

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 30 May, 2023

- PRESENT:** Councillor Ieuan Williams (Deputy Leader) (Chair)
- Councillors Neville Evans, Gary Pritchard, Alun Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Robin Williams.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer
Director of Social Services
Head of Housing Services
Head of Democracy
Legal Services Manager (RJ)
Interim Children's Service Manager (SA)
Committee Officer (ATH)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Llinos Medi, Carwyn Jones, Dafydd Rhys Thomas
Mr Dylan Williams (Chief Executive)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Geraint Bebb, Douglas Fowlie, Glyn Haynes, Aled M. Jones, R. Llewelyn Jones, Derek Owen
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1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of personal interest only were made by the following in respect of item 5 on the agenda –

Councillor Neville Evans as Chair of one of the Warm Spaces set up by Medrwn Môn to which the report refers.

Councillor Ieuan Williams also on account of his being Chair of a Warm Space venue.

Councillor Nicola Roberts on account of her being a member of Anglesey CAB which is referred to in the report.

Councillor Robin Williams on account of his wife's being employed by Anglesey Good Food (Bwyd Da Môn) to which the report makes reference.

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 25 April, 2023 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 25 April, 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 June, 2023 to January, 2024 was presented for confirmation.

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

- Item 7 (Responding to the local housing challenge – Development of 10 or more housing units: Stad Parc y Coed, Llangefni, Phase 4) as a new item for the Executive's 27 June, 2023 meeting.
- Item 10 (Petition Scheme) as a new item for the Executive's 18 July, 2023 meeting
- Item 11 (Changes to the Constitution – Extending the terms of reference of the Democratic Services Committee) as a new item for the Executive's 18 July, 2023 meeting.
- Item 12 (Annual Delivery Document 2023/24) as a new item for the Executive's 18 July, 2023 meeting.
- Item 16 (Review of Ysgol y Graig and Ysgol Talwrn Catchment Areas) as a new item for the Executive's 18 July, 2023 meeting.
- Item 22 (Annual Performance Report 2022/23) as a new item for the Executive's 26 September, 2023 meeting.
- Item 31 (Biodiversity Plan - Annual Progress Report) as a new item for the Executive's 12 December, 2023 meeting.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period June, 2023 to January, 2024 with the changes outlined at the meeting.

5. COST OF LIVING DISCRETIONARY SCHEME – FINAL REPORT

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out how grant funding provided by Welsh Government as part of the Cost-of-Living Discretionary Scheme to help local residents with the cost-of-living crisis was spent on Anglesey was presented for the Executive's information. The report detailed the support provided under the two phases of the scheme approved by the Executive (28 June, 2022 and 24 January, 2023) and the funding allocations made.

Councillor Robin Williams, Portfolio Member for Finance reported that a sum of £585,163 was provided by Welsh Government to which could be added any underspend from the Cost-of-Living national scheme. Under the national scheme, 21,906 residents received a payment of £150; 999 failed to cash the voucher sent to them and, as a result, £149,780 was transferred to the discretionary scheme giving a total funding pot of £734,943. As a local discretionary scheme, the Council was able to decide how to use the grant and while many authorities in Wales used the funding to award additional grants to specific groups of residents, the Council took a more creative and targeted approach which directed the funding to areas which gave a greater benefit to those in need of support during the cost of living crisis including distributing funding to third party organisations (e.g. Armed Forces veterans, Samaritans and Food Banks) which were best placed to identify those in the greatest need. The Portfolio Member for Finance said that he was pleased to be able to confirm that all the funding received from Welsh Government was utilised in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant and although some organisations had not distributed all the funds they received by 31 March, 2023, under the terms of the grant, they would be able to retain unused funding and continue to provide assistance to any new applicants who come forward as long as they meet the requirements relating to the funding. Councillor

Robin Williams took the opportunity to thank all those who had been involved in setting up and delivering the scheme in the Finance and Housing Services.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer in saying that he hoped the report showed that the Council had been creative in its use of the available funds to provide the greatest benefit to those most in need commented that thanks were due in the main to Llinos Williams the Housing Service's Community Housing Manager who had undertaken much of the hard work in liaising with organisations to distribute the funding.

Executive Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Llinos Williams and the team in Housing Services as well as the Finance Service for their initiative, and for doing their best to ensure that the grant funding was used where it was most needed on Anglesey.

