multi-site school. This decision depended on assurance being received that standards at Ysgol Henblas are improving and that pupil numbers remain constant. The outcome of an Estyn re-inspection of the school in October, 2018 confirms that progress has been made against the recommendations of the original inspection of May, 2017; also projections for pupil numbers indicate that these will remain constant over the next 3 years. The Authority therefore feels that it has had assurance with regard to improving standards and the stability of pupil numbers at Ysgol Henblas to enable the school to be removed from the proposal.

Councillor Dylan Rees reported from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's meeting of the 19 March, 2019 at which the Full Business Case was discussed. The Committee was updated

on, and noted the ways in which the Full Business Case addresses the matters which it had previously raised at the Strategic Outline Case stage in relation to highway and parking sufficiency issues; traffic and road safety issues in the vicinity of the new school; the future of Canolfan Bodffordd as a community resource and the affordability of the proposal. The Committee also noted the improved position at Ysgol Henblas and as a result of the information and clarifications received, it recommended approval of the Full Business Case and the removal of Ysgol Henblas from the proposal.

The Interim Head of Highways, Waste and Property outlined the traffic management arrangements in the vicinity of the new school.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Full Business Case (FBC) for the new primary school to replace Ysgol Bodffordd and Ysgol Corn Hir.**
- **To approve the submission of the Full Business Case to Welsh Government.**
- **To approve ring-fencing capital receipts for the construction of the new primary school, subject to no problems arising with selling the site(s).**
- **That Ysgol Henblas be removed from the proposal because it is judged that standards at the school have improved and that the number of pupils at the school remains constant.**

**Councillor Llinos Medi Huws
Chair**