

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Ieuan Williams (Chair)
Councillor J Arwel Roberts (Vice-Chair)

Councillors R Dew, K P Hughes, A M Jones and H E Jones

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Corporate Director (Community),
Corporate Director (Lifelong Learning),
Interim Head of Democratic Services (JHJ) (for item 5),
Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer (for items 7 & 8),
Head of Housing Services (for items 9, 10 & 11),
Business Manager (Housing)(NM) (for item 11),
Revenue & Benefits Services Manager (GJ) for item 6),
Financial Systems Manager (DG) (for item 9),
Principal Development Officer (Housing Services) (AJ) (for item 10),
Committee Officer (MEH).

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors John Griffith, Bob Parry OBE

APOLOGIES: Councillor Alwyn Rowlands

1 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor K.P. Hughes declared an interest in Item 12 and left the meeting during consideration and voting thereon.

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

None to report.

3 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 12 January, 2015 were submitted for confirmation.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 12 January, 2015 be confirmed as a true record.

4 MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

The draft minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 8th December, 2014 were submitted for information.

It was RESOLVED to accept, for information, the draft minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on the 8th December, 2014.

5 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 of 16th February to October 2015 was submitted for consideration.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services reported that the 2 Scrutiny Outcome Panels – Efficiency Savings 2014/15 and Managing Sickness Absence will be reported to the March meeting of the Executive. The Corporate Scorecard – Quarter 3, 2014/15 scheduled to be considered at the Executive's meeting on 16 March has been brought forward to the 16 February meeting.

He further stated that Items 15, 21, 22, 23 and 24 have been included within the forward work programme for consideration at the 16 March, 2015 Executive.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the updated Forward Work Programme for the period of 16th February – October 2015, subject to the additional changes outlined at the meeting.

6 DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS POLICY 2015/16 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS

Submitted – a report by the Interim Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer in relation to the above.

The Portfolio Holder (Finance) stated that the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Scheme grant had been fully utilised but not overspent. The DHPs provide claimants with 'further financial assistance' to meet their housing costs in addition to any other welfare benefits they receive, where the Local Authority considers that such additional help is necessary.

RESOLVED :-

- **To approve the current Local Discretionary Housing Payment Policy (DHP) Scheme unrevised from 6 April 2015 for 2015/16 and subsequent years.**
- **To ensure that total DHP spend for the financial year remains broadly in line with the amount allocated for the scheme by The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).**

7 CONSTITUTION CHANGES - TERMS OF REFERENCE OF APPEALS COMMITTEE

Submitted – the report of the Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer in relation to the above.

The Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer reported that currently the Appeals Committee has authority to decide appeals arising from any decision made in relation to the list of matters set out in 3.4.4.4 of the Constitution which includes employee appeals relating to grading, disciplinary and grievance.

RESOLVED to recommend to the County Council that :-

- **Council approve the changes to the Constitution, as contained in Appendix 1 attached to this report.**
- **The Head of Profession (Human Resources) be authorised to amend any relevant policies and procedures to reflect the said changes;**
- **The Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any consequential amendments to the Constitution to reflect the said changes.**

8 EXTENDING THE TERM OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Submitted – the report of the Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer in relation to the above.

RESOLVED to recommend to the County Council that :-

- **Council approve the reappointment of the independent Members of the Standards Committee for a further term of 4 years, from 17th December, 2015;**
- **Council delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer to make all consequential amendments to the Council's Constitution, and the Standards Committee's Constitution, to extend all future appointments to an automatic two terms for all independent Members of the Standards Committee.**

9 HOUSING RENTS 2015/16

Submitted – the report of the Head of Housing Services in relation to the Housing Rent HRA and Housing Service Charges 2015/16.

The Portfolio Holder (Housing & Social Services) stated each local authority has been directed by Welsh Government to implement the new rent policy from April 2015 for rent increases.

The Financial Systems Manager reported that using the WG formula for rent increases under the New Policy, the proposed rent increase for 2015/16 is 2.7% or an average weekly increase of £1.95. He further stated that WG Rent Policy does not provide any guidance on how to increase garage rents. In order to fully recover the cost of maintaining and improving the standard of garages a full assessment is required and this is envisaged to take place during 2015/16.

The Portfolio Holder (Finance) referred to 2.7 within the report which states that 195 garages are currently empty and this has been an ongoing issue. He was satisfied that an assessment is to be made on the standards of the empty garages but a completion date should be noted. The Financial Systems Manager responded that the work has been started on the assessment of the empty garages and arrangement will be put in place to afford a completion date of the work.

