

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 21 March, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Llinos Medi (Chair)
Councillors Neville Evans, Carwyn E. Jones, Gary Pritchard, Alun Roberts, Ieuan Williams, Robin Williams.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
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 Democracy
Head of Adults' Services
Head of Housing Services
Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation
Scrutiny Manager (AGD)
Committee Officer (ATH)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Nicola Roberts, Dafydd Rhys Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Glyn Haynes, Trefor Lloyd Hughes, MBE, R. Llewelyn Jones, Derek Owen, Dafydd Roberts, Ken Taylor, Keith Roberts, Arfon Wyn.

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was 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 2 March, 2023 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 2 March, 2023 be confirmed as correct.

4. THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democracy incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period from April to November, 2023 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive with regard to changes to the Forward Work Programme and the following were noted –

- Item 5 (Potential Compulsory Purchase on Eco Pellets land in Llangefni) and Item 6 (The Council's Corporate Property and Asset Management Strategy) as new items scheduled for the 25 April, 2023 meeting
- Items 26 to 29 (Q2 Performance and Budget Monitoring) as new items scheduled for the November, 2023 meeting
- Items 3 and 4 (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and Destination Management Plan respectively) to be presented to the 25 April meeting as draft plans for consultation and to be re-presented under items 16 and 17 to the July, 2023 meeting as final drafts.
- Portfolio details to be amended to reflect recent changes to the Executive ahead of the monthly update on the Council's website.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period April to November, 2023 with the changes outlined at the meeting.

5. SCORECARD MONITORING QUARTER 3, 2022/23

The report of the Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard setting out the position of the Council against its operational objectives at the end of Quarter 3 2022/23 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Chair presented the report as a highly positive reflection of the Council's performance at the end of Quarter 3 making it the best performing third quarter against the performance management section targets since the creation of the scorecard report. She referred to the performance indicators aligned to the Council's current three well-being objectives and highlighted some standout performances with regard to Housing, Adults' Services, Homelessness services and waste management. Notwithstanding the examples of very good performance along with the areas of improvement, the report also identifies areas where targets have been missed and these will be the subject of continued focus so as to improve the performance. However overall, the report demonstrates the commendable commitment and achievement of staff across the Council in maintaining performance levels in at times difficult circumstances and the Executive extends its appreciation and thanks to them for their efforts.

The Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation echoed the sentiments of the Chair saying that the Quarter 3 scorecard report was very encouraging and places the Council in a good position to set the contents and targets for the 2023/24 corporate scorecard the arrangements for which will be made known shortly to ensure everyone has an opportunity to contribute.

Councillor R. Llewelyn Jones, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee provided feedback from the Committee's 14 March, 2023 meeting where the Quarter 3 Corporate Scorecard report was scrutinised and challenged. While acknowledging the instances of positive performance and progress and asking about the arrangements to recognise those successes, the Committee also noted below target performance in some areas and sought assurance regarding the monitoring of these areas. The Committee had also discussed the performance against the attendance at work indicator including how it compared with previous years' performance and further, had sought clarification of the arrangements for aligning the corporate scorecard with the objectives of the new Council Plan for 2023- 2028. Having been reassured on these matters the Committee had resolved to note the areas of improvement along with mitigation measures outlined and to recommend the same to the Executive.

Members of the Executive welcomed the Q3 scorecard as testimony to the continuation of positive progress across the Council's services saying that there was a lot to be proud of

within the report. Notwithstanding, members also noted a declining trend over time for some performance management indicators and asked Officers to monitor those indicators closely in the coming months. The Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation and the Programme, Business Planning and Performance Manager were thanked for their work and support as were the Council's staff whose contribution to the improvement process was recognised with appreciation.

It was resolved to accept the Scorecard monitoring report for Q3 2022/23 and to note the areas of improvement together with the areas which the Leadership Team is managing to secure further improvements into the future.

