

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 18 February 2025

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gary Pritchard (Leader) (Chair)
- Councillors Neville Evans, Carwyn Jones, Dyfed W Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Dafydd Rhys Thomas, 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 Adults' Services (for item 11 only),
Head of Democracy,
Policy and Welsh Language Manager (FO) (for item 13 only),
Scrutiny Officer (EA) (for item 13 only),
Committee Officer (MEH),
Webcasting Committee Services Officer (FT).
- APOLOGIES:** None received
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Vice-Chair of the Partnership & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee) (for item 13 only).
- Councillors Glyn Haynes and T LI Hughes MBE

The Leader of the Council and Members of the Executive extended their best wishes to Mr Marc Berw Hughes, Director of Education, Skills and Young People who will be leaving his post at the end of the month.

1 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

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

None to report.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 21 January, 2025 were presented for confirmation.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 21 January, 2025 be confirmed as correct.

5 THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democracy incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period March – October, 2025 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on items that were new to the Forward Work Programme.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period March – October 2025 with additional changes outlined at the meeting.

6 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3, 2024/25

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the Council's revenue budget at the end of Quarter 3, of the 2024/2025 financial year was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance & Housing Services said that the overall forecasted position at the end of Quarter 3 indicates that the final position will result in an underspend on the revenue budget of £59k. He noted that the Adults' Services have been underspending and the provision has improved in the short term whilst having faced challenges of overspending in recent years. He noted that work has been ongoing in collection of Council Tax debts.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the revenue budget of the Council is positive for 2024/2025. He noted that the Adults' Services budget is still volatile as the service had cleared a backlog of financial assessments which had generated additional income in the third quarter which had contributed to the improved financial position for the service. He noted that there are still concerns as regards to Children Services overspending of over £2 million due to additional children coming into care and increased costs related to the placement of children outside the county. He said that additional resources have been reflected in the 2025/2026 budget for Children Services. He referred to Table 5 within the report highlights the change in demand for services within the Council; he noted that due to vacant posts within the Authority as it has been difficult to recruit this has created one-off savings in 2024/2025. He further said that the income fees have increased in the Highways and Leisure Services. Furthermore, several properties have reverted to the main Council Tax premium following Welsh Governments' changes to the criteria of holiday lets who qualifying for business rates in April 2023; as the properties are not the main dwellings of the owners, the

properties are subject to a 200% council tax charge, backdated to April 2023. It is anticipated that appeals will be submitted and some properties reverting to business rates having let the properties for the required 182 days. Around half of the additional income generated has been placed in an earmarked reserve and will be used to fund any refunds that result in 2025/2026.

The Portfolio Member for Children, Young People and Families said the overspend in Children's Services is concerning due to more children coming into care and the increasing costs of placing children in out of county provision. He referred to the success of the Cartrefi Clyd provision on the Island and the need to increase the provision with the purchase of additional properties to allow the children in care to be located on Anglesey. The Leader of the Council also agreed that the provision of Cartrefi Clyd has been a success to allow the children to live in their Welsh communities which also results in saving resources in out of country placement.

The Portfolio Member for Corporate and Customer Experience ascertained whether the variant of 10% within Economic Development and Information Technology will carry over into Quarter 4. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer responded that the variance within Information Technology is mainly due to several vacant posts within the service, but these posts have now been filled and it is anticipated that the variance within their budget will not further increase. Economic Development includes the Leisure Service which has benefitted from the new energy contracts which came into effect on 1 October, 2024. As a large energy user, Leisure Service has benefitted greatly from the reduction in energy prices. The Leisure Service has also seen an increase in income with more people attending the leisure centres. The budget for the service has been reviewed for the 2025/2026 budget. Members of the Executive wishes to congratulate the staff of MônActif for their work within the leisure centres and within the communities.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the position set out in Appendices A, B and C in respect of the Authority's financial performance to date and expected outturn for 2024/2025;**
- **To note the summary of Contingency budgets for 2024/2025, detailed in Appendix CH;**
- **To note the monitoring of agency and consultancy costs for 2024/2025 in Appendices D and DD;**
- **To agree to the implementation of new, and amendments to, Fees and Charges for 2024/2025, detailed in Appendix E.**

