

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the hybrid meeting held on 19 March, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor Llinos Medi (Leader) (Chair)
Councillors Carwyn Jones, Gary Pritchard, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Dafydd Rhys Thomas, Robin Williams.

IN ATTENDANCE: 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 Highways, Waste and Property (for item 8)
Head of Housing Services
Head of Regulation and Economic Development (for item 13)
Head of Democracy
Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation (for item 5)
Corporate Planning, Performance and Programme Manager (GP) (for item 5)
Corporate Programme Manager (ATR) (for item 7)
Chief Property and Asset Officer (MH) (for item 8)
Chief Economic Development Officer (for item 13)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Webcasting Officer (FT)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Neville Evans, Mr Rhys H .Hughes (Deputy Chief Executive)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Glyn Haynes, Trefor Lloyd Hughes, MBE, Dyfed Wyn Jones (Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) Gwilym O. Jones (Vice-Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee), R. Llewelyn Jones, Jackie Lewis, Communications Officer (GJ), Scrutiny Manager (AGD), Scrutiny Officer (EA) (Observer).

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Nicola Roberts declared a personal interest only when item 7 was discussed on account of her part time work with Citizens Advice.

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

None to report.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on the following dates were presented for confirmation: -

- 20 February, 2024
- 29 February, 2024 (extraordinary)

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on the following dates be confirmed as correct –

- **20 February, 2024**
- **29 February, 2024 (extraordinary)**

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 April to November 2024 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on the changes to the Forward Work Programme including the rescheduling of the item on the Local Housing Market from the March 2024 meeting to the July 2024 meeting and the addition of performance and budget monitoring items to the November 2024 meeting. The Head of Democracy confirmed that work is afoot to fully populate the Executive's Forward Work Programme for 2024/25.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Work Programme for the period April to November 2024 as presented.

5. SCORECARD MONITORING – QUARTER 3 2023/24

The report of the Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 3 2023/24 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The report was presented by Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience as the most positive end of Quarter 3 corporate scorecard since the scorecard was introduced as a performance management tool with 91% of all Performance Indicators performing above or within a 5% tolerance of their targets. He highlighted a number of strong performances for the period in relation to the Welsh Language and schools, NERS indicators, the number of empty homes brought back into use, Adults' Services, Children and Families' Services, Homelessness, Waste Management, and the Planning Service. Further work is required to bring the performance with regard to FOI responses, complaints management, delivery of DFGs and the time taken to re-let empty properties to target and these areas are being monitored and examined by the Leadership Team to secure improvements into the future. Although financial pressures continue to be felt and will need to be addressed going forward into the next financial year, the Council's financial management performance is encouraging and forecasts an end of year underspend which if realised would strengthen the Council's financial position.

The Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation echoed the comments of the Portfolio Member saying that the scorecard reflects positive performance across the organisation and although there are a few areas where performance can be improved, that endeavour forms part of the Council's ambition to continuously improve and do better.

Councillor Dyfed Wyn Jones, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported on the issues raised by the Committee in scrutinising the Q3 Scorecard at its meeting on 12 March 2024. Those included areas where the performance is on target but the trend is downwards, the lessons learnt from complaints and the extent to which those are being used to improve process and practice and the timetable for implementing the new 2024/25 scorecard and its alignment with the Council Plan 2023-28. Having discussed these matters and received assurances from the Officers and Portfolio Members and having recognised the positive performance overall which the Q3 scorecard represents, the Committee had

resolved to recommend the Q3 2023/24 scorecard report and the mitigating measures outlined therein to the Executive.

The Chief Executive commented that securing the level of achievement reflected by the Q3 scorecard has meant a great deal of hard work and he congratulated the Heads of Service and their managers and staff for their commitment. While maintaining and building on the current positive results to achieve further progress and improvement will be challenging, that must be the Council's aspiration.

The Executive's Members acknowledged the results of the Q3 scorecard with good performances across services and some standout areas, and they expressed appreciation of the efforts made by staff in achieving such a positive outcome. They noted that the Council had and continues to face external challenges which it seeks to manage and that the period also coincided with intense focus on developing the 2024/25 budget with services working on identifying budget savings which makes the performance all the more commendable. Councillor Gary Pritchard, Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services referred to KPI 28 (the average number of days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant) which has been the subject of recent discussions by Scrutiny and he was pleased to confirm that the number of days taken to deliver a DFG has reduced and although not yet at target the improvement shows that the mitigating measures put in place are having an effect and movement is in the right direction. He stressed the importance of looking at trends as much as targets and cited the Homelessness service as an example where the indicators are all currently performing well but where significant pressures on the service are driving the trend for one indicator downwards which will be monitored and reviewed.

