

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Committee Room and virtually on Zoom on 16 December, 2025

PRESENT: Councillor Gary Pritchard (Leader) (Chair)

Councillors Carwyn Jones, Dyfed Wyn Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola 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 Education, Skills, and Young People
Director of Social Services
Head of Highways, Waste and Property (for item 8)
Head of Housing Services (for items 9 & 11)
Head of Democracy
Education Strategic Leader (Primary) (RW)(for item 7)
Chief Digital Officer (MH) (for item 7)
Chief Waste Management Officer (ME) (for item 8)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Democratic Support Assistant – Webcasting (CH)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Neville Evans

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Glyn Haynes, Dylan Rees (Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee) (for items 7 & 8), Elin Allsopp (Scrutiny Officer (for items 7 & 8))

1. APOLOGIES

The apology for absence was noted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors Dafydd Roberts and Robin Williams declared a prejudicial interest with regard to item 11 on the agenda due to their membership of the Planning and Orders Committee. Both members left the meeting when the item was discussed.

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 25 November 2025 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 25 November 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 from January to August, 2026 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on the following changes to the Forward Work Programme –

- 6 January 2026 – an extraordinary meeting of the Executive to consider the Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi objections and final decision report subject to confirmation of the timetable by Welsh Government.
- 27 January 2026 meeting – the Council Tax Premium and Visitor Levy are rescheduled items.
- July 2026 meeting – a new item is the Draft Final Accounts 2025/26 and Use of Reserves and Balances.
- Decision Delegated to the Portfolio Holder - Annual Report on the Biodiversity Plan for publication in February.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period January to August 2026 with the changes outlined at the meeting.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2025/26

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer which set out the Council's performance in relation to the 2025/26 treasury management strategy at the mid-year point was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance, Corporate Business and Customer Experience presented the report as required by CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021 and CIPFA's Prudential Code 2021. The report provides an economic update, outlines the current position in respect of borrowing and investment performance and measures the Council's current position against the performance indicators set out in the Treasury Management Strategy.

The Director of Function (Resources) reported that capital expenditure remains broadly on target at the six month point. The Council has continued its strategy of using its own cash balances to fund capital projects and has avoided the need to borrow during the first half of the year. However, these balances have reduced as they have been used to support both capital expenditure and the revenue budget.

The Council's investments are held in short, fixed term deposits with mainstream banks and other local authorities. These are now due to mature and it is unlikely that any further investments will be made in the fourth quarter. However, Table 4 of the report shows that the interest received on investments is higher than budgeted due to interest rates being higher than anticipated when the budget was set.

In confirming that treasury management performance remains in line with the prudential indicators approved by the Council, the Section 151 Officer noted a minor technical breach of treasury management practice as outlined in paragraph 8 of the report. This occurred when a call account briefly exceeded the limits set by the treasury management strategy as a result of interest being credited to the account.

The Section 151 Officer further explained in response to a question about whether making no investments in the fourth quarter was usual practice, that the Council has held healthy balances in the years since the pandemic due to Covid related grants, which it was able to invest. These balances have been utilised in the years since, and the Council is now down to its final £5m of investments which are currently maturing. It is likely that the Council will need to borrow in the first half of the new year. This borrowing would be on a short term basis of around a year in the expectation that interest rates may fall, allowing the Council to refinance for a longer period on a lower rate.

It was resolved to note the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review report for 2025/26.

7. DIGITAL EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People incorporating the Digital Education Strategic Plan was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language introduced the report as an important step in ensuring the island's schools are digitally equipped for the future.

The Education Strategic Leader (Primary Sector) reported that the Education Digital Strategic Plan supports the development of a modern education system and focuses on five key areas – sustainability, connectivity, collaboration, professional learning, and data protection and digital resilience. The Plan reflects the Council's values and is consistent with both the Council Plan and the Council's Digital Strategic Plan. It is also aligned with Welsh Government's priorities set out in the Curriculum for Wales. The Plan emphasises equality ensuring that every pupil, regardless of their background or location, has equal access to digital resources. It aims to reduce the digital divide between learners and supports all learners in accessing online educational resources, giving every learner the same opportunity to succeed in school.

Councillor Dylan Rees, Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee reported from the committee's 10 December 2025 meeting which had reviewed the Digital Education Strategic Plan. The committee had noted the importance of the plan in developing a modern education system that meets the needs of current and future learners. Concerns were raised about potential cyber security and data management risks for schools as well as the challenges posed by limited funding for implementation. The committee sought assurances on these issues and on the provision of adequate support and training for staff once the plan is introduced. Following review, the committee recommended that the plan be accepted by the Executive.

The Chair confirmed that the Executive has committed to setting aside an annual reserve for digital equipment in schools, thereby ensuring the Council avoids a significant financial burden when devices need renewing.