6. PROGRESS REPORT: SOCIAL SERVICES IMPROVEMENT

The report of the Director of Social Services which provided an overview of the latest progress and development within the Social Services was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Alun Roberts, Portfolio Member for Adults' Services and Community Safety provided context to the Social Services progress report which has been presented to Scrutiny and the Executive quarterly and then lately on a twice yearly basis following a critical Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) report in 2016. A recent performance and evaluation inspection of Social Services by CIW produced a positive report in December, 2022 which identified a number of strengths across both Adults and Children and Families' services as well as areas for further improvement which will be the focus of attention for an internal working group. Although the report is a reflection of the positive journey on which the Social Services in Anglesey have been since 2016 there remain a number of challenges especially in relation to capacity and staffing which is affecting the sector as a whole. The Portfolio Member highlighted that the Social Services Department continues to work closely with Coleg Menai to attract younger people into the service and with the help of HR is trying out innovative recruitment ideas and marketing. As regards highpoints, the Holyhead 50+ Open Day, the third such event proved popular with participants with plans to make the series one that repeats annually.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services summarised the main developments in Children and Families' Services with particular reference to Carterf Clyd Rhosybol the fourth such facility to be registered. The Youth Services team is being reviewed with a focus on engaging with stakeholders especially the young people who access the service as well as those who do not. A looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy has been developed and will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel in March, 2023.

The Director of Social Services commented that while the progress report documents specific initiatives and successes they are in addition to the day to day delivery of social services to many people on the Island. World Social Work Day falls on the 21 March, 2023 and is a reminder of the importance of valuing social work and social workers. The Social Services Department is proud of its achievements in recent years but recognises that there are still challenges that must be faced with regard to funding, staffing and demand.

The Head of Adults' Services confirmed that Adults' Services had been under significant pressure over the winter months but thanks to the workforce, had responded flexibly and creatively to levels of demand. An internal working group will be addressing the CIW report in terms of making further improvements recognising that the Service cannot stand still and must continue to explore ways of modernising service delivery for the future.

Councillor R. Llewelyn Jones, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee at its 14 March meeting had considered the progress report and had acknowledged the positive points while seeking confirmation of the monitoring arrangements with regard to areas needing attention. The work streams to be prioritised by the Social Services Scrutiny Panel over the next period were raised and the Committee considered whether it supported the intention to cease reporting on Social Services improvement to the Committee with reports to come from the Social Services Scrutiny Panel instead. The Committee had endorsed this approach confirming that it was satisfied with the pace of progress and improvements in Social Services to date and recommending the same to the Executive.

Members of the Executive acknowledged the progress made by the Social Services since 2016 and thanked the staff for the contribution they had made to that process in often challenging circumstances.

The Chief Executive likewise thanked the staff and also the Director of Social Services and Head of Adults' Services for providing leadership and guidance. The Chair was pleased by the focus on Youth Services as a valuable investment in the Island's young people who had endured a great deal over the past two years in the wake of the pandemic.

It was resolved -

- **To confirm that the Executive is reassured that the continued progress made by the Social Services Department is reasonable and timely.**
- **To endorse the intention not to report to the Executive on Social Services improvements hereafter and that reports in future will continue to be made to the Social Services Scrutiny Panel.**

7. SCHOOLS MODERNISATION – CHANGING THE IMPLEMENTATION DATE OF THE STATUTORY NOTICE FOR YSGOL Y GRAIG AND YSGOL TALWRN

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People seeking the Executive's approval to delay the statutory notice implementation date for Ysgol y Graig and Ysgol Talwrn was presented for consideration.

Councillor Ieuan Williams, Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language explained the background to the publication of the statutory notice to discontinue Ysgol Talwrn and to increase the capacity of Ysgol Y Graig to accommodate pupils from Ysgol Talwrn with the implementation date for the proposal being 1 September, 2023. He referred to the numerous factors – listed in the report which have paused the start date including a longer than expected land purchase and planning consent process; restrictions during the pre-election period and the undertaking of archaeological works on site. The Executive had agreed that the original implementation date of the statutory notice was 1 September, 2023 but due to the reasons outlined it is being asked to extend the period for 12 months to 1 September, 2024. Accordingly, as the proposer of the intention in the statutory notice there is a need for the Isle of Anglesey County Council's Executive to defer the implementation date.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the delay of the implementation date of the proposal namely “to increase the capacity of Ysgol Y Graig to take pupils from Ysgol Talwrn, close Ysgol Talwrn and review the catchment areas of Ysgol Y Graig and Ysgol Talwrn” to 1 September, 2024.**

- **Subject to the above, Officers will notify the “relevant parties” of the decision to defer the implementation date of the proposal for Ysgol Y Graig.**

8. MODERNISING LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND DEVELOPING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People incorporating the draft Learning Communities and Developing the Welsh Language Strategy was presented for the Executive’s consideration.

