

THE EXECUTIVE (BUDGET)

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2014

- PRESENT:** Councillor Ieuan Williams (Chair)
- Councillors Richard Dew, Ken Hughes, Aled Morris Jones,
H.E. Jones
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Community
Director Lifelong Learning
Interim Head of Resources and Section 151 Officer
Head of Council Resources and Monitoring Officer (for item 9)
Head of Profession (Human Resources) (for item 9)
Head of Learning
Interim Accountancy Services Manager (BHO)
Committee Officer (ATH)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors John Griffith, Trefor Lloyd Hughes, Llinos Medi Huws,
R. Meirion Jones, R.G. Parry, OBE, Nicola Roberts
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor J A Roberts and Councillor Alwyn Rowlands

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The following declared an interest in respect of item 9 on the agenda and withdrew from the meeting during the discussion thereon:

Mrs Bethan Jones, Deputy Chief Executive
Mrs Gwen Carrington, Director of Community
Dr Gwynne Jones, Director of Lifelong Learning

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

None received.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 1st December, 2014 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 1st December, 2014 be confirmed as correct.

4 THE COUNCIL'S EFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2014-17

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive setting out the survey results of the Efficiency Strategy – Making a Difference exercise undertaken during October/November, 2014 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that the Efficiency Strategy is required to provide a clear direction over the coming years to ensure an understanding amongst the public, staff and councillors as to how the Authority aims to meet its financial challenges. The 2014 consultation exercise follows on from a similar exercise undertaken in 2013. An analysis of the response to the 16 set proposals along with a selection of comments from across the different consultation formats – questionnaires, letters and e-mails as well as face to face consultation – are contained in Appendix A to the report. Respondents were asked to categorise their response on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 denoted they strongly disagreed with the proposal and 5 denoted they strongly agreed.

It was resolved –

- **To note the response of the citizens of Anglesey to the proposals and ideas put forward in the Making a Difference survey.**
- **To formally adopt the Efficiency Strategy and that the budget proposals for the forthcoming 3 years be aligned with the principles outlined therein.**

5 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2015-16

The report of the Interim Head of Resources and Section 151 Officer incorporating the draft Revenue Budget for 2015-16 was presented for the Executive's consideration. The report set out the context to the proposals along with the efficiency savings identified.

The Portfolio Member for Finance reported that the Welsh Government's Final Settlement announced on 11 December, 2014 confirmed a reduction of 3.9% in the RSG settlement for Anglesey for 2015/16 which equates to £3.545m. In presenting the £4m schedule of savings attached, the objective has been to try to minimise the impact on services and to protect Schools and Social Services. The Efficiency Strategy has been taken into account and a value for money approach adopted. The Portfolio Member for Finance said that the guiding principles have been to seek to avoid impacting unduly on services and to forego drawing on the Council's reserves for 2015/16 in the expectation that those might need to be utilised in meeting the financial challenges in the years following.

In considering the draft budget, the Executive emphasised the importance of ensuring that the proposals are subject to a thorough and wide ranging consultation process.

It was resolved –

- **To adopt the draft standstill budget as a basis for the 2015/16 revenue budget.**
- **That the Executive should seek to make sufficient savings in 2015/16 to balance the revenue budget without the use of reserves.**
- **That the Executive should plan to cover unavoidable cost of severance or other one off costs of delivering savings without the use of reserves.**

6 DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015-16

The report of the Interim Head of Resources and Section 151 Officer incorporating the schedule of capital bids proposed by departments for inclusion in the 2015/16 to 2019/20 Capital Programme was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Finance reported that following the adoption by the Executive in July, 2014 of a Capital Strategy, departments were requested to submit bids for capital projects to be included in the 5 year Capital Programme. The full list of submissions is contained in Appendix A. These were reviewed individually and then prioritised according to a points based set of criteria as outlined in Appendix B to the report. The schedule of bids was compared against an estimate of available capital resources (Appendix C) and those pared down to the items shaded on Appendix A (valued at £14,480m) as ones deemed appropriate to be proposed for inclusion in the 2015/16 capital programme. The Portfolio Member for Finance said that the aim is for the capital programme to be self-financing and for the Council to try to avoid increasing its borrowing commitments and the costs that accompany that, and to be more proactive in disposing of assets no longer required.

It was resolved that the items shaded on Appendix A to the report (to the value of £14,480m) be included in the Capital Programme 2015/16 to 2019/20.

7 SCHOOL TRANSPORT COSTS

The report of the Head of Learning outlining proposals with regard to the school bus contracts tenders and charges structure was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Leader and Portfolio Member for Education reported on the rationale for the changes as presented and on the views of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee which was supportive of the proposals with certain caveats relating to introducing safeguards in respect of pupils who mislay their travel pass, clearly communicating the changes to parents, pupils and governing bodies and undertaking a risk assessment of the two non-statutory routes which it is proposed be abolished.

The Executive endorsed the observations of the Scrutiny Committee with regard to the issues raised in respect of communication, risk assessing the routes to be abolished and introducing safeguards in relation to pupils who mislay their travel pass.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the introduction of a “no pass, no travel” system in order to assist in ensuring that every traveller has an allocated seat on a bus.**
- **To approve Option 2 outlined in the report to gradually increase the charges in order to reconcile the fees with the remainder of the North Wales authorities.**
- **That in order to ensure consistency in the implementation of the Authority’s transport policy, to approve the abolition of the following non-statutory services: Pentre Berw to Ysgol Esceifiog and Maes Llwyn / Porth Amlwch to Ysgol Gynradd Amlwch, subject to risk assessing those routes.**
- **That the changes be clearly communicated to parents, pupils and school governors and safeguards introduced in relation to pupils who mislay their travel pass.**

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was resolved under Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1072 to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion of the following item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the Public Interest Test presented.

9 RESTRUCTURING OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM WITH A VIEW TO MAKING EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

The report of the Chief Executive setting out proposals for the restructuring of the Senior Leadership Team was tabled for the Executive’s consideration.

Miss Lynn Ball, Head of Council Business and Monitoring Officer withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on point 6 of Section D of the report. With reference to the Appointments Committee, Councillor A.M. Jones wished it to be noted that the Committee has representation from each political group, but not each political party.

Having considered the proposals, it was resolved –

- **To recommend Option 4 to the County Council as the Executive’s preferred option as fulfilling the objectives and as being achievable for implementation, with a view to commissioning more detailed work to develop the option for consultation with staff.**
- **To recommend that the restructuring programme be commenced without delay.**
- **To recommend that the Chief Executive be authorised to commission specialist legal advice and/or professional HR guidance in developing the plans further if and when that is deemed necessary in the process.**
- **To recommend that the restructuring programme be steered by the Chief Executive.**

- To authorise the Chief Executive to collate the opinions of the service regulators in developing further the option to be considered in the final recommendation before the matter is formally presented to the Council.
- To recommend that the statutory posts of Section 151 Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer be incorporated within the Senior Leadership Team.
- To recommend that the process of appointing a new Chief Executive should commence forthwith as the first stage of the process of restructuring the Senior Leadership Team whilst at the same time approving the preferred option for change, and following the resolution of the Council, that the Appointments Committee be requested to implement the recruitment process for restructure and to also consider the pay structure as a matter of priority.
- To authorise the Chief Executive to share the contents of the report with members of the Senior Leadership Team initially to invite their comments, before the matter is presented to the County Council and before further consultation with Heads of Service and Trade Unions.
- To request the Chief Executive in consultation with HR and Legal Services to formulate a timetable of each consultation stage for the information and assistance of the Group Leaders.

**Councillor Ieuan Williams
Chair**