Councillor Ieuan Williams, Portfolio Member for Highways, Waste and Climate Change highlighted several elements he would have liked to see included in the Education Digital Strategic Plan, such as a ratio of devices to learners to reflect the Council's aspirations, and the expectations regarding the proportion of teaching staff achieving Microsoft or Google education related certification. He also proposed that the high level strategy be supported by a detailed action plan outlining how its ambitions will be delivered, at least for the first year. In addition, he suggested that, within the next six months, information on each school's allocation – whether financial or in terms of devices – should be issued, along with a service level agreement setting out the standards of service schools can expect. Noting that the education digital hardware estate is larger than the corporate estate, Councillor Ieuan

Williams recommended establishing a dedicated post to ensure effective delivery of the strategic plan and asked the Leadership Team to consider creating this role.

Officers explained that the Education Digital Strategic Plan is a high level document that will be supported by operational plans that will outline the delivery steps. The plan will be implemented in partnership with the IT service and will be overseen by a steering group with an annual progress report and review. Officers noted that further reflection and engagement with schools will take place to review the current provision, assess its effectiveness including device to learner ratio and determine future investment and priorities. Any changes in use or approach will be factored into the financial forecasting. Officers also highlighted the existing support available to schools in relation to professional learning, specialist advice, and wider network of digital facilitators and technicians. It was emphasised that the service has a strong skills base and a clear direction for development.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People further confirmed that a draft service level agreement has been circulated to schools and is referenced in the strategic plan.

The Chief Executive stressed that, despite ongoing financial pressures, the Council is committed to the education digital strategic plan and has demonstrated this through annual investment in recent years to keep pace with a rapidly evolving landscape. He acknowledged that the financial situation continues to be challenging and that digital requirements need to be fully discussed and understood and plans developed for the next two to three years. He explained that the strategic planning approach is intentional, and combines both strategy and delivery, ensuring the efficient use of resources, clear leadership through a lead officer and annual reporting on progress. Detailed considerations sit with the service and portfolio member where challenge and discussion take place, and the outcomes of that process inform strategic and financial decision making.

The Executive acknowledged the points raised. It was noted that financial considerations and concerns will be addressed through the budget setting process. Members also recognised the importance of schools having robust IT systems and sufficient capacity as digital assessment methods are more widely introduced.

It was resolved to adopt the new Digital Education Strategic Plan (2025-2031).

8. WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING CONSULTATION

The report of the Head of Highways, Waste and Property which sought the Executive's approval to conduct a consultation process on potential changes to waste collection and recycling services as part of the strategy to achieve statutory targets was presented for consideration.

Councillor Ieuan Williams, Portfolio Member for Highways, Waste and Climate Change presented the report, and noted that the Council is statutorily required to achieve a 70% recycling rate by 2024/25. Failure to meet this target could result in a Welsh Government fine and based on the current recycling rate of around 65%, the Council could incur an annual penalty of £361k. Welsh Government's collections blueprint published in June 2025 sets out recommendations for waste collection practices, most of which the Council already meets. Wrap Cymru has provided support with increasing recycling rates with its main recommendation being to reduce weekly residual waste capacity to 60L in line with the blueprint. This could be achieved through less frequent residual waste collections and/or smaller bins, which could increase the Council's recycling rate by 5%, although replacing bins would involve a significant cost.

A potential change to a service especially where that involves a possible reduction, requires consultation, and since the waste collection service impacts every householder, a full public consultation is necessary. Proposed consultation questions developed with the legal and communication teams are set out in Appendix 1 to the report. If, following consultation a service change is introduced, substantial financial investment will be required. Welsh Government funding would only be available where the Council can demonstrate a credible plan to achieve a recycling rate of 70% or higher. Without such a plan the risk of a fine increases and could also affect business as usual costs.

The Head of Highways, Waste and Property advised that national evidence indicates that the 70% recycling target cannot be achieved through education or enforcement alone and that a step change in approach is required. The long-term plan, if approved would safeguard business as usual operations as significant investment in the two recycling centres is needed to modernise equipment and maintain current services. He also noted that minor amendments have been made to the consultation questionnaire to make it more digitally friendly and to include a Welsh language impacts question in line with statutory duties.

Councillor Dylan Rees, Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee reported from the committee's 10 December 2025 meeting which reviewed the proposed consultation. The committee emphasised the need to reach as many residents as possible through a variety of engagement methods. Members noted the main challenges as low response rates and limited public understanding of the need to change waste collection and recycling arrangements to meet statutory targets. They had sought assurance that additional efforts would be made to raise awareness of the importance of recycling and they suggested extending the consultation period. After reviewing the documentation, the committee had recommended that the Executive proceed with the consultation using the questions set out in Appendix 1 and the proposed timetable, while being mindful of the committee's concerns.