Councillor Ieuan Williams, Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language presented the report by referring to the Council’s ambition for the Island’s children and young people that whatever their background and circumstances, they achieve their full potential, and that all learners are supported to develop towards the four purposes of the curriculum. Since the original strategy was published in 2013, a great deal of work has been undertaken to modernise the school stock on Anglesey with three projects having been completed thus far and two further projects currently underway. By the time the latter two will have been completed the Council will have opened five 21st century buildings in four areas including the Council’s first net zero building, updated and expanded a further two schools and closed 11 small schools. Additionally, approximately 25% of primary learners on Anglesey will be receiving their education in 21st century buildings by that time. The projects undertaken to date have had a positive impact on surplus places in the primary sector and have led to revenue savings and removed current and projected maintenance costs. The Council’s progress in modernising its school organisation has been recognised by Estyn in its report in June 2022.

The Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language spoke about the funding commitments that go with modernising school organisation saying that although Welsh Government has contributed 50% towards the cost of Band A projects and 65% towards Band B projects, the Council has had to meet the remaining costs. While building new schools is therefore expensive especially at present as a result of global events, it is important that the Council takes advantage of the opportunity to attract external funds to improve the condition of its education buildings estate. Good progress has been made in the primary sector but work needs to be done to address the decline in the condition of secondary school buildings; as a result the strategy anticipates the need to remodel secondary provision over the coming years whilst also implementing other difficult decisions.

The Portfolio Member outlined the objectives underpinning the strategy as listed in the report and stressed that the Council is keen to consult on the strategy ahead of its adoption so as to be able to consider the views of stakeholders and partners before making further decisions about how to move forward with the programme.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People explained the proposed consultation process and timetable confirming that subject to the Executive’s approval, the intention was to commence consultation on 31 March, 2023 for a period of seven weeks until 18 May following which a consultation report would be prepared before the draft strategy is then presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee in June and to the Executive for approval in July, 2023 to be ready for implementation at the start of the new school term in September, 2023.

The Executive’s members voiced their support for the draft strategy saying that it was difficult to disagree with the strategy’s mission to deliver effective schools of the right size in the right locations with a suitable teaching environment and led by inspirational leaders. They emphasised that it was the Council’s responsibility to do all it can to ensure that the Island’s

children are provided with the learning conditions and environment that will enable them to become ambitious, capable learners and responsible citizens and reference was made in this context to the new Ysgol Corn Hir, the latest completed project of the original strategy as encapsulating the Council's ambition and vision for its schools. Some members of the Executive mentioned that they had had the opportunity to visit the school prior to its official opening after this coming Easter and had been struck by its modernity and range of facilities providing the best opportunities for pupils to learn and develop. They urged others to take advantage of the school's Open Day on 31 March to see for themselves what the new Ysgol Corn Hir is able to offer its learners.

It was resolved to approve the draft Modernising Learning Communities and Developing the Welsh Language Strategy for public consultation.

9. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2053

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-53 was presented for the Executive's consideration and approval.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services presented the report and HRA Business Plan as a statutory document saying that the Business Plan reflects the Council's vision of ensuring that everyone has the right to call somewhere home. The HRA finances all of the Council's operations in its role as registered social landlord and is ring-fenced for that purpose; it provides a financially viable plan for the Council's housing stock. An important element of the HRA is the commitment to expanding the Council's housing stock to meet differing housing needs across the Island. As the Portfolio Holder Councillor Gary Pritchard said that he was proud that Anglesey in among the few authorities to have retained their housing stock and is actively enlarging its stock by building new housing and converting empty properties into homes.