It was resolved to note the contents of the report which confirms that all the funding provided by Welsh Government was utilised in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

6. CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND LEAVING CARE STRATEGY 2023-2028

The report of the Director of Social Services incorporating the Children Looked After and Leaving Care Strategy 2023-2028 was presented for the Executive's consideration and approval.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services presented the report highlighting that the role of corporate parent to children and young people looked after by the Authority is one of the most important duties a councillor has; it means doing the best for those children in the Authority's care in the same way as any parents would do for their own children. Every child and young person on Anglesey should have the best possible start in life and be given every opportunity to thrive, and as a corporate parent it is the Council's vision that this should apply equally to the children and young people it looks after. Councillor Gary Pritchard said that the strategy is the first of its kind for Anglesey's Children and Families' Services and has come about as a result of an internal audit review which showed that although the Corporate Parenting Panel was working well a strategy was needed to give direction and focus to the work. The Children Looked After and Leaving Care Strategy has been produced to set out how the Council collectively intends to challenge itself as corporate parent over the next five years and has been developed with input from the Corporate Parenting Panel. It is a working document and will be reported on annually to the Panel and from there to the Executive. Councillor Pritchard emphasised that corporate parenting is a whole Council endeavour and extends beyond the Portfolio Holder, the Executive and the Children and Families' Service with the strategy therefore applying across the Council and to all elected members.

The Director of Social Services thanked all those who had contributed towards developing the strategy. He confirmed that the Council currently looks after 150 children and 63 care leavers who have come into care not through choice but due to circumstances which have required the intervention of the Authority. It is right therefore that the Council does its best by these children and young people and provides them with the care and attention they need. Approval of the strategy represents the start of the journey with annual reports to be issued on how the Council is meeting the strategy's priorities.

Councillor Douglas Fowlie, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported from the Committee's 19 April, 2023 meeting at which the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy was scrutinised. Councillor Fowlie said that the issues raised by the Committee at that meeting included the link between the Strategy and the newly adopted Council Plan 2023-28, the strategy's affordability in the current climate and the risks arising and measures

planned to mitigate the impact on children and young people looked after. Questions were also asked about the wider impact of the strategy on the people of the Island and about the degree to which children who are looked after attain and achieve. Having considered these matters and the responses provided, the Scrutiny Committee had confirmed that it was satisfied with the contents of the strategy and had recommended the same to the Executive.

Executive Members acknowledged the importance of the strategy and the corporate parenting responsibility which falls to each elected member ensuring that the needs of the children and young people whom the Council looks after are identified and met. Councillor Robin Williams pointed out that the strategy is the result of the Council taking it upon itself to review its corporate parenting arrangements and in that process recognising the need for a strategy to formally set out its vision for the children and young people in its care and the means by which it will be delivered, which shows the Council to be self-aware and to be capable of challenging itself to make improvements where it sees necessary.

It was resolved to accept and approve Ynys Môn's Children Looked After and Leaving Care Strategy 2023-28.

7. THE USE OF SECOND HOMES PREMIUM FUNDING

The report of the Head of Housing Services regarding the proposed use of the Second Homes Premium funding for 2023/24 was presented for the Executive's consideration and approval. The report outlined the schemes which the £1.502m funding would support and the allocation for each scheme.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services presented the report saying that the Council had recently approved raising the Second Homes Premium from 50% to 75%. He said that the ruling party had campaigned in last year's election on a manifesto commitment of ensuring that everyone has the right to be able to call somewhere home and as part of that vision it is the Administration's intention to use the additional funding generated by the Second Homes Premium to help local people with their housing needs including by providing grants to bring empty properties back into use and by providing shared equity loans for first time buyers to purchase properties on the open market. For 2023/24 the Council is also introducing a subsidy scheme to help local people afford open market rents. Councillor Pritchard said that the strategy which enables those who can afford more than one home to assist those who are struggling to afford any home is crucial in ensuring local housing for the people of Anglesey.

The Head of Housing Services highlighted that when the Second Homes Premium was introduced in 2017 funding of £170k was made available while in the year gone by the Service was able to spend £696k. He was confident that with the additional funding available the schemes listed in the report will come to fruition.

Councillor Robin Williams, Portfolio Member for Finance referring to the proposed £300k allocation to the Planning Service sought clarification of how the allocation is to be spent. Councillor Gary Pritchard in confirming that work is required in relation to Article 4 directions said that he had consulted with Planning Officers and the Portfolio Member for Planning to obtain further details and a breakdown of the £300k allocation.

The Chair proposed therefore, and it was agreed, that the schemes listed in section 10 of the report be approved except for the £300k allocation to the Planning Service and that that allocation be agreed jointly by the relevant Portfolio Holders once the breakdown has been received.

It was resolved –

- To approve using the funding generated through the Second Homes Premium for the schemes highlighted in paragraph 10 of the report for 2023/24 except for the £300k allocation to the Planning Service.
- That the maximum grant for bringing empty properties back into use be increased to £25,000.
- That the allocation to the Planning Service be agreed jointly by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Youth and Housing Services and the Portfolio Holder for Finance once a breakdown of the £300k has been received.

Councillor Ieuan Williams
Chair

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