

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Committee Room and virtually on Zoom on 24 February, 2026

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gary Pritchard (Leader) (Chair)
- Councillors Neville Evans, Carwyn Jones, Dyfed Wyn Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Ieuan 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
Director of Social Services
Head of Adult Services (for item 10)
Head of Regulation and Economic Development (for items 18 & 18)
Head of Highways, Waste and Property (for items 19 & 20)
Head of Democracy
Chief Public Protection Officer (TO) (for item 18)
Chief Property and Asset Officer (MH)(for item 20)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Webcasting Officer (FT)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Robin Williams (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance, Corporate Business and Customer Experience)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Jeff Evans (Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) (for items 12, 13 and 20), Glyn Haynes, Aled M. Jones, R. Llewelyn Jones
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1. APOLOGIES

The apology for absence was noted.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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 27 January 2026 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 27 January 2026 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 March to October, 2026 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on the following changes to the Forward Work Programme –

- North Anglesey development – agreement of joint initiative with the Welsh Government is a new item for the May 2026 meeting.
- Quarter 1 2026/27 performance and budget monitoring reports are new items for the September 2026 meeting.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period March to October 2026, with the changes outlined at the meeting.

6. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3 2025/26

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer which set out the financial performance of the Council's services at the end of Quarter 3, 31 December 2025 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the Quarter 3 revenue budget monitoring report noting that the forecasted year-end position is an underspend of £1.865m (0.95%). Although the position at the end of the third quarter provides greater certainty being based on nine months of actual income and expenditure, several factors could still influence the final outturn. These include changes in demand for services, particularly social care; one off unforeseen expenditure, recruitment and retention challenges leading to higher than anticipated vacancies, unexpected weather conditions and the potential receipt of additional grant funding in the final quarter.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the overall combined position of the Council's services shows a forecasted overspend of £0.463m (as set out in Table 4). He highlighted the budget variances, noting that Children's Services remains an area of concern with an overspend of £1.625m driven by the rising number of children in care and high placement costs. Other areas experiencing overspends include Planning and Council Business. Most remaining services are either on budget or underspending helped mainly by staff vacancies, additional grant funding and higher fee income. The underspend in Adult Services has been assisted by several one-off events totalling £2.4m which have either increased income or reduced costs. Without these, the underlying position would be an overspend of £1.2m.

Corporate budgets overall show a £1.267m underspend (as set out in Table 6). Core Council Tax income is forecast to be £483k above budget. The Council Tax premium is expected to generate a surplus of £578k by year-end, partly due to properties transferring back to Council Tax from business rates following a change in eligibility rules for business rates on self-catering accommodation. There remains a risk that appeals relating to self-catering properties could reduce income, and £900k has been set aside in a reserve to mitigate this risk.

The Executive noted how close the overall budget is to that set at the start of the year, with only a projected 0.95% underspend, and expressed thanks to the Finance Service staff for their work.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader commented that the timing of grant funding, particularly when received late in the financial year continues to hinder strategic planning which is a

concern long raised with Welsh Government. He added that multi-year settlements and the incorporation of grant funding into the main settlement would provide councils with greater certainty, rather than the receipt of ad-hoc grant allocations throughout the year.

It was resolved –

- **To note the position set out in Appendices A, B and C of the report in respect of the Authority's financial performance to date and expected outturn for 2025/26.**
- **To note the summary of contingency budgets for 2025/26 detailed in Appendix CH.**
- **To note the monitoring of agency and consultancy costs for 2025/26 in Appendices D and DD.**

7. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER 3 2025/26

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer which set out the financial performance of the capital budget at the end of Quarter 3 2025/26 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the Quarter 3 capital budget monitoring report noting that the capital budget remains tight and provides limited scope for discretionary spending beyond the maintenance of current assets.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the capital programme for 2025/26 totals £66.945m following approved slippage, additional schemes and funding adjustments. By the end of December, 2025, £36.673m (55%) of the annual budget had been spent or committed, with the HRA having spent 63% of its annual budget. A year end underspend of £9.849m is forecast on the 2025/26 capital programme and budget with this being potential slippage into the 2026/27 capital programme. The associated funding will also slip into 2026/27. The main areas of forecast underspend and reasons for them are outlined in section 4 of the report. Progress on the major grant funded projects is detailed in section 3 of the report.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader highlighted the importance of grant funded capital projects and referred to a visit made the previous month to view Levelling Up funded schemes in Holyhead. He noted the positive impact these upgrades will have on the town's high street and thanked the Economic Development Service team and partner agencies for their collaborative work, emphasising the significant benefits such grant funded projects bring.

The Chief Executive drew attention to the Council's dependency on grant funding for capital projects, noting that the application process is often competitive and requires capacity, expertise and substantial input. These grants remain vital to the Council and the island and the Levelling Up programme demonstrates the value of partnership working. However, the grants landscape is changing again with a period of uncertainty ahead. Safeguarding the expertise that can transfer between programmes as opportunities arise is essential and will be a focus in the coming months.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety referred to HRA funded projects including new housing developments, renewal of existing housing and decarbonisation works all of which support local contractors and the wider local economy. A major project within the programme is the new extra care facility in Menai Bridge.

It was resolved –

- **To note the progress of expenditure and receipts against the capital budget 2025/26 at Quarter 3.**
- **To approve the additional schemes, amounting to £7.276m to the capital programme and amendments to funding, as per Appendix C, which will result in a revised capital budget of £66.945m for 2025/26.**

8. HOUSING REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER 3 2025/26

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer which set out the financial performance of the HRA for the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the Quarter 3 HRA budget monitoring report.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported on the overall position noting that the HRA shows a £715k revenue overachievement against the profiled budget at Quarter 3 2025/26. The forecast year-end revenue underspend is £546k, and capital expenditure is forecast to be £864k under budget. The combined revenue and capital deficit forecast is £8,436k which is £1,403k better than planned and reduces the amount of external borrowing required. By Quarter 3, a total of 29 units have been added to the housing stock, including newly developed houses as well as existing properties acquired and refurbished by the HRA. Further developments and acquisitions are progressing as shown in Appendix C to the report.

The opening balance of the HRA reserve stood at £7.976m. The budget allowed for the use of £6,820k of this balance, leaving the minimum level of reserve balance of £1,155k as set out in the HRA Business Plan. After capital budget and grant adjustments, the net revenue/capital deficit budgeted for the year is £8,436k. This is to be funded from the HRA reserve and £1,616k in external borrowing.

Councillor Gary Pritchard referred to the challenges facing the HRA which were raised during the Corporate Scrutiny Committee meeting last week. While the Council is pleased to maintain rents at a level below what the Trussell Trust recommends as fair rent, its inability to raise rents to housing association levels places pressure on the HRA, particularly as it is also expected to fund improvements to ensure the housing stock continues to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Housing and Community Safety confirmed that achieving the Council's ambitions for new build, acquisitions and development alongside investment in the existing stock and meeting WHQS requirements remains a significant challenge especially as revenue income is not keeping pace with rising costs. The Council is grateful for grant funding and is keen to ensure rents remain affordable. Nevertheless, choices will need to be made - either grant income must increase, WHQS requirements must be eased, or the Council must review its ambitions. Borrowing is another option, but the Council does not wish to burden the HRA with excessive debt.

It was resolved to note the following –

- **The position set out in respect of the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for Quarter 3 2025/26.**
- **The forecast outturn for 2025/26.**

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2026/27

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2026/27 was presented for the Executive's consideration. The statement set out how the Council will manage its borrowing, investments and cash flow in the coming year in line with CIPFA's Prudential and Treasury Management Codes.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the TMSS report for 2026/27.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer provided an overview of the report noting that it had been scrutinised by the Governance and Audit Committee which did not propose any amendments. The strategy contains no significant changes from the previous year's version, but it aligns with the Capital Strategy and sets out three capital spending scenarios – base, ambitious and ideal, together with the borrowing implications of each as shown in Table 6 of the report. Tables 7a and 7B outline the revenue implications for the General Fund and HRA respectively with revenue costs significantly higher under the ideal scenario.

