

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 24 October 2023

- PRESENT:** Councillor Llinos Medi (Chair)
- Councillors Neville Evans, Carwyn Jones, Gary Pritchard, 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 Social Services,
Director of Education, Skills and Young People,
Head of Profession (Human Resources) & Transformation,
Head of Democracy,
Legal Services Manager (RJ),
Programme Manager (EB),
Committee Officer (MEH),
Webcasting Officer (FT).
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Glyn Haynes, Gwilym O Jones, Robert Ll Jones, Liz Wood.
- APOLOGIES:** Head of Adults' Services

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None 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 26 September, 2023 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 26 September, 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 November 2023 to June 2024 were presented for confirmation.

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

- Item 8 – (Freeport – Update) as a new item for the 28 November, 2023 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 9 – (Freeport – Approval of Outline Business Case [confidential item]) as a new item for the 28 November, 2023 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 13 – (Treasury Management 2023/2024 – 6 month review) as a new item for 23 January, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 14 – (Draft Revenue Budget 2024/2025) a new item for 23 January, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 15 – (Community Based non-residential Social Care Services – 2024/2025 Fees and Charges) as a new item for the 23 January, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 16 – (Independent Sector Care Home Fees 2024/2025) as a new item for the 23 January, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 17 – (Fees and Charges 2024/2025) as a new item for the 23 January, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 18 – (HRA Housing Rents and Housing Service Charges 2024/2025) as a new item for the 23 January, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 20 – (Modernising Day Opportunities: Learning Disabilities [Holyhead area]) item re-scheduled from the 28 November, 2023 meeting to the 23 January, 2024 meeting.
- Item 22 – (Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/2025) as a new item for the 20 February, 2024 meeting of the Executive.
- Item 23 – (Local Authority Homes for Older People – Setting the Standard Charge 2024/2025) as a new item for the 20 February, 2024 meeting of the Executive.

Items scheduled for an extraordinary meeting of the Executive (Budget) – March 2024 (date to be confirmed)

Item 28 – (Revenue Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 3, 2023/2024) item re-scheduled from the 20 February, 2024 meeting.

Item 29 - (Capital Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 3, 2023/2024) item re-scheduled from the 20 February, 2024 meeting.

Item 30 - (Housing Revenue Account Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 3, 2023/2024) re-scheduled from the 20 February, 2024 meeting.

Item 31 – Revenue Budget 2024/2025 – new item

Item 32 – Capital Budget 2024/2025 – new item

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

5 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW 2022/23

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the Treasury Management Annual Review 2022/2023 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance presented the report saying that the Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2022/2023. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code). The report provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by Members.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the report sets out as to how the Council has performed against the Treasury Management Strategy adopted by the full Council in March 2022. However, since the publication of the Strategy the financial climate has changed completely with the significant rise in inflation and interest rates, which has impacted on the cost of borrowing and the return on investments. He noted that during 2022/2023, the Council maintained an under-borrowed position of £20.3m with the use of Council's own cash balances to fund capital expenditure. This meant that the capital borrowing need was not fully funded with loan debt, as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. The level of externalised debt fell by £1.5m during the year with a debt balance of £123.8m at the end of the financial year. Conversely the balance of reserves and provisions fell by £3m to £59.8m. All treasury management decisions taken during the year were in accordance with the Treasury Management strategy and none of the prudential indicators had been breached during the year. He further said that the MRP Policy was revised during 2022/2023 and this along with improved returns on investments had resulted in a significant reduction in revenue costs.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note that the outturn figures in the report will remain provisional until the audit of the 2022/2023 Statement of Accounts is completed and signed off; any resulting significant adjustments to the figures in the report will be reported as appropriate;**
- **To note the provisional 2022/2023 prudential and treasury indicators in the report;**
- **To forward the Annual Treasury Management Review Report for 2022/2023 to the Full Council without further comment.**