It was resolved to accept the Corporate Scorecard for Q3 2023/24 and to note the areas which the Leadership Team is exploring and investigating to manage and secure improvements into the future along with the mitigating measures as outlined in the report.

6. FURTHER EDUCATION TRUST ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2022/23

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the David Hughes Charitable Estate and Anglesey Further Education Trust Annual Report and Accounts for 2022/23 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The report was presented by Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance who provided an overview of the background of the Anglesey Further Education Trust and the three funds within it, namely the David Hughes Endowment, the Anglesey Further Education Fund 1/3 and the Anglesey Education Trust Fund 2/3 which provide specific educational benefit for young persons who attend or have attended the Island's secondary schools. He referred to the funding allocated to the secondary schools by the Executive in October 2019 and how this has been utilised by the schools during 2022/23 as described in sections 5 and 6 of the report. As the David Hughes Charitable Estate did not generate a surplus in 2022/23 no funding was available to be transferred to the Trust in that year and so no allocation was made to the schools. Work is being done to ensure that optimum use is made of the Anglesey Further Education Trust and that it remains fit for purpose.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer advised that the accounts for 2022/23 show that the costs of running the estate exceeded the rental income from the estate's smallholding properties meaning that there was no surplus income available to be distributed to the Anglesey Further Education Trust in 2022/23. Although the value of the estate comprising of its smallholdings and other investments altogether at approximately £4.88m has increased, the net income has not and if this situation persists, consideration will have to be given to ways of maximising the income from the estate to ensure that funds can continue to be distributed to the Further Education Trust otherwise there is a risk that the

Trust will cease to exist along with the benefit to Anglesey's secondary schools and their pupils.

In light of the advice provided about the income situation of the estate, the Chair proposed and it was agreed, that the Executive makes a specific recommendation to authorise the Section 151 Officer to proceed to investigate options for increasing income generation by the David Hughes charitable estate in order to ensure the long-term viability of the Further Education Trust so that Anglesey's young people can continue to derive an educational benefit from it. The Executive would be provided with a further report on the options identified in order to determine a way forward mindful of the needs of the estate's smallholding tenants as well as those of Anglesey's young people.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Draft Annual Report and Accounts for the Anglesey Further Education Trust for the Year 2022/23 as set out in Appendix A to the report.**
- **To delegate to the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer the authority to sign the Final Annual Report and Accounts and file with the Charity Commission upon satisfactory completion of the audit.**
- **To delegate authority to the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Head of Highways, Waste and Property to examine options for maximising income from the David Hughes Charitable Estate in order to safeguard the long-term viability of the Anglesey Further Education Fund for the benefit of Anglesey's young people. A further report will be submitted to the Executive to determine which option to follow.**

7. TACKLING POVERTY STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-29

The report of the Director of Social Services incorporating the Tackling Poverty Strategic Plan for 2024 to 2029 was presented for the Executive's consideration and approval.

The draft Tackling Poverty Strategic Plan was presented by the Director of Social Services as setting out the Council's vision and key priority areas in tackling poverty on the Island over the next five years. The need for the Plan has been recognised as a priority and is driven by the Council Plan 2023 to 2028 which envisions an Anglesey that is healthy and prosperous where people can thrive. The Plan has been developed with input from Officers and stakeholders and its delivery will require their continued support and partnership working. In developing the Plan, the financial constraints on the Council have been considered with it being recognised that more has to be achieved with less. A newly launched cost of living dashboard will provide evidence-based data and information enabling the Council to make correct and informed decisions in tackling poverty on Anglesey as well as monitoring progress effectively.

Councillor Gwilym O. Jones, Vice-Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee reported from the Committee's 13 March 2024 meeting where the Tackling Poverty Strategic Plan had been scrutinised. In discussing the Strategic Plan the Committee had raised issues with regard to the definition of poverty and how that had been arrived at, the inclusiveness of the consultation process, the processes for collecting information about poverty on the Island along with the arrangements for monitoring the actions linked to the key priorities and evaluating the success of the Plan. The Committee had questioned whether setting out six key priorities was overly ambitious in the current climate and in discussing financial poverty the Committee had sought clarity about the accessibility of sources of income via benefits and debt management advice and also the availability of employment opportunities for local people especially with regard to liaising with companies

operating on the Island to create apprenticeships for young people. In recommending the Strategic Plan for approval by the Executive, the Committee had also agreed as an additional action that a joint letter on behalf of this Authority and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai be sent to the Westminster and Welsh Governments to express concern about the effects of the recent decision to significantly reduce the funding for apprenticeship schemes in the UK. The Executive thanked Scrutiny for the input and was agreed in lending its support to the additional action put forward by Scrutiny.