In recent years, the Council has utilised internal borrowing, but falling reserves mean that external borrowing will be required by the end of the year or the beginning of the next. The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely to profit from investing the extra sums borrowed. It will also avoid rescheduling existing borrowing, as PWLB redemption rates remain high and exceed any potential savings. Instead, the Council will seek to time external borrowing to coincide with reductions in interest rates.

The Council's investment strategy continues to prioritise security and liquidity of funds over yield, using only highly creditworthy counterparties and ensuring that day to day cashflow requirements are met. The strategy also sets out the governance and reporting arrangements.

The Prudential and Treasury indicators are provided in Appendix 10 to the report. These cover affordability, prudence and set limits for capital expenditure, external debt, the liability benchmark and the maturity structure of borrowing.

It was resolved to note the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27 and to forward the statement to the Full Council without further comment.

10. INDEPENDENT SECTOR CARE HOME FEES 2026/27

The report of the Head of Adult Services which set out proposed independent sector care home fees for 2026/27 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Neville Evans, Portfolio Member for Adult Services presented the report noting that the Council is required to review independent sector care home fees annually to coincide with Central Government's changes to benefits and pensions levels. When setting fee levels for independent sector care homes, a range of factors must be taken into account including local circumstances, demand pressures and the availability of provision.

The Executive proposes a 5% increase in independent sector care home fees for 2026/27, covering residential, residential dementia, nursing and nursing dementia placements. This uplift is intentionally higher than the inflationary increases indicated by the regional methodology toolkit (Table 1 of the report) and the uplift awarded to in-house provision. The higher increase reflects the local financial pressures on providers and the need to maintain sufficient care home capacity. The recommended weekly fees are outlined in Table 2 of the

report and exclude free nursing care contributions. They apply to homes that accept the Council's standard rates. Homes already receiving above the standard rates will be asked to share financial information which will be considered when determining any monetary uplift. Exceptions to the fee levels will be considered where clear evidence shows that the fee set is insufficient in any individual case. It is proposed that such decisions are delegated to the Section 151 Officer, Head of Adult Services and the Portfolio Member for Adult Services.

The Head of Adult Services noted that Anglesey's fees are competitive within the region and remain slightly below the Welsh average.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the recommendations to increase fee levels as follows:-**
 - **Residential Care (Older People) - £874.18 per week**
 - **Residential (Dementia) - £976.89 per week**
 - **Nursing Care (Social Care element) – £952.07 per week (excluding LA and HB FNC)**
 - **Nursing (Dementia) (Social Care element) - £1,125.03 per week (excluding LA and HB FNC)**
- **To authorise Social Services and the Finance Service to respond to any requests from individual homes to explore their specific accounts, and to utilise the exercise as a basis to consider any exceptions to the agreed fees. Any exceptions to be agreed with the Adult Service Portfolio Holder, the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer and the Head of Adult Social Care within current budgets.**

11. FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating a proposed schedule of fees and charges for 2026/27 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader presented the report noting that the Executive has set an objective for all non-statutory fees and charges to increase by an average of 3% across each individual service. This allows service heads to adjust individual fees by more or less than 3%, provided that the overall increase for the service equates to 3%.

All statutory fees have been increased in line with the amounts set by the relevant approving body where updated figures have been published. Where the revised charges have not yet been confirmed, the fees are listed as "to be confirmed" and will be updated once the new rates are received. Fees relating to social care and housing are reported to the Executive separately.

It was resolved to approve the schedule of Fees and Charges for 2026/27 outlined in the booklet presented.

12. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET 2026/27

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the detailed revenue budget proposals for 2026/27 was presented for final review by the Executive. The Executive was asked to agree the revenue budget for 2026/27, Council Tax level, use of reserves and updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) before final approval by the Full Council on 5 March 2026.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader presented the report noting that the budget proposals have undergone an extensive process of discussion and challenge, including scrutiny by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at two separate meetings in January and February 2026. The proposals include a net revenue budget of £207.029m, a Council Tax increase of 5.1% taking the Band D charge £1,792.98, the use of £1.685m of reserves to help balance the budget and the continuation of the 100% Council Tax premium on second and empty homes. The proposed Council Tax increase is comparable to national increases and based on the latest information, Anglesey will still have the lowest Council Tax rates in North Wales and its increase will be among the lowest regionally.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer confirmed that the final budget proposals remain unchanged from those initially presented. The risks to the budget are outlined in section 5 of the report with the main risk being uncertainty around future pay awards. As the Section 151 Officer he confirmed that, having considered all identified risks and mitigating actions in place, it is his view that the budget is robust and deliverable. He also noted that the Council's healthy level of general balances and earmarked reserves provides sufficient mitigation against the risks identified.

The report also updates the Medium Term Financial Plan. Based on the assumptions in the MTFP which may change as 2027/28 approaches, further savings will be required in both 2027/28 and in 2028/29. The use of reserves again to balance the budget for 2026/27 creates an immediate funding gap in 2027/28. The Council may or may not be able to address this gap through reserves once more; otherwise budget reductions and/or Council Tax increases will be necessary unless funding improves. The MTFP currently assumes a Council Tax increase of 5% in 2027/28 and 3% in 2028/29. An updated MTFP will be presented to the Executive in September, 2026. However, it is important to note that the medium term financial outlook remains challenging and the Council may face the need to reduce costs, including through potential service reductions.

Councillor Jeff Evans, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported on the committee's 18 February 2026 meeting at which members considered the final draft revenue budget report and proposals. Members discussed the additional allocations within the budget and noted the financial risks set out in the documentation. They also considered the comments of the Chair of the Resources Scrutiny Panel. Members noted that the overall budget proposals remained unchanged from those presented in January 2026. Having sought assurance on a number of questions, the committee resolved to support the final draft revenue budget proposals and to recommend them to the Executive.

Councillor Gary Pritchard thanked the Corporate Scrutiny Committee for its input over the two meetings and also thanked the Finance Service for its work throughout the budget setting process.

Executive members acknowledged that no one wishes to raise Council Tax more than necessary. Although the Welsh Government settlement increased by more than expected, it remains insufficient to meet inflation, pay pressures and rising demand for services – particularly in children's and adults' social care, homelessness and additional learning needs. It was emphasised that in setting the proposed budget, the Executive has sought to protect frontline services on which the most vulnerable depend, and to increase budgets to address growing demand in Adult and Children's services while fully funding inflationary pressures in schools. The proposals also include investment in smaller services that are struggling to meet statutory duties.

Members highlighted the wide range of services the Council is responsible for and the challenges involved in balancing rising costs with limited funding. The proposed budget

seeks to balance service pressures with a combination of savings, reserves and a council tax rise in a way that is deliverable and as fair as possible. A prudent approach to budgeting and spending in previous years means that the Council is able draw on reserves to balance the budget, although reliance on reserves in future is not certain. Nevertheless the Executive accepts that some people will be affected and for those who are struggling financially, support is available and can be accessed through the Council or Citizens Advice.

The Director of Function (Resources)/ Section 152 Officer responding to a request also explained how the Fire Service levy is calculated and how its impact on the Council's budget differs from that of the police precept and the town and community council precepts.