RESOLVED to approve rent increase for 2015/16 as follows :-

- **To approve increasing all rents below target rent of between £0.01 - £4.40 immediately to target rent;**
- **To approve increasing all rents below target rent of between £4.41 - £21.00 per week by 2.7% per week;**
- **To approve reducing the current rents above target rent of between £0.01 - £2.00 per week immediately to target rent;**
- **To approve increasing the current rent above target rent of between £2.00 - £21.00 per week by 2.7% minus £2 per week;**
- **To approve an increase of 36p per week on garage rents;**
- **To approve that the service charges costs as noted within section 3.3 of the report be applied to all tenants who receive the relevant services.**

10 SUPPORTING PEOPLE COMMISSIONING PLAN

Submitted – the report of the Head of Housing Services in relation to approval of Supporting People Programme grant Commissioning Strategy and Spend Plan.

The Portfolio Holder (Housing & Social Services) stated that the Supporting People Programme for Anglesey, which provides housing related support for vulnerable people and families has seen its annual allocation from Welsh Government for 2015/16, reduced by 8.8% which is commensurate with a £256,000 decrease. This level of decrease is substantial to the service.

The Principal Development Officer (Housing Services) reported that the reduction in funding has resulted in difficult decisions being made from April 2015, with unavoidable implications to the Local Authority's Learning Disability Budget. Historically, Supporting People has invested heavily within the provision of support for People with Learning Disabilities, with in excess of 33% of the total funding allocated toward the needs of this service area.

In addition to learning disabilities Domestic Abuse has seen a reduction of 10.3%, Services for Offenders 21%, Alcohol and Substance Misuse 10.2%, Single Parent Families 5.8% and homeless and Rough Sleepers 10.6%. All services mentioned

are provided either by the Third Sector Organisations or subsidiaries of Housing Associations.

Members of the Executive requested that a letter be sent to the Minister of Communities and Tackling Poverty and a press release in the name of the Leader and the Portfolio Holder (Housing & Social Services) expressing the County Councils deep concerns in the reduction in funding for the Supporting People Programme in North Wales.

RESOLVED :-

- **To approve the recommendations of the Supporting People Commissioning Plan;**
- **To approve the allocation of funding per service area, as outlined within the Supporting People commissioning Plan document.**

11 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN

Submitted – the report of the Head of Housing Services in relation to Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2015/16.

The Head of Housing Services reported that Members will be aware from seminars and previous reports of the intended move to buying out debt from the HM Treasury and transferring to the Public Wales Loan Board (PWLB), thereby becoming self-financing. This will also bring a range of flexibilities to the Council, for example the ability to increase housing stock. She further stated that there is a need for more affordable housing for rent and increase in the authority's housing stock on Anglesey. The authority will work closely with Môn Tenants Voice Group which has already helped develop the business plan and a number of other key policy initiatives. It was also stated that it will have a positive effect on the local economy and supply chain and it is intended to work closely with Coleg Menai and Môn Communities First to develop apprenticeships opportunities for local young people.

Members raised the issue of the Right to Buy scheme and the loss of social housing. It was noted that Carmarthenshire County Council has recently been given approval by Welsh Government to suspend the right to buy option. It was agreed that the Officers of this Council should proceed negotiations with Welsh Government in respect of this matter.

RESOLVED:-

- **That the key objectives and priorities on which the HRA Business Plan is based be endorsed and that the updated Business Plan as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.**
- **To authorise the Officers to proceed negotiations with Welsh Government in respect of suspending the Right to Buy.**

12 SCHOOL MODERNISATION - LLANNAU AREA

Submitted – a report by the Corporate Director (Lifelong Learning) in relation to a site for the new Primary School in the ‘Llannau’ area.

The Portfolio Holder (Education) stated that an assessment of 18 potential sites had been assessed and 9 non-financial options criteria were used to evaluate the sites. He noted that Llanfachraeth School with additional fields scored the highest but the stakeholder group and the consultees, requested that the project team should consider locating the new school in the centre of the new proposed catchment area, thus proposing option 7, Llanfaethlu – the second highest scoring site. Archaeological and planning investigations have taken place at both Llanfachraeth and Llanfaethlu sites. Llanfachraeth has no archaeological issues but Llanfaethlu site would require a staged programme of archaeological assessment and evaluation. A full geophysical survey of the site has now been completed. During the excavation in the identified trenches, there has been concentration of Neolithic features in two of the trenches. The project team has received verbal confirmation that the works and findings undertaken on the Llanfaethlu site does not mean that the site cannot be developed. The next stage is to negotiate with the landowner to purchase the land.

RESOLVED :-

- **To approve and agree to the site, named Option 7 in the consultation document, being the preferred site for the proposed new primary school;**
- **To authorise Officers from the Environment and Technical Services to discuss purchasing the requisite land for the proposed new primary school, subject to obtaining planning permission.**

The meeting concluded at 10.50 am

**COUNCILLOR IEUAN WILLIAMS
CHAIR**