The Executive noted that the Council is not alone in not having met the statutory 70% recycling target and is not among the lowest performers. Members acknowledged that Welsh Government regards recycling rates as a priority and that it can fine local authorities that fail to meet targets. They emphasised that the public consultation is essential in developing a credible plan to demonstrate the Council's commitment to meeting the statutory target, both to avoid penalties and to secure funding to invest in the Council's recycling facilities. Members also highlighted the ongoing need to educate residents about the purpose and process of recycling and emphasised that it is a shared responsibility. They recognised that the Council must lead in promoting and facilitating recycling and that a collective effort is needed to achieve the target.

It was resolved –

- **To approve conducting a consultation process on how the recycling/waste collection service could change in future to help reach the 70% statutory recycling targets.**
- **To approve the questions to be asked as part of the consultation process as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- **To approve the timetable for the public consultation, to commence on 7 January 2026 and last for six weeks.**

9. HOUSING RENTS AND SERVICE CHARGES 2026/27

The report of the Head of Housing Services which set out proposed housing rents and service charges for 2026/27 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety presented the report stating that the 2026/27 rent year will be the first year under the new 10 year Welsh Government Rent and Rent Service Charge framework effective from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2036. On 24 October, 2025, the Welsh Government confirmed approval of the social housing rent policy for 2026/27, advising that all local authorities should apply the formula of Consumer Price Index plus 0.5%, (with the CPI at 3.8% in September 2025), resulting in a maximum annual rent uplift of 4.3% across the whole of the stock.

The Council intends to apply the maximum increase in order to -

- Meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) 2023 by 2033 which will require significant investment funded by the HRA.
- Secure the major repair allowance of £2.7m which has not risen to reflect the new standards.
- Support the delivery of affordable social homes and contribute towards meeting Welsh Government's target of 20,00 new homes.

Rent affordability for the Council's tenants has been assessed using the Joseph Rowntree (JRF) Living Rent methodology which confirms that applying a 4.3% increase keeps the average rent and service charge for all property types and sizes affordable for tenants on Anglesey. In addition, 77% of tenants will face no additional hardship as they receive full or part Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. The Housing Services Financial Inclusion team is also available to provide advice and support to any tenants experiencing financial hardship as a result of the increase.

Service charges for 2026/27 will be based on the actual 2024/25 costs, shared equally among tenants and leaseholders utilising the services with most costs eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. Additional income from increased garage rents will be used to develop a strategic plan for the garages.

The Executive emphasised that the Council's ability to invest in its housing stock to meet the WHQS depends on the HRA budget, supported by rental income. Members noted that rents remain affordable under the JRF methodology, but they urged any tenants facing financial difficulties to seek support from the Housing Services Financial Inclusion team, Citizens Advice or the J. E. O'Toole Centre, where guidance on benefit eligibility is also available.

It was resolved to approve the following –

- **A rent increase of 4.3% on all general rent units in line with the Welsh Government rent policy on collection over 51 weeks.**
- **An increase of £1.10 per week for the rent of all garages.**
- **That the service charges costs noted in section 6.3 of the report be applied to all tenants who receive the relevant services.**
- **The administration of the Rent Support Scheme, a local scheme to support self-paying tenants who are in financial difficulty.**

10. EXCLUSION OF THE 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 involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act and in the Public Interest Test as presented."

11. RESPONDING TO THE LOCAL HOUSING CHALLENGE – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT PLAS PENLAN, LLANGEFNI

The report of the Head of Housing Services with regard to a proposed new council housing scheme at Plas Penlan, Llangefni was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety presented the report stating that the site under consideration is that of the former Plas Penlan care home which was closed as a care home nearly a decade ago. The proposal offers an opportunity to demolish the home and clear the site for re-development into 12 affordable homes for local residents to include a mix of one, two and three bedroom bungalows along with a bespoke unit for Social Services to support residents with learning disabilities which could potentially reduce future revenue costs by providing an inhouse provision for the client group. The development would be part funded by a Social Housing Grant and part by the HRA. Initial feasibility modelling indicates that the development is viable and conforms to the Council's development procedures.

A full planning application for the development has been submitted with a decision expected in the Spring 2026.

The Head of Housing Services confirmed that the Council's housing waiting list shows a high demand for one and two bedroom bungalows in Llangefni, and that the development would contribute towards meeting the need with the bungalows intended to be let at a social rent to older people.

The Executive welcomed the proposal as a positive use of the vacant care home site, which if granted planning approval, would address an identified housing need for bungalows in Llangefni and support collaborative work with Social Services.

It was resolved to approve the development of 12 new houses at Plas Penlan, Llangefni,* which will be made available to local residents as affordable homes for rent in response to the current housing challenge.

****The realisation of the scheme is subject to the grant of planning consent.***

**Councillor Gary Pritchard
Chair**