It was resolved –

- **To recommend to the Full Council that it accepts the draft revenue budget as proposed and increases the Council Tax Band D charge by 5.1%, taking the charge for 2026/27 to £1,792.98, noting that a formal resolution, including the North Wales Police and Town/Community Council precepts, will be presented to the Council on 5 March 2026.**
- **To note the Section 151 Officer's recommendation that the Council should maintain a minimum of £10.4m general balances.**
- **To note the comments made by the Section 151 Officer on the robustness of the estimates made, as set out in section 5 of Appendix 1 to the report.**
- **To authorise the Section 151 Officer to make such changes as may be necessary before the submission of the final proposals to the Council.**
- **To agree that any unforeseen pressures on demand led budgets during the financial year will be able to draw upon funding from the general contingencies budget.**
- **To request the Council to authorise the Executive to release up to £250k from general balances if the general contingencies budget is fully committed during the year.**
- **To delegate to the Section 151 Officer the power to release funding from the general contingency up to £50k for any single item. Any item in excess of £50k not to be approved without the prior consent of the Executive.**
- **To confirm that the level of Council Tax Premium for second homes and empty homes is maintained at 100%.**

13. CAPITAL BUDGET 2026/27

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the proposed capital budget and programme for 2026/27 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader presented the report noting that the scope for spending within the capital budget is limited and although borrowing is possible, it has cost implications for the revenue budget.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer reported that the capital budget sets out the Council's strategy for capital expenditure, with priority given to refurbishing and replacing the Council's existing assets (£6.937m). The Council's main funding sources for capital expenditure include the Welsh Government's general capital grant, supported borrowing, capital receipts, and earmarked reserves. Unsupported borrowing remains an

option, however in such cases all loan repayments and interest costs would fall entirely on the Council’s revenue budget and borrowing limits apply to ensure the Council does not overextend itself. It is expected that the Council will receive additional grants during the year as in previous years, which will be added to the budget. Appendix 2 to the report provides a detailed breakdown of the final proposed capital budget for 2026/27, showing each scheme, its costs and how it will be funded. Some schemes totalling £8.934m are also carried forward from 2025/26 but this figure may increase as the Council’s accounts are finalised in June and July 2026.

The Section 151 Officer also referred to other areas of investment within the capital budget including improvements to the Council’s waste infrastructure (£3.806m), largely funded through eEPR income. Other major projects include improvements to the Menai Bridge Pier and Pontoon (£225k), Phase 2 of the upgrade of Plas Arthur Leisure Centre (£1.65m) and Pride in Place Fund Projects (£1.5m) which aim to deliver short-term visible improvements to community valued places and spaces by March 2027 and are community led. The HRA capital budget is ring-fenced for housing and focuses on continued investment in the existing stock to ensure compliance with the WHQS (£15.71m), a new extra care and residential facility in Menai Bridge (£14.001m) and new housing development (£1.498m).

Councillor Jeff Evans, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported on the committee’s meeting of 18 February 2026, at which members considered the final draft capital budget report and proposals. The committee reviewed the documentation presented and the responses of Portfolio Members and Officers to the matters raised. They also considered the comments of the Chair of the Resources Scrutiny Panel. Members discussed the HRA capital programme and its funding, noting the pressures on HRA and the need to balance maximising rental income with keeping rents affordable. Having scrutinised the final draft capital budget proposals for 2026/27, the committee resolved to support the proposals and recommend them to the Executive.

Executive members noted that the capital programme and budget are constrained and that these limitations influence what the Council is able to deliver in terms of capital investment . Because funding is restricted, the Council continues to prioritise essential work such as maintaining existing assets leaving limited scope for new initiatives.

Members emphasised however, that the Council does seek to invest in new projects where possible, including in improving the visual environment of the island. Much of this is achieved through securing grant funding and working in partnership with others. The list of schemes in appendix 2 reflects this approach and includes redevelopment and transformation projects in Holyhead.

Members also welcomed the Pride in Place funding which the Council will allocate to the town and community councils so that individual communities and neighbourhoods can benefit from capital investment that is locally led and locally chosen.

