

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 27 September 2022

- PRESENT:** Councillor Ieuan Williams (Chair for this meeting only)
- Councillors Alun Mummery, Gary Pritchard, Alun Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Dafydd R Thomas.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive/Interim Head of Democratic Services,
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer,
Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer,
Director of Social Services,
Director of Education, Skills and Young People,
Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation,
Head of Adults' Services,
Head of Housing Services,
Chief Planning Officer (DFJ),
Service Strategy & Business Manager (Sustainable Development) (GP),
Scrutiny Manager (AGD),
Policy Officer (RWJ),
Communications Officer (GJ),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Llinos Medi, Carwyn Jones, Robin Williams.
- Programme, Business Planning and Performance Manager (GJ)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Geraint Bebb, Jeff Evans, Neville Evans, Glyn Haynes, Aled M Jones, Robert LI Jones, Derek Owen, Alwen Watkin.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Ieuan Williams was appointed as Chair for this meeting only.

1 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest received.

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 19 July, 2022 were presented for confirmation.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 19 July, 2022 be 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 October 2022 to May 2023 was presented for consideration and the following changes were noted :-

New items

- Item 1 – Complex Disabled Facilities Grant Application – Delegated Decision to the Portfolio Holders for Adults' Services and Children's Services;
- Item 4 – Estyn Inspection on the Council's Education provision – Post-inspection Action Plan for the Executive's 25 October, 2022 meeting;
- Item 15 – 2023/2024 Budget – date to be confirmed for submission to the Executive, subject to Welsh Government timescale;
- Item 24 – Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget 2023/2024 – date to be confirmed for submission to the Executive, subject to Welsh Government timescale;

Rescheduled Item

- Item 17 – Council Plan 2023 – 2028 to be rescheduled from the Executive's 25 October, 2022 meeting to the 24 January, 2023 meeting.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period October 2022 to May, 2023 as presented.

5 ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

The report of the Director of Function (Council Business)/ Monitoring Officer in respect of Assistant Executive Members was presented to the Executive for consideration.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer reported that the Section 57 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced provisions enabling the appointment of elected members to be assistants to the Executive (assistants). The operation of Section 57 can only be implemented by a decision of the full Council. No more than three assistant executive members can be appointed at any one time with no remuneration for the role. All other terms and conditions shall be decided by the Leader.

It was RESOLVED to accept the recommendations at A.2 of the report for the full Council's consideration.

6 ANNUAL LETTER FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FOR WALES 2021/2022

The report of the Director of Function (Council Business)/ Monitoring Officer in relation to the Annual Letter from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales 2021/2022 was presented to the Executive for consideration.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer reported that the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales has recently published the Annual Report for 2021/2022 together with a separate annual summary of performance for each Council – the Annual Letter.

The Chief Executive reported that he attended a meeting with the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales recently and she was satisfied with the robust arrangements the Authority is undertaking in dealing with complaints.

It was RESOLVED It was RESOLVED :-

- **To note and accept the Annual Letter from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) 2021/2022;**
- **To note any feedback to be shared with the PSOW – no feedback noted;**
- **To authorise the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer to write to the PSOW to confirm that the Executive has given formal consideration to her Annual Letter and to provide assurance that the Council will continue to monitor complaints, and thereby provide members with the information required to scrutinise the Council's performance.**

7 SCORECARD MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 1, 2022/23

The report of the Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 1, 2022/2023 was presented for the Executive consideration.

The Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation reported that the scorecard highlights the position of the Council against its wellbeing objectives. The Quarter 1 report is considered to result in the Council in a positive position in respect of performance, however the financial challenges will need to be monitored due to the cost of living crisis.

The Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee said that at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 26 September, 2022 discussed the Corporate Scorecard – Quarter 1 and the Committee having considered the report and the updates provided by Officers at the meeting, resolved to note the areas which the Leadership Team is managing to secure improvements into the future and the mitigation measures outlined in the report.

Councillor Ieuan Williams said that the Council will face financial challenges and as was discussed at the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 26 September, 2022. He asked for an additional column to be included in the

Scorecard as regard to the long term tendency and the annual tendency of the corporate monitoring process.

It was RESOLVED to accept the Scorecard monitoring report for Q1, 2022/2023, to note the areas which the Senior Leadership Team are managing to secure improvements into the future and to accept the mitigation measures outlined in the report.

