

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 12 December 2023

- PRESENT:** Councillor Llinos Medi (Chair)
- Councillors Carwyn Jones, Gary Pritchard, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Dafydd R 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 Housing Services,
Head of Democracy,
Programme Manager (Corporate) (AH) (item 6 only),
Committee Officer (MEH),
Webcasting Officer (FT).
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Neville Evans
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Glyn Haynes and Derek Owen
Scrutiny Officer (EA)

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

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

None to report.

3 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, 2024 to August, 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 16 (Biodiversity Plan – Annual Progress Report) re-scheduled from the Executive's 12 December, 2023 meeting to its 20 February, 2024 meeting.

- Item 26 (Local Housing Market Assessment) re-scheduled from the Executive's 12 March, 2024 meeting to its 23 April, 2024 meeting.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period January 2024 – August 2024 with the changes outlined at the meeting.

4 HRA HOUSING RENTS AND HOUSING SERVICE CHARGES 2024/25

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the HRA Housing Rents and Housing Service Charges 2024/2025 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services said that as the CPI for September 2023 was 6.7%, which falls outside the range of 0% to 3%, means that the current annual rent uplift of CPI + 1% does not apply, and the Minister for Climate Change within Welsh Government therefore will determine the appropriate change for Social Housing Rents for 2024/2025. The Minister has determined that the total maximum annual rent uplift across the whole of the stock will be up to 6.7%.

The Head of Housing Services reported that if the Council agrees to increase the annual rent by 6.7%, Welsh Government expects the Authority to commit to meeting the SATC2 standards recently launched by 2033. There is also an expectation that all RSLs in Wales continue to increase the number of new affordable social homes to fulfil their ambition of 20,000 new homes. Over the past 3 years, the Housing Service has completed the development of 131 new units and in addition a development programme of 39 new homes is in the process of planning development of an Extra Care Housing Scheme in Menai Bridge. However, as part of the consideration to increase the annual rent, several new commitments and initiatives have been set by Welsh Government which include that no evictions should be undertaken due to financial hardship for the term of the settlement where tenants engage with landlords; targeted support to those experiencing financial hardship to access support. There is also a requirement to maximise the use of all suitable social housing stock. The Head of Housing Services further referred to the requirement to assess the current average affordability of rents to tenants which was highlighted within the report. A questionnaire was sent out to all tenants to ascertain whether they believed that their rent is fair, affordable and the service they receive is value for money. A total of 779 questionnaires were returned and the target audience was to reach as many tenants who were not in receipt of any benefits that contributed towards paying for their rents as any possible rent increases would have an effect. 82% of tenants agreed that the rents were affordable and 18% disagreed. In addition, over 61% of the survey were completed by tenants working full time which shows that the survey targeted the tenants who were potentially not eligible for housing benefit or universal credit support. He further said that there is a Financial Inclusion Team within Housing Services who are available to provide advice and support to tenants.

The Executive emphasised the importance that tenants who are currently not eligible for housing benefits and financial support should be encouraged to contact the Council if they are suffering any financial hardship.

It was RESOLVED to approve:-

- **the rent increase of 6.7% on all general rent units in line with the Welsh Government rent policy on collection over 52 weeks;**
- **an increase of 63p per week for the rent of all garages;**
- **that the service charges cost as noted with 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 tenants who self-pay their rent.**

5 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 Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the attached Public Interest Test.

6 AETHWY EXTRA CARE & RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME – BUSINESS CASES

The report of the Director of Social Service which sought the Executive’s approval relating to the Aethwy Extra Care and Residential Care Home - Strategic Outline Case (SOC)/Outline Business Case (OBC) was presented for consideration.

The Executive expressed their appreciation to the Officers involved in the development stages of Aethwy Extra Care and Residential Care Home and noted that such a development will contribute towards the strategic objective of ensuring that every person has a right to call somewhere a home and to be able to live independently for as long as it is possible.

It was RESOLVED to approve:-

- **The SOC/OBC for the Aethwy Extra Care/Residential Care Home scheme;**
- **The submission of the SOC/OBC to Welsh Government;**
- **To delegate authority to the Director of Social Services in consultation with the Deputy Leader & Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services, Deputy Leader & Portfolio Member for Finance, Portfolio Member for Adults’ Service and Community Safety, Chief Executive, Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer and the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer to amend the SOC/OBC if necessary, if the changes do not result in material changes (in terms of policy, principles, financial contribution, risks and harm to third parties);**
- **To commit to funding the Council’s Capital requirement, towards the project, via the Housing Revenue Account.**

The meeting concluded at 10.35 am

**COUNCILLOR LLINOS MEDI
CHAIR**