It was resolved to recommend to the Full Council the following capital programme for 2026/27 –

	£’000
2025/26 Schemes Brought Forward (General Fund)	8,394
Refurbishment/Replacement of Assets	6,937
Waste Infrastructure	3,806
Menai Bridge Pier and pontoons	225
Plas Arthur Refurbishment Phase 2	1,650

Pride in Place	1,500
Housing Revenue Account	31,572

Total Recommended Capital Programme 2026/27	54,084
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Funded By:

General Capital Grant	2,761
Supported Borrowing General Communities for Learning	5,047
Unsupported Borrowing	0,000
Capital Receipts Reserve	271
Earmarked Reserves	3,452
Welsh & UK Government Grants	10,044
Unsupported Borrowing (General Fund)	937
HRA Revenue Account Surplus	5,418
HRA External Grants	17,291
HRA Unsupported Borrowing	8,863

2026 Total Capital Funding	54,084
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14. COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY RELIEF POLICY

The report of the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer which proposed a change to Anglesey's Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy was presented for the Executive's consideration. The proposed amendment would introduce a 100% Council Tax discount for households with a terminally ill occupant.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader presented the report noting his gratitude to Councillor Jeff Evans for bringing the matter to his attention after seeing press reports of Manchester City Council introducing a similar scheme in line with the approach advocated by the Marie Curie charity. He was pleased that the Executive was able to propose this change and expressed thanks to the Finance Service for undertaking the necessary research. The proposal is to amend the existing Council Tax discretionary relief policy so that households with a terminally ill occupant receive a 100% Council Tax discount. The policy if approved by Full Council, would take effect from 1 April 2026 and be reviewed after twelve months.

The Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer confirmed that staff had examined how other councils had implemented similar schemes, including those based on the SR1 certificate which facilitates access to benefits and support for people who are terminally ill. However it was felt that relying solely on the SR1 certificate might restrict eligibility to individuals who may already be receiving support through the Council Tax Reduction scheme. It is therefore proposed to extend eligibility to individuals who do not have an SR1 certificate but can provide a letter from their GP confirming they are terminally ill and may have less than twelve months to live.

The discount will apply for up to twelve months or two months after death, whichever comes first. The financial impact is difficult to quantify as it depends on the number of applicants, the property band, whether the applicant already receives other discounts or Council Tax reduction and whether the exemption lasts for the full twelve months. To manage this risk, the policy will be reviewed after twelve months and a report presented to the Executive.

The Executive's members were fully supportive of the proposed amendment, recognising that a terminal illness places significant pressure on individuals and their families, and that

financial stress can worsen hardship at the end of life. The discount would help ease that burden.

It was resolved to recommend the following to the Full Council –

- **To approve the amendment to the Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy to introduce a 100% discount for households with a terminally ill occupant, in accordance with Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
- **To implement the policy from 1 April 2026, ensuring that application processes and documentation (including SR1 certification) are in place.**
- **To delegate authority to the Revenues and Benefits Manager to administer the scheme and make any minor operational adjustments required.**
- **To monitor and review the impact of the policy after 12 months and report findings to the Executive.**

The meeting adjourned for a short break at this point and resumed at 11:40 a.m.

15. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION – FINAL APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The report of the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer which sought the Executive's views on a proposed amendment to the Council's Constitution to provide for the final approval of the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) by the Governance and Audit Committee, in place of the Council was presented for consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the report noting that it proposes a practical amendment to the Constitution so that the Governance and Audit Committee rather than the Full Council, gives final approval to the Annual Governance Statement.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer outlined the reasons for the proposed change which include a shorter audit timetable set by Audit Wales for 2025/26. Under the revised timetable, the accounts must be authorised by 30 September 2026, one month earlier than the previous year. Welsh Government guidance also states that the AGS should be published at the same time as the unaudited accounts are signed, leaving limited time to revise the AGS after it has been reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee. If approval remains with the Council, the September 2026 Council meeting would need to be rescheduled an extraordinary meeting convened.