7 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3, 2024/2025

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out the financial performance of the Capital Budget at the end of Quarter 3, of the 2024/2025 financial year was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing Services said that an annual capital budget for 2024/2025 was set at £75.173m. The actual expenditure up to quarter 3 is £38,603m, with committed

expenditure of £2.613m which totals £41.216m which has been financed by capital grants. It is projected that there will be underspend within the capital budget. He noted that any projects that have slipped from this year will be transferred to the next financial year.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that grant funding is imperative to fund capital projects within the Council with a total of £46m out the £75m annal capital budget. He noted that it is predicted that there will be an underspend of £8.171m and specifically to the UK Governments' Levelling Up projects in Holyhead of an underspend of £3.4m which will be transferred to the next financial year. The Housing Revenue Account is also underspending £1.7m and £0.5m underspend within the school's projects due to grant funding received by Welsh Government. Flood Relief schemes are also anticipated to underspend against the budget, albeit will slip into the next financial year. Low Carbon energy projects are also underspending due to awaiting a response by Welsh Government to slip the projects into the next financial year. He further said that the Glanhwfa Community Hub project also underspending at present.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the progress of expenditure and receipts against the capital budget 2024/2025 at quarter 3;**
- **To approve the additional schemes within quarter 3, amounting to £2.696m, to the capital programme and amendments to funding, as per Appendix C, which will result in a revised capital budget of £75.173m for 2024/2025;**
- **To approve the carry forward of potential underspend, as noted in Section 4.2 of the report.**

8 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3, 2024/25

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 3 2024/2025 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing Services presented the report which sets out the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the period 1st April, 2024 to 31st March, 2025 comprising of both the revenue and capital expenditure. He highlighted that the HRA is 'ring-fenced', and its reserves cannot be used for purposes other than to fund costs relating to the Council's housing stock including the development of new housing. The revenue budget was set with a budgeted surplus of £8,369k. The gross capital budget for 2024/2025 is £29,573k. Grant funding budget of £10,578k and £509k earmarked reserve balance reduces the net budget to £18,485k. The combination of both the revenue budget and adjusted capital budget gave a planned budget deficit of £10,116k, of which, £7,011k is to be funded from the HRA reserve, with the balance of £3,104k to be funded by external borrowing.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the revenue expenditure shows an overspend of £38k as the rental income is lower than set out within the budget as new development were foresaw to be becoming available sooner within the financial year. The maintenance element of the HRA is also dependent on demand for the service. He noted that there has been an underspend of £2.9m as regards to keeping the current housing stock to WHQS standards. The development of new houses and buying former social housing element has seen an overspend of £1.1m., as some projects have commenced earlier than planned.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the position set out in respect of the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for quarter 3, 2024/2025;**
- **To note the forecast outturn for 2024/2025.**

9 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2024/25

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating a mid-year review of the treasury management position on 30 September 2024 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing Services presented the report and referred to the reporting requirements for treasury management under the Local Government Act 2003 and the CIPFA Prudential Code 2021 which includes the production of a mid-year review of treasury management activities. He confirmed that the Governance and Audit Committee had scrutinised the report at its 11 February, 2025 meeting and had forwarded it to the Executive without further comments.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer advised that there had been no change in the Council's borrowing and investment approach in the reporting period. Cash balances have been used to fund capital expenditure to avoid external borrowing at higher interest rates. It is foreseen that interest rates will decrease during the year and borrowing will have to made during the next financial year over a short-term loan period. He noted the Councils' balances to invest stands at under £30m compared to £53m in April 2022 which results in the interest of the investment considerably lower which thereafter influences the revenue budget. The Council's Treasury Management position has remained stable, and all prudential indicators have remained within the boundaries and targets set in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement. He further noted that the Treasury Management Consultants have recently changed to MUFG, formerly Link Asset Services.