6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT - QUARTER 1, 2023/24

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer setting out the Treasury Management – Quarter 1, 2023/24 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance presented the report saying that the CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management and CIPFA Prudential Code 2021 now requires that prudential indicators are reported quarterly rather than twice yearly. Following discussion between the Portfolio Member and the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer it has been agreed that the quarterly report of Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 for them to be reviewed and accepted by the Portfolio Member for Finance and thereafter presented to the Governance and Audit Committee for information only and the mid-year and Annual Report be submitted to the Executive and to full Council.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that internal balances continue to fund capital expenditure and as interest rates are high it is prudent not to be tied into long-term borrowing if the need arise so as to avoid high interest rates. It is anticipated that interest rates will remain high for some time. He noted that the financial reserves are decreasing and at the end of Quarter 1 the total balance invested was £53.097m as was shown in Table 5.6. The yield from these investments from 1 April, 2023 to 30 June, 2023 was £0.457m, with the total interest receivable on investments expected to be £1.287m for 2023/2024. However, cash balances are reducing as the financial year progresses, so not all these investments will be viable to renew on maturity. He further said that the Council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/2024.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the report, the treasury activity and the prudential indicators as at 30 June, 2023;**
- **That all future Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 Treasury Management reports are reviewed and accepted by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and reported to the Governance and Audit Committee for information only. The half yearly and annual review reports will continue to follow the same process i.e. reported to the Governance and Audit Committee, the Executive and full Council.**

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2023-2028

The report of the Head of Profession (Human Resources) & Transformation incorporating the Public Participation Strategy 2023 - 2028 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Corporate and Customer Experience presented the report and said that under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, local authorities in Wales must produce a Participation Strategy which notes how local people are encouraged to take part in the Council's decision-making process. The strategy aims to encourage people to take part in

the Council's business and build on the success that the Council has achieved in engaging with residents as recognised by Audit Wales. The Strategy includes examples of participation within the report. A consultation exercise was undertaken with Council Officers for a four-week period. A high percentage of respondents agreed with the content of the Strategy which shows support for the Strategy and the intention to review it regularly. It was recognised that improvement is required as regards increased participation by children and young people in the Council's decisions, looking at new methods of gathering and presenting feedback digitally and considering ways of reporting successes/lack of successes in terms of participation. He noted that following today's meeting of the Executive the Public Participation Strategy will be submitted to the full Council on 26 October, 2023 for ratification.

The Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation reported that work has been undertaken for several years as regards to public participation in encouraging residents to respond to consultation process within the Council. She noted that the Strategy will give the Authority a platform and a firm foundation to improve public participation. The Programme Manager reiterated that the Strategy formalises much of the work already taking place and that the Strategy is a strong foundation on which to build regarding further public participation in the future.

Councillor Gwilym O Jones, Vice-Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee provided feedback from the Committee's 17 October, 2023 meeting where the Public Participation Strategy 2023-2028 report had been scrutinised. The Committee's members raised as to how and why the Council needs to produce a participation strategy and how it will assist the Council to achieve its Council's Plan. Further questions were raised as to the processes and arrangements that will be put in place to make sure that the Authority complies fully with the requirements of the Strategy together with any financial implications. Reference was made also to the contribution from local communities and the Town and Community Councils to promote engagement. Councillor Gwilym O Jones confirmed that following its discussions the Committee had agreed to note the Public Participation Strategy and to recommend to the Executive and the full Council that the Strategy be adopted. The Committee also recommended to the Executive and full Council to authorise the Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Corporate and Customer Experience to prepare the final document in accordance with the corporate format before uploading the document on the Council's website. The Committee further agreed that an action point be adopted that the Town and Community Councils Forum should discuss the role, purpose and the participation of Town and Community Councils to promote engagement and participation with the public when the Council consult on different issues.

The Chief Executive said that the template for the Public Participation Strategy is currently being undertaken and the Welsh and English format needs to be consistent. He noted that the legislation has required that a new work programme be established, and digital technology is the preferred platform to allow people the opportunity to engage, consult and to get more local residents to respond to public consultations. However, opportunity should also be given to people who prefer not to use the digital platform available.

Members of the Executive expressed that it is paramount to engage with residents when public consultation on different matters is sought. It was expressed that it is important to have consultation and responses from young people.

The Leader said that there are examples that responses to consultation has risen and especially during consultation on the Council's Plan. She noted that social media is used to engage and raise awareness of the work of the Council. She referred to the volunteers within the local communities that promote and afford opportunities to residents and the engagement with School's Forums and to voice of young people is paramount to any public consultation. The Leader further referred to the Town and Community Councils Forum and the discussion that are undertaken in the quarterly meetings.

It was RESOLVED:-

- **To note the Public Participation Strategy;**
- **To recommend to the full Council that it adopts the Public Participation Strategy, that it is a live document, and it will be reviewed and updated regularly and will continue to build on successes thus far;**
- **To authorise the Head of Profession (Human Resources) and Transformation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder – Corporate and Customer Experience to prepare the final document in accordance with the corporate format before uploading the document on the Council's website.**

The meeting concluded at 10.50 a.m.

**COUNCILLOR LLINOS MEDI
CHAIR**