Delegating approval to the Governance and Audit Committee is therefore considered a more efficient process and aligns the approval of the AGS with the approval process for the Council's annual accounts which has already been delegated to the Governance and Audit Committee. The proposed change would not disadvantage councillors or the public as reports would continue to be available in the usual way, and the draft AGS would be circulated to all members in June for comment.

It was resolved to recommend to the Full Council that it approves the proposed amendment to the Constitution to provide for the final approval of the Council's Annual Governance Statement by the Governance and Audit Committee, in place of the Council.

16. ALLOCATION OF UP TO £100K FUNDING FROM GENERAL BALANCES

The report of the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer which sought the Executive's approval to release up to £100k from the Council's general balances to address staffing and capacity issues in the Council's legal service was presented for consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the report noting that the request for funding is being made to ensure continuity of legal and information governance services.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer referred to the ongoing recruitment difficulties within the Council's legal services. Continued reliance on agency staff has resulted in an annual overspend of £250k on the Council Business budget, a position which is again projected for 2025/26. In all, 41 recruitment attempts over 20 months including revised job descriptions and evaluations, national advertising, flexible working and removal of Welsh language requirements, have been largely unsuccessful.

Two vacancies have now been filled by newly qualified solicitors who lack experience in the specialist areas required. To manage the situation responsibly, the service must develop and mentor the two appointees while maintaining safe and lawful support to clients in the interim. The funding request is for the retention of agency legal staff for six months in one case and for three months in the other to provide this support and development. It also includes continued funding for the Interim Data Protection Officer to deliver the Information Governance Recovery and Improvement Programme, support the CRM development project and mentor a potential new paralegal.

The Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer noted that further requests may follow if additional inexperienced solicitors are appointed to other vacant posts, and delegated authority is requested for the Leader and Portfolio Member for Finance to approve such requests. However, no immediate further request is anticipated, as the service intends to follow the process set out and in time to repeat the process if necessary. The service will also continue efforts to fill vacancies through the usual recruitment process.

Executive members acknowledged the challenges in recruiting qualified solicitors with the required specialist competencies and the extensive efforts made to fill the vacancies in the legal service. They also recognised that the proposed funding would help reduce reliance on agency staff in the long-term by enabling the development of permanent in-house staff. Members noted that an in-house legal service supports service delivery, reduces costs, builds the contextual and organisational knowledge that is not possible through external support and also offers better opportunities to develop Welsh language skills. Reference was also made to Bangor University's School of Law and the potential recruitment benefits of strengthening links with the school.

The Chief Executive noted the situation has been difficult for some time and he emphasised that the Council as an employer has explored every avenue to fill the vacancies. Similar challenges are being experienced by other councils and are not unique to this authority. He stressed the critical role of the legal service in managing organisational risk, ensuring compliance with legislation and supporting robust decision making. A legal resource and specialist expertise are therefore essential to the Council's day to day operations. He concluded by thanking the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer for her work and commitment during this period.

It was resolved –

- **To authorise the release of up to £100k from the Council's general balances to –**

- **Retain agency support to develop the specialisms of two solicitors who have now been appointed.**
- **Fund the continuing but temporary costs of agency support for clients, to ensure a smooth and safe transition back to internal legal provision in those routine areas of work**
- **Retain the current Interim Data Protection Officer to ensure the delivery of an Information Governance Recovery and Improvement Programme, the revised and upgraded CRM and the development of a new paralegal.**
- **To delegate any further such requests to the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Corporate Business and Customer Experience, in consultation with the Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer.**

17. VISITOR LEVY

The report of the Head of Regulation and Economic Development which sought the Executive's approval to conduct a public consultation on whether Anglesey should introduce a Visitor Levy was presented for consideration. Details of the requirements for the conduct of the consultation was provided in Annex A the report.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader introduced the report, noting that Welsh Government requires councils to consult residents, businesses and other local organisations before deciding whether to introduce a visitor levy. Neighbouring Gwynedd and Conwy Councils intend to undertake a consultation process in June/July 2026 and Anglesey considers it sensible to collaborate with Gwynedd and Conwy on the approach and timetable, though each council would run its own consultation independently.