The Chief Executive commented that it is important to understand that poverty is much broader than a lack of financial resources and encompasses the experiences and opportunities available to people particularly young people and how the absence of these can impact upon their lives and life chances which gives an added dimension to the approach to tackling poverty especially when the cost-of-living crisis has made circumstances more difficult for many families and children.

The Executive's Members welcomed the Strategic Plan as critically important in seeking to alleviate the effects of poverty which can be far reaching and can include many elements such as lack of public transport and lack of access to services as well as in-work poverty as a result of low income and high housing costs due to private rents. They noted the statistics with regard to poverty on Anglesey as challenging, and they acknowledged that although the Council cannot end poverty on the Island, it can in collaboration with partner organisations and by focusing on the six priority areas identified in the Plan, address the impact of poverty, and help people improve their situation. Members recognised that many people might be reluctant to admit to being in hardship and that it was essential therefore to raise awareness of the support available across Anglesey and how people can access it.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the draft Tackling Poverty Strategic Plan 2024- 2029.**
- **To endorse the recommendation by Scrutiny that a joint letter on behalf of this Authority and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai be sent to the Westminster and Welsh Governments to express concern about the effects of the recent decision to significantly reduce the funding for apprenticeship schemes in the UK.**

8. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-29

The report of the Head of Highways, Waste and Property incorporating the Corporate Asset Management Strategic Plan 2024-29 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Strategic Plan was presented by Councillor Dafydd Rhys Thomas, Portfolio Member for Highways, Waste and Property as a high-level document which sets out the strategic direction and principles that will guide the Council's asset management decision-making and processes for the period until 2029. He referred to the limitations on the Council's budget which make the upkeep of all its assets in the way it would like increasingly challenging meaning that it will have to review its portfolio to ensure that the assets it holds are safe, accessible, and fit for purpose. The work of collecting and processing information about the Council's portfolio of assets is essential in providing evidence and supporting decision making and is a work stream that is already underway.

The Head of Highways, Waste and Property reported that the purpose of the Strategic Plan is to ensure that the Council has a financially and environmentally sustainable asset portfolio, rationalised to be fit for purpose and safe for the delivery of services. This will then ensure that the Council's assets support and help deliver corporate priorities in line with the Council Plan. The Corporate Asset Management Strategic Plan is closely linked to the Capital Strategy which sets out the principles to be used as guidance for capital priorities and capital resource allocation across the Council's services. The Council's asset portfolio is

varied but does not include those properties held under the Housing Revenue Account nor highways infrastructure. The Strategic Plan will be led by the Property Service in close collaboration with the Council's other services which have asset interests such as schools, leisure centres and residential homes. The Head of Highways, Waste and Property said that strengthening the management of the Council's assets will lead to better assets in the right locations driving efficiency and rationalisation and will also support the Council on its journey towards net zero.

The Chief Property and Asset Officer expanded on the four key priority areas set out in the Strategic Plan in relation to ensuring the suitability of assets, the sustainability of assets, managing assets collaboratively as a corporate resource and taking an approach to planning and decision making that is data driven. He referred to the importance of asset information and of the Council being in possession of accurate and up to date information about its assets so that decisions about those assets some of which are likely to be difficult in order to make the best use of scarce resources, are made on the basis of robust evidence.

Councillor Dyfed Wyn Jones, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported back on the Committee's discussions regarding the Asset Management Strategic Plan at its 12 March 2024 meeting. Points raised by the Committee at the meeting had included the ways in which the Plan helps the Council fulfil its corporate objectives, the affordability of the Plan in the current financial climate and the arrangements for monitoring progress and measuring achievement. The Committee has also asked whether in order to provide a fuller picture it would be appropriate to include additional information in the Strategic Plan about each asset type's value, backlog maintenance requirements and planned maintenance costs. Having considered the Officers' responses the Committee had resolved to recommend the Asset Management Strategic Plan 2024-29 to the Executive to be adopted by Full Council.

The Executive noted that the Council has a large historical portfolio of assets and that the capital requirements to modernise and upgrade its existing assets and deliver on its strategic objectives is in excess of £300m over the next 5 years. This being so Members acknowledged that as capital resources are squeezed and the Council continues to face budget pressures, consideration will have to be given to a range of options for managing the Council's assets some of which will be radical and include rationalising the portfolio, adapting buildings where possible and looking at opportunities for co-locating services mindful also of the Council's commitment towards realising its Decarbonisation and Net Zero Plan.

It was resolved to recommend the Asset Management Strategic Plan 2024-2029 to the Full Council for its approval.

9. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2024-2054

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the HRA Business Plan 2024 to 2054 was presented for the Executive's consideration and approval.