It was RESOLVED to note the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review report 2024/2025 and to forward the same to the Full Council without additional comments.

10 FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating a schedule of proposed fees and charges for 2025/2026 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing Services reported that the Executive has set an objective that all non-statutory fees and charges are increased by an average of 3% across each individual service. This has allowed Heads of Service to increase individual fees by more or less than 3% but, overall, the increase across the services equates to a 3% increase. All statutory fees have been increased by the sum set by the approving body, where the increase has been published. Where the revised charge is not known, the fee is shown as to be confirmed and will be updated once the notification of the new is received. Social Care fee increases are reported separately to the Executive.

It was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of Fees and Charges for 2025/2026 as outlined in the booklet attached to the report.

11 INDEPENDENT SECTOR CARE HOME FEES FOR 2025/26

The report of the Head of Adults' Services seeking the Executive's approval to set the rate for independent sector care home fees for 2025/2026 was presented in accordance with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.

Councillor Alun Roberts, Portfolio Member for Adult's Services, Community Safety and Equalities presented the report which sets out the proposed fee levels for Residential, Residential EMI, Nursing and Nursing EMI Care for the 2025/2026 financial year. The Local Authority is required to review independent sector care home fees annually to coincide with Central Government's changes to benefits and pensions levels. The proposal is to increase the fees by 7%.

The Head of Adults' Services reported that in setting fee levels for independent sector care homes, the Council needs to show that it has fully considered the cost of the provision in determining its standards care fees. The increase is in recognition of the financial pressures faced by the providers due to increase in national insurance contributions and the real living wage increase. When reviewing the fee levels, consideration is given to local circumstances, demand pressures and availability of provision, in addition to the regional formula. Individual fees can be discussed with providers when special circumstances arise.

The Executive Members ascertained whether the Government takes into consideration the census and the change in the population with the elderly in each local authority. Further questions raised as to the threshold where people can afford to pay for their care and whether the EMI Nursing Care has increased. The Head of Adults' Services responded that the level of fees is set by the financial contribution the Authority receives. He noted that when the income of an individual falls below the £50k threshold the Authority will contribute to the care. He further said the EMI Nursing Care is continuing to increase, and the provision is limited across the sector. This Authority has continued to adapt the provision with

the Authority's Care Homes sector with additional places, but as the authority is only providing residential care, EMI Nursing Care needs to be acquired from the independent sector.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To approve the recommendation to increase the fee levels as follows :-**

Residential Care (Adults) - £832.56 per week

Residential (EMI) - £930.37 per week

Nursing Care (Social Care Element) - £906.70 per week

Nursing Care (EMI) (Social Care Element) - £1,071.41 per week

- **To authorise Social Services and the Finance Service to respond to any requests from individual homes to explore their specific accounts and to utilise the exercise as a basis to consider any exceptions to the agreed fees. Any exceptions to be agreed with the Adults' Services Portfolio Member, the Director of Function (Resources)/ Section 151 Officer and the Head of Adults' Services from within current budgets.**

12 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2025 – 2030

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the Capital Strategy for 2025-20230 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing Services said that the revised CIPFA Prudential Code (September 2017) introduced the requirement that all authorities must produce a capital strategy. This must set out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made. The requirement is aimed at ensuring that authorities take capital and investment decisions in line with the service objectives, and properly consider stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability. The capital strategy is linked to several other plans and strategies. He noted that the strategy is dependent on grant funding, resources from Welsh Government and revenue budget available to spend on capital projects.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the strategy is a summary of the capital investments. He noted that the Capital Strategy is a key document to ensure that capital investment decisions are taken in a planned way, that allows the Council to achieve its key objectives whilst ensuring that the long-term viability of the Council is not put at risk. He referred to the capital expenditure summary for 2025- 20230 as noted within page 26 of the report. The revenue implications of the capital expenditure were set out in Page 29 of the report, and it was noted that the MRP is calculated based on the Council's current MRP Policy. The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer further said that moving from the 'Base Case' scenario into the 'Ideal' scenario on projects is dependent on the revenue position of the Council.

