

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2014

- PRESENT:** Councillor Ieuan Williams (Chair)
Councillor J. Arwel Roberts (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Richard Dew, Kenneth Hughes, Aled Morris Jones,
H. Eifion Jones, Alwyn Rowlands
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Lifelong Learning
Director of Community
Director of Sustainability
Interim Head of Function (Resources) & Section 151 Officer
Interim Head of Democratic Services (for item 4)
Acting Accountancy Services Manager (BO)
Programme Manager (Schools Modernisation) (EB) (for item 9)
Policy & Strategy Manager CWO) (for item 8)
Committee Officer (ATH)
- APOLOGIES:** None
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Jeff Evans, R. Llewelyn Jones (item 9); Victor Hughes (item 11), R. Meirion Jones (items 8 & 11); R. G. Parry, OBE (item 11); John Griffith, Llinos Huws

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were made as follows:

Councillor J. Arwel Roberts declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of item 9 on the agenda and withdrew from the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor Jeff Evans (not a Member of the Executive) declared an interest in respect of item 9.

Councillor R. Llewelyn Jones (not a Member of the Executive) declared an interest in respect of item 9.

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

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 20th October, 2014 were presented and confirmed as correct.

4 THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Interim Head of Democratic Services incorporating the Executive's Forward Work programme for the period from December, 2014 to July, 2015 was presented for the Executive's endorsement.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services reported that there were 13 new items on the Work Programme and that four specifically in relation to financial matters are scheduled for consideration at the Executive's December meeting.

It was resolved to confirm the updated Forward Work programme for the period from December, 2014 to July, 2015.

5 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 2 2014-15

The report of the Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the Council's services for the first half of the financial year and the projected position for the year end including the overall position and service variances was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Finance reported that the overall projected financial position for 2014/15 is an overspend of £456k. A summary of the financial performance by service for the first half of the year and the projected out-turn position for each service is set out in Annex A to the report with an explanatory narrative provided in Appendix A.

The Executive noted the position and the remedial actions being taken where required.

It was resolved –

• To note –

- The position set out in respect of financial performance to date.**
 - The projected year end deficit, and**
 - The actions being taken to address this.**
- To request the Senior Leadership Team to develop proposals to bring the Council back within budget in 2014/15 and to report these to the next Executive.**

6 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 2 2014-15

The report of the Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the capital budget for the first half of the financial year was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Finance referred to the five most significant projects in terms of risk as detailed in the report. He said that one of the main risks relates to not being able to dispose of assets as and when needed, although it is anticipated that a substantial sum will be realised in the next month hopefully leading to an improvement in the third quarter. It is intended to present information about capital bids to the next meeting.

It was resolved to note the progress of expenditure and receipts against the capital budget.

7 RESERVES AND BALANCES

The report of the Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer setting out a policy for the utilisation and management of usable reserves was presented for the Executive's approval.

Councillor H.E. Jones, Portfolio Member for Finance reported that it was timely to develop a robust policy for the use of reserves and that the main thrust of the report is the establishment of arrangements whereby individual services at year end will be able to put in proposals/bids for the use of funds which will be held within a single Corporate Reserve.

The Chair sought clarification that the introduction of the proposed new policy means that individual services will no longer be able to carry forward 1% of their budgets and that service reserves will now be combined to form a composite corporate reserve. The Interim Head of Function (Resources) confirmed that that is what is being proposed and that the objective is to strengthen the Council's position with regard to the prospective management of its reserves. This is the first phase report and a subsequent report will be presented on the next stage.

It was resolved to approve the Financial Reserves and Balances Policy as set out in the report.

8 CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE PROJECT

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive incorporating a proposed Customer Service Charter setting out standards for dealing with the public was presented for the Executive's approval.

The Policy and Strategy Manager explained the background to the formulation of the Charter and its purpose along with the principles on which it is based. The Officer referred to the consultation undertaken on the Charter and the Work Package developed to support the process of improving and implementing the

Charter which will include monitoring arrangements via the Corporate Scorecard and other means to ensure that standards set out are being met.

Councillor R. Meirion Jones, whilst welcoming the Charter commented to the following effect:

- that the Charter could be more personal in its tenor by directly addressing the customer;
- that it should specify that communication with regard to correspondence will be in a language of the customer's choice;
- that the aim that telephone calls be answered within 5 rings during opening hours be reinforced by a stated default position on the software to explain to the customer what the response will be should that not be the case.
- that it would be useful if Members were provided with documentation such as this well in advance of the Executive's meeting to enable points such as those above to be raised and discussed with the Officer concerned in a more timely way.

The Chair confirmed that work is ongoing with regard to making the telephone system more user friendly. He confirmed also that there are plans to arrange monthly briefing sessions for Members to highlight upcoming issues and to allow adequate preparation time for when they are then presented to the Executive.

Councillor Aled Morris Jones proposed that during the Charter's initial implementation period, a quarterly report be presented to the Executive to monitor achievement against the standards set out within the document and to show that the Authority regards the matter of customer care as one of utmost importance.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Customer Service Charter.**
- **That a quarterly report on the initial implementation of the Customer Service Charter be presented to the Executive to monitor achievement of the standards set out.**

9 SCHOOLS MODERNISATION - HOLYHEAD AREA

The report of the Director of Lifelong Learning regarding the outcome of the formal consultation process on the proposal to merge the three schools of Ysgol Parchedig Thomas Ellis, Ysgol Llaingoch and Ysgol y Parc in a new building on the Cybi site and that the proposed new school should be a Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales school was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Having declared an interest in this matter, Councillor J. Arwel Roberts withdrew from the meeting during the discussion thereon.