The HRA Business Plan was presented by Councillor Gary Pritchard, Portfolio Member for Children, Youth and Housing Services as a requirement by Welsh Government as part of the process of securing the Council's Major Repairs Allowance of approximately £2.7m for 2024-25. The Plan contributes towards the fundamental themes of the Council's Corporate Plan with the main contribution being towards ensuring that everyone has the right to call somewhere home, social care and wellbeing and economic development. The Plan refers to the new Wales Housing Quality Standards 2023 published in November 2023 by Welsh Government and affirms the Council's commitment to achieving the new standards having been the second council in Wales to complete the original WHQS 2012.

The Head of Housing Services confirmed that the focus for the coming year will be on planning the approach to meeting the new WHQS 2023. A stock condition survey of the Council's housing stock was completed in 2023/24 on the basis of access to 88% of the properties which establishes a baseline in preparation for the new standard. Work will also be undertaken on producing Target Energy Pathways for the Council's housing to improve the energy efficiency of its homes. The need for social housing on Anglesey has reached an all-time high with 704 applicants on the housing waiting list and while the Council currently owns and manages 3,981 housing units it is committed to increasing its social housing stock to respond to the local housing challenge and meet the local housing need. A sum of £17m has been included in the 2024/25 budget for developing new council housing and buying back former council houses on Anglesey along with £13m for programmed repairs, £1m for energy and decarbonisation works and £5.7m for responsive repairs. Rental income of £23m is expected.

Councillor Dyfed Wyn Jones, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee summarised the issues discussed by the Committee in scrutinising the HRA Business Plan at its 12 March 2024 meeting as the affordability of the Plan, the challenges in achieving WHQS 2023, the percentage of the Council's housing that is suitable for the 21st century and the rationale for the 30-year Plan timescale. Having considered these matters and the responses to them the Committee had resolved to recommend the HRA Business Plan 2024-2054 to the Executive.

The Executive's Members recognised the challenges facing the Council in seeking to meet both increasing housing need on the Island and the requirements of WHQS 2023 and they were appreciative of the Housing Service's work and ongoing commitment to achieve continuous improvement for the homes and services provided across Anglesey as well as to invest in and deliver new council housing on the Island.

It was resolved to approve the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2024-2054.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and 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 Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the Public Interest Test presented.

11. STRATEGIC OUTLINE PROGRAMME – ROLLING PROGRAMME

The report of the Director of Education, Skills, and Young People incorporating the Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) - Rolling Programme was presented for the Executive's approval for submission to Welsh Government.

The report and SOP were presented by Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language for the Executive's approval ahead of its submission to Welsh Government for the next phase of strategic infrastructure funding for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, (formerly known as 21st Century Schools Programme). In November 2022 Welsh Government noted that it would be replacing the previous banded programme for capital investment in schools and colleges and moving to a regime of using a Strategic Outline Programme over 9 years. Under this regime, it is required to present a 9-year capital programme, including an indicative finance forecast for the 9 years to Welsh Government for consideration towards providing commitment and support for the first 3 years alongside support in principle for Years 4,5 and 6. Years 7 to 9 will reflect the Authority's more long-term project pipeline. The SOP sets out the focus of this Authority's 9-year rolling programme and details the proposed future schemes identified for investment

over the course of the programme timeframe along with the estimated costs of the programme and funding impact.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Strategic Outline Programme – Rolling Programme (SOP)**
- **To authorise Officers to present the final version of the Strategic Outline Programme – Rolling Programme (SOP) to Welsh Government officials before the 31 March 2024 deadline.**
- **That authority be delegated to the Director of Education, Skills and Young People in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Education and the Welsh Language, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Chief Executive, Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer and the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer to change the SOP if required, if the changes do not lead to substantial changes in terms of policy, principles, financial contribution, risk and harm to third party.**

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and 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 Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the Public Interest Test presented.

13. ANGLESEY FREEPORT – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The report of the Head of Regulation and Economic Development setting out proposed governance arrangements for the Anglesey Freeport was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The report was presented by Councillor Llinos Medi, Leader and Portfolio Member for Economic Development. As was reported in a previous report to the Executive in November 2023, the Council's Officers and its advisors have been working to agree a position on the form of legal entity that would best enable the Freeport to discharge its responsibilities to the Governments and ensure adequate transfer and management of risk and liabilities. Based on the advice received and with the agreement of Stena Line, it is proposed that the Council establishes a Company Limited by Guarantee as the Freeport entity and preferred option. The report outlines the governance considerations involved in this approach and the next steps in the process.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the creation by the Council of a Company Limited by Guarantee to act as the Anglesey Freeport legal entity.**
- **To delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer and Director of Function Resources)/ Section 151 Officer to agree the Articles of the Company and its Members Agreement.**
- **To delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer and Director of Function Resources)/ Section 151 Officer to continue negotiations with key stakeholders and, where appropriate, to invite such stakeholders to become members of the Anglesey Freeport Company.**

**Councillor Llinos Medi
Chair**

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