The Chief Executive said that it is imperative that the Council's assets are safe for public use. The Authority's assets are ageing and there will be a need for integrated multi-use of these buildings and there will be a need to be working in partnership with third-party organisations. He further said that attracting grants is paramount to allow assets to be develop and especially within the towns to bring more people to integrate into these areas.

The Leader of the Council said that having capital strategy enables the Council to make mature decisions to invest in projects and buildings for future generations within local communities.

It was RESOLVED to endorse and to recommend the Capital Strategy 2025 – 2030 to the Full Council.

13 REVIEW OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL'S WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY

The report of the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer incorporating the review of the Council's Welsh Language Policy was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language said that the Council's current Welsh language policy was adopted in 2016 when statutory Welsh language standards came into force, since then, the understanding of the standards has matured, and the Authority's practices in relation to the language have developed significantly. The Welsh language policy affects all those who deal with the Council and the draft policy is designed to meet the statutory requirements of the Welsh language standards. He further said that the draft policy contributes to the aims of the Council Plan and the Welsh language promotion strategy.

Councillor Gwilym O Jones, Vice-Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee outlined the issues raised when the Committee was presented with the Review of the Council's Welsh Language Policy at its meeting on 12th February, 2025. Having considered the review of the Welsh Language Policy and the Officer's and Portfolio Member's responses to the points raised at the meeting, the Committee had resolved to recommend the policy for the Executive's approval for adoption by the full Council and noting that a letter be sent to Welsh Government to request and emphasis the need for new legislation to protect Welsh historic place names and the request the Leader of the Council to raise the issue with the WLGA.

The Executive Members welcomed the draft review of the Welsh Language Policy which shows the commitment of the Authority towards the Welsh language.

It was RESOLVED :-

- **to recommend to the full Council that it adopts the revised Welsh language policy;**
- **to support the recommendations of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 12 February, 2025 that:-**

- a letter be sent to Welsh Government to request and emphasise the need for new legislation to protect Welsh historic place names;
- the Leader of the Council be requested to raise the issue with the WLGA.

14 TERMINATING THE GWE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People incorporating the terminating of the GwE Partnership Agreement was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Member for Education, Skills and Young People said that following a review of the responsibilities of the education partners in Wales, there is an expectation from Welsh Government to move from a wider regional way of working to a more local model. The Transition Board has been established to oversee the arrangements for transferring GwE services back to the local authorities in North Wales. In order to formalise the change to the partnership arrangement, all six authorities must agree to end the current arrangement, GwE services, as well as abolishing the GwE Joint Committee in order to bring GwE to an end.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People reported that considerable work has been undertaken to bringing the current arrangement with GwE to an end by 1st June, 2025. He noted that a consultation period is currently undertaken to change the structure and to work to a more local model of working.

Members of the Executive ascertained whether assurances can be given that the schools will not be affected by the change of ending the current arrangement with GwE during the transitional period.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People responded that up to the period 31st May, 2025 the support from GwE staff to schools will continue. In the meantime, the transfer of staff from GwE into the local authorities will be undertaken.

The Chief Executive said that this is a significant change and the full costs of the moving from the regional way of working to a more local model is yet to be confirmed. He noted that there is a commitment, in principle, by Welsh Government to contribute to the costs.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To approve the termination of the agreement to work in partnership with other North Wales Local Authorities in the context of the regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE) on the 31 May, 2025 and subsequently dissolve the requirement for the GwE Joint Committee;**
- **It there is slippage in the timetable, the Executive Committee gives the right to the Director of Education, Skills and Young People, in**

- collaboration with the Education Portfolio Member, to decide on a suitable date to terminate the agreement;
- To confirm the contractual commitment in relation to ending the arrangement.

The meeting concluded at 11.30 am

**COUNCILLOR GARY PRITCHARD
CHAIR**