The Head of Housing Services advised that the HRA Business Plan had been prepared in conjunction with the Finance Service and will be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of the month in order to secure the Council's annual Major Repairs Allowance of £2.688m for 2023/24. The Business Plan demonstrates how the Council brings its stock to Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS); how it intends to work towards the new WHQS and the investment needed to finance its new council house development programme. By the end of the period covered by the Business Plan, the Council's housing stock will have increased by 25% to over 5,000 properties which will help meet the increasing local housing need with over 900 people currently on the social housing waiting list including 85 households in temporary accommodation on the Island.

The Council is fully committed to fulfilling the new WHQS shortly to be agreed by Welsh Government and to that end carried out a stock condition survey of all its housing stock during 2022/23 to establish a baseline in preparation for meeting the new standards. A capital programme of £9.7m for 2023/24 has been included in the Business Plan for improvement works; a provision of £6.963m has been included within the revenue budget for responsive repairs and in addition, £8.749m has been budgeted for in 2023/24 for the development programme of new Council housing and acquisition of former council housing on the Island. The Council will also continue with its energy and decarbonisation works with £1m having been earmarked to target a further 250 Solar PV system installations on the Council's properties. The Business Plan is accompanied by a sensitivity analysis which demonstrates its robustness and further, the plan has been stress tested to take account of the risks and to ensure it remains viable over the 30 year period.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer advised that the Business Plan is based on a complex financial model and having examined the Plan to verify the figures it has become apparent that the way the plan is funded needs to be changed with regard to the timing of the capital borrowing to be undertaken which while it has implications for interest

payments, does not change the Plan's overall expenditure nor income figures. These amendments will be made prior to forwarding the Plan along with the financial model to Welsh Government.

The Chair suggested and it was agreed, that in order to expedite the matter the Plan be approved by the Executive subject to the amendments to be made as outlined, and that the Portfolio Members for Housing and Finance be given the authority to approve the finalised Plan to be forwarded to Welsh Government.

Councillor R. Llewelyn Jones, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported that in the course of its discussion on the HRA Business Plan at its 14 March, 2023 meeting the Committee had raised several issues including the Plan's affordability; the ways in which it enables the Council to realise the priorities of the Council Plan 2023-28; how it addresses the supply of adequate accommodation for vulnerable adults and families and the capacity necessary to deliver the Plan including among private sector developers and contractors with whom the Council collaborates to build new housing. Having been reassured to its satisfaction with regard to these matters, the Committee had resolved to recommend the Business Plan to the Executive.

Members of the Executive welcomed the HRA Business Plan highlighting that the Council has long taken a proactive approach to developing and expanding its council house stock to respond to local housing needs and was the second council in Wales to meet the original Welsh Housing Quality Standards. Reference was also made to the collaboration with Social Services on the development of Extra Care housing for older persons on the Island with the third such facility now in the planning.

The Chair further highlighted the Housing Service's tackling poverty activities as well as the support and advice services provided to tenants with the cost of living crisis and welfare issues especially important at this time.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-2053 subject to minor amendments to the financial details and**
- **To authorise the Portfolio Member for Housing and the Portfolio Member for Finance to approve the finalised HRA Business Plan for submission to Welsh Government.**

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and 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 involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 12, Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the Public Interest Test presented.

11. COMPLEX DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT APPLICATION

The report of the Head of Housing Services seeking the Executive's approval for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) application in a specific case was presented for consideration.

The Head of Housing Services advised that the DFG is a mandatory council grant that helps meet the cost of adapting a disabled person's home so that they can continue to live there as independently as possible. The works required would be identified in a Social Service Adaptation Care Plan, prepared by an Occupational Therapist and each DFG is considered on its individual merits.

The Head of Housing Services outlined the circumstances and complex needs of the client whose application was the subject of the report confirming that those needs have been identified and outlined in the Complex Adaptations report. He explained the works required to enable the client and family to remain in their current home and confirmed that other options had been considered but were found to be unfeasible. The tendered costs of the required adaptations is £122,868 which requires a discretionary grant approval for the £86,868 above the mandatory maximum grant of £36,000 and which is also above the £80,000 which the Head of Housing Services in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Housing has authority to approve hence the request for the Executive's approval.

It was resolved to approve a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) application for the required adaptation works for the total cost of £122,868 which requires a discretionary grant approval for the £86,868 above the mandatory maximum grant of £36,000.

**Councillor Llinos Medi
Chair**