

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUDGET

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Bryan Owen (Chair)
Councillor K.P.Hughes(Vice-Chair)

Councillors W J Chorlton, R LI Hughes, T LI Hughes, K P Hughes, B Owen,
R G Parry OBE and G O Parry MBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Head of Function Legal and Administration
Director of Community
Committee Services Manager (JG)
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Lifelong Learning
Chief Executive
Consultant Section 151 Officer
Corporate Director (Sustainable Development)
Head of Service (Finance)

APOLOGIES: Councillor O Glyn Jones

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor R.G.Parry,OBE, declared an interest in Item 5 of these minutes and was not present at the meeting during any discussion or voting thereon.

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

None to declare.

3 2013/14 BUDGET STRATEGY UPDATE - (A) REVIEW OF FINANCIAL RESERVES AND BALANCES

Submitted for information – The report of the Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer updating previous assessments of financial reserves and advising on the potential release of small amounts from earmarked and restricted reserves as a one-off contribution to protect general balances during the current year.

Members were of the opinion that the limit for the carry forward of reserves within Services should be amended to 0.5% of budget (compared to the present 1%) from the end of 2013-14. This would then assist the 2014-15 budget.

RESOLVED

•To note the contents of the report;

•That the carry forward of Service reserves be limited to 0.5% of budget from the end of 2013-14, except where a commitment has been approved in advance.

4 2013/14 BUDGET STRATEGY UPDATE - (B) UPDATE TO BUDGET STRATEGY AND INITIAL DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2013-14

Submitted – The report of the Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer on the budget assumptions and the effect of the provisional settlement.

Reported – That the content of the Budget was not prescribed, but its timetable required the co-operation of the Executive, Scrutiny and full Council before adoption in March 2013. An all Member workshop had been established for 4th December, 2012 to go through the options for growth and savings. The initial proposals for the budget would be presented to the Executive in January and thereafter the completion of a consultation document covering both strategy and annual budget issues, should serve both the requirements of the Constitution and public consultation.

Members requested officers to provide further information to the Executive as regards the position of the pension fund and the costs of energy.

RESOLVED

- To adopt the draft standstill budget as a basis for the 2013-14 revenue budget;**
- To seek to make sufficient savings in 2013-14 to balance the revenue budget without use of reserves;**
- To plan to cover unavoidable costs of severance or other one-off costs of delivering savings without the use of reserves;**
- That the Interim Head of Function(Resources) be requested to provide the Executive with further information as regards pension and energy costs.**

5 NATIONAL PROCUREMENT SERVICE

Submitted for information – The report of the Head of Service (Finance) seeking the Executive's approval to join the proposed Welsh Public Sector National Procurement Service.

Members expressed concern regarding the ability and intentions of the NPS to provide a bilingual service consistent with the requirements of the Council's language scheme. They felt that it was important that local businesses should be given the opportunity to use the Welsh language and that they be given fair consideration in that respect.

RESOLVED

- To commit to joining the National Procurement Service for the procurement of common and repetitive goods and services for an initial period of 5 years.**
- That the Chief Executive be requested to write to the Managing Director of Newport City Council expressing this Council's concern that the business case makes no reference to the provision of a bilingual service and that there is some doubt whether the current proposal will enable this Council to comply with its Welsh Language Plan.**

6 PLANNING MATTERS PROCEDURE RULES

Submitted – A joint report by the Legal Services Manager and the Head of Service (Planning and Public Protection) seeking approval to make permanent changes to the Planning Matters Procedure Rules of the Council Constitution, following the end of the 12 month trial period.

Members considered that the trial period should be extended by a further 12 months, on the basis that there would be a 25% reduction in the number of members following the May 2013 election which by necessity would reduce the membership and quorum of the Planning and Orders Committee. It was also highly likely that there would be new Members on the Council after the

election and therefore the new Council should be afforded the opportunity to evaluate the position at the end of that extended trial period.

RESOLVED to recommend to the County Council that the changes made to the Council's Constitution by the Minister to the Rules (for a trial period of 12 months from 20 November, 2011) be extended for a further trial period of 12 months.

The meeting concluded at 11.30am

**COUNCILLOR BRYAN OWEN
CHAIR**