8 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 1, 2022/23

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the Council's services at the end of Quarter 1 of the 2022/2023 financial year was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that predicting the final year-end position at the end of Quarter 1 is difficult as the position can change considerably through the remainder of the financial year with the increase in inflation, the fact that the staff pay awards for 2022/2023 have yet to be agreed, the potential for covid related costs through the winter months and the impact on the cost of living crisis which will have on the demand for Council services. The estimated position at the end of the financial year does not take into account the proposed pay awards for teachers (September 2022) and other staff (backdated to April 2022). Once these costs are known, they will be factored into future projections. An earmarked reserve of £2.3m has been created to provide additional funding to meet these inflationary pressures, an additional £2m will be required to fund the pay awards should the current offer be accepted. This will utilise most of the earmarked reserve, leaving little additional funding to meet the expected increases in other costs. He further said that the winter pressures, which are historically seen within the Highways and Adult services, and it is hard to quantify the full extent of extra costs which could be incurred this early in the financial year. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer highlighted that a new tender contract for school transport will need to be effective from November 2022 and the taxis and mini buses contracts in January, 2023, it is anticipated that these will increase costs significantly for the Council. He wished it to be noted that there is an overspend of £1.5m within the Adults' and Children's Services at present and grants and reserves have supported these services, but without these the overspend would be over £3m and this needs to be taken into account when setting the budget for next year. Homelessness also creates pressure on the budget as the capacity of the private sector is reducing and this creates problems with additional people presenting themselves as homeless to the service. He concluded that it was very unlikely that the forecast set out in the report would be the final position and it is estimated that the Council will probably overspend its revenue budget in 2022/2023, but that the position will become clearer at the end of the second quarter.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the position set out in Appendices A and B in respect of the Authority's financial performance to date and expected outturn for 2022/23;**
- **To note the summary of Contingency budgets for 2022/23, detailed in Appendix C;**
- **To note the monitoring of agency and consultancy costs for 2022/23 in Appendices CH and D.**

9 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 1, 2022/23

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the Capital Budget for the first quarter of the financial year for the Executive's consideration.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the Capital Budget for 2022/2023 was £48.7m. He noted that it was anticipated that by the end of the Quarter 1 a total of £6.6m would have been spent. There are a number of Capital Grant schemes in the Capital Programme for 2022/2023 which are underway and progressing (these were highlighted within the report). He further said that there is a forecast underspend on the Capital Programme of £4.176m. The forecast underspend relates mainly to flood alleviation schemes and the planned maintenance, environmental works and energy efficiency schemes within the HRA, which is explained in the HRA Q1 budget monitoring report under a separate item on the Agenda. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer further said that there is a requirement to reallocate £0.140m from the match funding in relation to Traeth Coch flooding scheme to the small scale scheme to cover the expected increase costs.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the progress of expenditure and receipts against the capital budget 2022/23 at quarter 1.**
- **To approve a reallocation of £0.140m from the match funding in relation to Traeth Coch to small scale schemes to cover the expected increase cost, as noted in 3.1.1 of the report.**

10 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 1, 2022/23

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for Quarter 1 2022/2023 was presented to the Executive for consideration.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the HRA is a ring-fenced funding and its reserves are unable to be transferred to the General Fund, nor can General Fund reserves be used to fund the HRA. There is a slight overspend as regards to maintenance and repairs of £119k at the end of Q1 as is highlighted within the report. He referred to the Capital expenditure of the HRA and noted that the budget for new build has been reduced by £4.704k as can be seen at 9.2 of the report. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer further referred to the Energy Performance Improvement budget which is also anticipated to underspend by £337k. Undertaking energy performance improvement projects such as installing Solar PV panels requires consultation with and the approval of the District Network Operator (DNO) prior to undertaking the work. Obtaining the necessary consent can be a lengthy process and explains the delays in undertaking the work.

It was RESOLVED note:-

- **The position set out in respect of the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for quarter 1 2022/23;**
- **The forecast outturn for 2022/23;**
- **To approve the reduction in the capital budget by £4,704k as set out in paragraph**

9.2 of the report.

11 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 TO 2024/25

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the Council's requirement to put in place a robust system to monitor and control its revenue budget and a key element is a Medium Term Financial Plan was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that this is usually a three year Plan but due to the uncertainties it was not considered that an estimate for 2025/26 would be of any value, given that it would require a significant number of assumptions to be made, with little or no evidence to support them. An update on the UK economy and the Government's economic strategy was provided to Members. He referred to the main budget pressures facing the Council over the term of the plan as can be seen at 5.2 within the report i.e. Pay increases – non-teaching and teachers pay; Local Government and Teachers' Pension Contributions; Major Service Contracts; Energy Costs; Elderly, Nursing, EMI and Residential Care Home Fees; Domiciliary Care Contract; Children's and Adults' Services; Homelessness; School Transport; Council Tax Reduction Scheme; Capital Financing Charges and General Price Inflation. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that the indicative all Wales Settlement of a 3.6% increase in funding, previously announced by Welsh Government will not be sufficient to fund the financial pressure the Council is facing due to inflation and increasing demand for services, in particular Social Care and Homelessness.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the initial estimate show that the Council's budget will increase from £158m to around £176m, which is an increase of 11.5%. Reference was made to Table 3 of the report which highlights the impact on Council Funding for Changes in AEF and Council Tax for 2023/2024 and shows that a 10% increase in both Welsh Government funding and Council Tax would be insufficient to fund the estimated budget requirement for 2023/2024. The Council holds general balances to have sufficient funding to meet any unexpected expenditure which may arise during the year which now stands at £11m with £23m in the earmarked reserves. He noted that the Council does have some capacity to use general balances and reserves to help reduce the funding gap, but using reserves has risks in so far as they are not a recurring sources of income and using reserves does not eliminate the need to bridge the funding gap in the long term.

