

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Committee Room and virtually on Zoom on 29 April, 2025

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gary Pritchard (Leader) (Chair)
- Councillors Neville Evans, Carwyn Jones, 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 Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer
Director of Education, Skills, and Young People
Head of Democracy
Chief Economic Development Officer (THJ)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Webcasting Officer (FT)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Dyfed Wyn Jones (Portfolio Member for Children, Young People and Families), Mr Fôn Roberts (Director of Social Services).
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Glyn Haynes, Trefor Lloyd Hughes MBE, Derek Owen, Mr Gethin Jones (Communications Officer) Mr Steffan Davies (Digital and social media Officer) (for item 8)
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1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted and were noted as documented above.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Mr Dylan Williams, Chief Executive declared a personal but not prejudicial interest with regard to item 8 on the agenda due to his currently being the only director of Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn by virtue of his position as Chief Executive of the Isle of Anglesey County Council.

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

None to report.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 25 March 2025 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 25 March 2025 be confirmed as correct.

5. THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democracy incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period from May to December 2025 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on the changes to the Forward Work Programme. These included the addition of the Draft Corporate Self-Assessment 2024/25, the Annual Delivery Document 2025/26 and Means Tests - Disabled Facilities Grant to the Executive's 24 June 2025 meeting agenda. Also, the Corporate Self-Assessment and Annual Performance and Wellbeing Report 2024/25 has been added to the Executive's 23 September 2025 meeting agenda.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period May to December 2025 with the changes outlined at the meeting.

6. FURTHER EDUCATION TRUST ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2023/24

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 2023/24 was presented for the Executive's consideration. It is a requirement of the Charity Commission that the annual accounts are approved by the Executive as the Trusts' responsible body.

Councillor Robin Williams, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing presented the report outlining the background of the Anglesey Further Education Trust, its legal status and the different elements within it. The report also provides a summary of the Trust's financial performance in 2023/24 and updates members on the progress made to distribute more of the Trust's funds to meet the charitable purposes of the Trust. In October 2019 the Executive determined to allocate a one-off sum of £55,280 to each secondary school, funded from the Anglesey Further Education 1/3 Restricted Trust Fund, to cover the cost of Learning Coaches. The Executive also approved an allocation of an additional £8,000 per secondary school to provide grants for financially disadvantaged students. The grants were to help students obtain places at colleges and universities and/or purchase books and equipment required for their first year of courses. The total cost of £40,000 was funded by the Anglesey Further Education 2/3 Restricted Trust Fund. Section 5 of the report details how schools utilised these funds in 2023/24.

Councillor Robin Williams highlighted the reliance of the Further Education Trust Fund on the David Hughes Charitable Estate to generate surpluses which are subsequently transferred to the Further Education Trust Fund. While the return on the traded investments is good the performance of the Charitable estate's investment properties is very poor, showing negative returns in 2022/23 and 2023/24. This is because of restrictive tenancy agreements that have hindered rents from increasing significantly over time coupled with rising maintenance costs due to the deteriorating condition of the properties. As a result, the David Hughes Charitable Estate has failed to make a contribution to the Anglesey Further Education Trust in the past two years having generated no surplus. This means that the Trust has not been able to provide support to the current and former pupils of the Council's five secondary schools which is its primary purpose. Without a change in strategy in relation to the David Hughes Charitable estate this situation is likely to persist. This challenge was previously identified in March 2024 when the Executive authorised Officers to examine options to maximise income from the estate to safeguard the long-term viability of the Anglesey Further Education Trust Fund for the benefit of Anglesey's young people. However, due to capacity issues, no progress has been made in implementing this recommendation. The Executive is now asked to authorise the commissioning of external assistance to conduct the necessary review.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer confirmed that the David Hughes Charitable Estate investment properties are not generating sufficient income to cover day to day repair costs or produce a surplus. A point will eventually be reached where significant capital investment will be required to maintain the properties at a lettable standard. The report outlines the aims of the proposed review, which will examine the current tenancy agreements, the revenue and capital investment requirements and the existing investment policy to identify options for generating greater returns on the Trust's investments relating both to the David Hughes Charitable Estate and the Anglesey Further Education Trust. The Further Education Trust Funds accounts for 2023/24 will be published on the Charity Commission's website once they have been signed off on the completion of the audit.

The Chair emphasised the importance of the Council as the sole trustee of the Anglesey Further Education Trust in ensuring that its purposes are effectively fulfilled namely, to provide support to the current and former pupils of the Council's five secondary schools. To achieve this it is vital to maximise income flow from the David Hughes Charitable Estate to the Trust.

The Executive agreed on the necessity of the review and queried the timeline for its completion and reporting.

The Chief Executive advised that a meeting with Finance and Property services had been held during which it was agreed to establish a working group operating under clear terms of reference. The group will include the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and Property service officers. It is anticipated that the review will be conducted in two parts. The first phase will focus on establishing baseline information which will involve specialist input regarding land valuation in relation to the estate. The second phase will explore potential investment opportunities. The aim is to have the first phase underway by the summer.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Draft Annual Report and Accounts for the Anglesey Further Education Trust for the year 2023/24. (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 authorise the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer to commission an external review of the operation and investment options in respect of both Trusts.**

7. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and resolved under Section 100 (A) (40 of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A to the said Act and in the Public Interest Test presented.

8. FREEPORT – UPDATE AND APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT

The report of the Head of Regulation and Economic Development which sought the Executive's agreement to the signing of a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the relevant parties in relation to the Anglesey Freeport was presented for consideration.

The report was presented by the Chief Economic Development Officer who recapped on the background confirming that the draft Anglesey Full Business Case (FBC) was submitted to

the Westminster and Welsh Governments on 17 January 2025 and following written feedback on 11 March, the draft FBC was resubmitted with the expectation that it would be signed off in early April 2025. Following FBC approval, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) must be agreed and signed. The purpose of the MoU is to set out the terms, principles and practices that govern the working relationship between the relevant parties - UK Government, Welsh Government, the Isle of Anglesey County Council and Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn, and outstanding requirements. Signing the MoU is the final step in the Freeport becoming operational. It formalises the key commitments made by the Freeport in the FBC and outlines what support it can expect from the UK and Welsh Governments. The Council has reviewed and commented on the draft MoU and is awaiting the Welsh Government's final version. Once the MoU has been reviewed by the Council's Chief Executive, the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer and Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer, the Council will proceed with signing it. Subject to the Executive's approval it will be signed before the end of May to allow the Freeport to be fully operational by 1 June 2025.

Addressing the Executive's enquiries about progress and timescales, the Chief Economic Development Officer updated members on governance developments including the status of member and landowner agreements. An inaugural shadow board meeting was held in January 2025 with key stakeholders to begin the transition into Freeport delivery. The Chief Executive also provided the latest updates on the Freeport's designated Tax Sites and related matters.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the signing of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UK Government, Welsh Government, the Isle of Anglesey County Council as the Accountable Body, and the Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn as the Governing Body.**
- **That in respect of previous Executive decisions made on 19 March 2024 "Anglesey Freeport Governance Arrangements" and on 23 May 2024 "Agree on the Arrangements for the Establishment of the Porthladd Rhydd Ynys Môn," the delegated authority is amended to the Deputy Chief Executive rather than the Chief Executive.**

**Councillor Gary Pritchard
Chair**