The Director of Lifelong Learning reported on the principal issues that had arisen during the consultation process in relation to health and safety linked to the size of the proposed new school; traffic, transportation and road safety; class sizes; the adequacy and suitability of the Cybi site for the school proposed and the proposed

status of the new school, and he explained how the Authority had responded to those issues.

Councillors Jeff Evans and R. Llewelyn Jones spoke as Local Members. The former notwithstanding his reservations regarding the conduct of the consultation process, the merger of 3 rather than 2 schools and the outstanding traffic issues that remained to be resolved, said that he recognised the proposal as the only and best way forward in the circumstances. The latter questioned the Executive's Members on the extent of their familiarity with the Cybi site as the proposed new school site, and highlighted the absence of a Business Plan on which he believed the decision should be based.

The Director of Lifelong Learning said that the original consultation report did make reference to the figures involved in building the new school along with the revenue savings to be made from a three school merger. When adopting the Strategic Outline Plan the Executive resolved that every Business Plan would be presented for approval by the Executive. He confirmed that the Business Plan will therefore be presented to the Executive at the earliest opportunity and it will have to demonstrate both to the Executive and the Welsh Government that the proposal provides value for money.

The Chair confirmed that the decision taken today is in relation to the model and the site.

Members of the Executive gave their views on the matter. Clarification was sought and was provided by the Director of Lifelong Learning in relation to issues regarding the timing of road improvement works in around the new school site; provision for parents to exempt their children from collective worship arrangements should they wish; provision for SEN and ensuring a distinct identity for the new school as separate from the secondary school nearby.

The Chair said that he advocated the setting up of a stakeholder group to provide input at the design stage and in relation to traffic management and school travel plans. He would also wish to see the establishment of as much green areas as possible in the environs of the new school.

It was resolved that the three schools – Ysgol Parchedig Thomas Ellis, Ysgol Llaingoch and Ysgol Y Parc – be merged in a new school building on the Cybi site, and that the proposed new school will be Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales school.

10 WELSH PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS ANNUAL RETURN 2013/14

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating Welsh Government's (CyMAL) assessment of the Library Services 2013/14 Annual Library Report and the issues arising therefrom was presented for the Executive's consideration.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report for 2013/14.**

- **To note the Welsh Government's (CyMAL) assessment of the Library Services 2013/14 Annual Library report, and the issues arising.**

11 CORPORATE SCRUTINY REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE SKATE PARK CLOSURE

The report of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on its review of the closure of the Skate Park in Llangefni was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Aled Morris Jones, Portfolio Member for Economic Development, Tourism and Leisure presented the report and proposed an amendment that Officers investigate the availability of grant funding sources to allow the reinstatement of the Skate Park and report back to the January 2015 meeting of the Executive. He said that he had offered this course of action at the time of the Scrutiny Committee's review meeting.

Councillor Dylan Rees spoke as a Local Member in favour of the reinstatement of the skate park. The circumstances now provided an opportunity to turn an adverse situation around and re-establish the skate park as a brand new state of the art facility. He requested the Executive to consider approving the utilisation of £50k from general reserves as match funding towards the re-establishment of the skate park. Councillor R.G. Parry, OBE also speaking as a Local Member supported the comments made with regard to the Council having a duty to make amends for the way in which the facility had been removed.

Councillor Victor Hughes as the Member who had requested the scrutiny review emphasised that the Council, having taken away a valuable community asset in an inappropriate way should pay to reinstate it on its original site as a matter of priority and learn from the experience. He asked for the Executive's support and deemed the proposed timeline to allow the investigation of alternative sources of funding to be an inadequate response to the situation.

The Interim Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer clarified that the professional advice he had given on this matter was that there was no funding for the project and none had been sought, and that he therefore advised the Executive to decline the recommendation presented. He said that there are reserves available if the Council is minded to spend reserves on rebuilding the skate park.

Councillor H. Eifion Jones, Portfolio Member for Finance said that he agreed that there are lessons to be learnt from the actions taken. However, capital funding is scarce and there are a number of calls against it. The skate park facility is not a statutory provision and priority has to be given to statutory services. There is a role for the Town Council to play. He supported the proposal to examine alternative sources of grant funding for the facility. Councillor Kenneth Hughes, Portfolio Member for Housing and Social Service supported the reinstatement of the skate park via the exploration of grant funding in the first place.

The Chair said that the recommendation to reinstate the skate park on its original site is accepted. Officer resources should be earmarked to the task of investigating and identifying grant funding for that purpose.

It was resolved -

- **That the Skate Park be reinstated on the original site outside Plas Arthur, Llangefni**
- **That Officer resources be earmarked as a matter of immediacy to investigate the availability of grant funding to enable reinstatement, and a report on potential funding sources be presented to the January, 2015 meeting of the Executive.**
- **That Heads of Service should ensure in future that appropriate training is given to officers who may find themselves in a similar situation i.e. if changes are to be made to the way citizens access or receive services, regarding the requirement to consult with stakeholders and Local Members and to undertake Equality and Privacy Impact Assessments (EIA and PIAs) accordingly.**

**Councillor Ieuan Williams
Chair**