Councillor Ieuan Williams, in the Chair, said that he considered that an Elected Member Briefing Session needs to be arranged to discuss the Medium Term Financial Plan and to highlight the pressures on the budget that Council will faced due to the uncertainties in the global economy.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **That the Council is required to put in place a robust system to monitor and control its revenue budget, and a key element of that system is a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The plan sets out the Council's budget strategy over the next two year period and sets out the assumptions which will be taken forward to the annual budget setting process;**
- **to note the contents of the plan, to approve the assumptions made and to consider how to bridge the funding gap identified in the report as part of the process to set the 2023/24 revenue budget as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.**

12 REGIONAL AND LOCAL MARKET STABILITY

The report of the Director of Social Services in respect of the Regional and Local Market Strategy (Social Services) was presented to the Executive for consideration.

The Portfolio Holder for Adults' Services reported that this report was considered by the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee on 26 September, 2022 where there was a lengthy discussion on the implications of the Strategy. He noted that there are challenges facing the Council as to the services that will be afforded over the years. The Portfolio Holder said that there are recruitment issues across the care sector and especially attracting young people into these roles.

The Head of Adults' Services reported that the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 introduced a new duty on local authorities and health boards to develop a joint assessment of the sufficiency and sustainability of the Social Care Market. The report enables the authority to understand the social care market in North Wales, so that the authority can effectively commission and support providers of health and social care services to meet the needs of the population effectively. However, local authorities must ensure that the market stability report also contains an assessment of the market for care and support within each local authority area as well as across the RPB area as a whole. The report will inform both regional and local decision making around commissioning care and support, feeding into the strategic plan for the RPB area and helping shape local and regional commissioning strategies. He noted that there is a strong link between the Market Stability Report and the Population Needs Assessment where the population needs assessment sets out current and projected need and demand for care and support, and the range and level of services that will be required to meet that demand. Both the Population Needs Assessment and Market Stability Report documents will be used to plan local and regional delivery plan and service development plans going forward. He further reported that Home Care Service has seen an increase in demand for the service of 33% over recent years and the demand is projected to grow. There has been a fall in providers affording the Home Care service and it is concerning that recruitment into the Care Sector is decreasing and especially within the Home Care provision with the average age of Home Carers being over 50 years of age. The Head of Adults' Service further said that there is a need to support Informal Carers within the Island. He referred to the need for an increase in specialist provision for complex conditions together with Dementia Care due to the ageing population. As regards to Children's Services there need to be an increase in the provision of children and young people with complex needs i.e. learning difficulties, emotional and mental health issues.

The Scrutiny Manager, in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, said the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 26 September, 2022 discussed the Regional and Local Market Stability Report and having considered the report provided by Officers at the meeting, the Committee referred to the challenges in recruiting staff to the Care Sector and that the Council should continue to work closely with the schools and local colleges to attract young people to work within the Care Sector. The Committee noted that there is a need for a national solution for a pay increase to recognise the essential work provided by Care Workers. The Committee also highlighted the challenges in recruiting bilingual staff as Home Carers and especially within Residential Care Homes. Discussions were also undertaken as to the effect of the decision by the two neighbouring local authorities recently to change the national fees structure of the Residential and Nursing Care Homes. Having discussed the report in detail the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee accepted the report.

It was RESOLVED to approve the North Wales Market Stability Report and the Market Stability Report for Anglesey.

13 PROGRESS REPORT: SOCIAL SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

The report of the Director of Social Services in respect of the Progress Report : Social Service Improvement was presented to the Executive for consideration.

The Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services reported that the impact of the pandemic still creates challenges within Social Services across Wales. He noted that the Authority is leading on a number of projects and the aim is to highlight preventative schemes rather than reactive measures.

The Director of Social Services and the Head of Adults’ Services highlighted the main successes of the Social Services Team to the Executive as can be seen within the report to the Committee.

The Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee said that at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 26 September, 2022 discussed the Progress Report : Social Service Improvement Plan and the Committee resolved to confirm that it was satisfied with the pace of progress and improvements to date.

It was RESOLVED to accept the Social Service Improvement Progress Report.

14 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was RESOLVED:-

“Under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following item on the grounds that it may involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the attached Public Interest Test.

15 ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW PLANNING POLICY TEAM FOR THE ANGLESEY PLANNING AUTHORITY AREA

The report of the Head of Regulation and Economic Development in respect of establishing a new Planning Policy Team for the Anglesey planning authority was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Public Protection and Climate Change said that there is a requirement to identify a suitable structure for the new Team to ensure its statutory planning policy duties can be undertaken in an efficient, effective and robust manner. She highlighted the main consideration and additional annual revenue funding to establish and operate a new Planning Policy Team for Anglesey.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To authorise the release of £69,632 of additional annual revenue funding, to be split 50/50 between the Council's general balances and the Planning Function's existing revenue budget, to establish and operate a new Planning Policy Team for Anglesey;**
- **To delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, in consultation with the Leader and Chief Executive, to authorise further decisions in relation to the establishment of the new Planning Policy Team.**

The meeting concluded at 11.50 am

**COUNCILLOR IEUAN WILLIAMS
CHAIR FOR THIS MEETING ONLY**