Councillor Alun Roberts, Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism, Maritime and Property noted that the proposed consultation must follow the Gunning Principles advocated by Welsh Government. These include undertaking consultation at an early stage, providing sufficient information for informed responses, allowing adequate time with 12 weeks recommended, and ensuring that decision makers properly consider the responses. The final decision must be taken by Full Council.

The Executive stressed its intention to seek views from all interested parties and stakeholders and encouraged everyone to contribute. It was also noted that all visitor accommodation providers in Wales will be required to sign up to a national register regardless of whether the Council ultimately adopts the levy.

The Chief Executive explained that the national register is still under development by Welsh Government. Once further details are available, a member briefing session will be arranged to outline how the register will operate and whether the Council will have any operational or enforcement responsibilities.

It was resolved to support the following –

- **The undertaking of a public consultation process regarding the potential introduction of a visitor levy on Anglesey (in line with Council and Welsh Government guidelines).**
- **That the consultation process be planned in conjunction with Gwynedd and Conwy Councils but conducted independently.**

18. STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2026-2031

The report of the Head of Regulation and Economic Development incorporating the Statement of Licensing Policy 2026-2031 was presented for consideration. The report sought the Executive's endorsement of the policy for submission to the Full Council.

Councillor Nicola Roberts, Portfolio Member for Planning and Public Protection presented the report noting that the Isle of Anglesey Council as the Licensing Authority, is required every five years to review, consult and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy. The policy sets out how the Authority will exercise its functions under the Licensing Act 2003 including how it will make decisions on licences for the sale and supply of alcohol, regulated entertainment and late night refreshment. The licensing authority must carry out its functions with a view to promoting the four statutory licensing objectives and the policy is framed around these – preventing crime and disorder, ensuring public safety, preventing public nuisance and protecting children from harm.

A draft policy was issued for consultation between 14 November 2025 and 5 January 2026. Responses were received from BCUHB, Public Health, Environmental Health and one licence holder. The feedback informed a series of targeted amendments to strengthen specific sections of the policy.

It was resolved to support the submission of the draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2026-2031 to the Full Council for adoption.

19. BEAUMARIS CAR PARK

The report of the Head of Highways, Waste and Property in response to a request in a business plan by Beaumaris Town Council (included as Appendix 1 to the report) to take ownership of Castle Car Park, Beaumaris was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Gary Pritchard, Leader informed the meeting that he had received a request from Beaumaris Town Council to defer today's decision. As both Leader and a resident of Beaumaris, he considered that the Town Council had already been given a fair opportunity to present a business case, noting that the lease on the car park had expired in July 2025. He did not believe there were any further grounds for postponement and confirmed that the matter would therefore be determined at today's meeting.

Councillor Ieuan Williams, Portfolio Member for Highways, Waste and Climate Change presented the report, noting that the Council transferred Beaumaris Gaol and Court to the Town Council in July 2020, following an assessment based on a consultant's opinion that approximately £600k of investment was required on the buildings. To support the Town Council in meeting these costs, a 5 year lease on Castle Car Park was granted from 15 July 2020 to 15 July 2025 with the income (around £100k per annum) intended to contribute to the upgrade costs. The Town Council has since requested that Castle Car Park be transferred into its ownership in perpetuity for no consideration. The request has been considered with the recommendation that it be refused. Instead, it is proposed that the lease be extended until 31 March 2026 on the same terms as before in recognition of the income lost during the Covid 19 pandemic. The Executive recommends refusal for the following reasons –

- Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 prohibits councils from disposing of property (except by way of a short tenancy) for a consideration less than the best that can be reasonably obtained (without ministerial consent). The car park is valued at between £900k and £1.2m, based on the average gross profit set out in Beaumaris Town Council's business plan.

- Transferring such an asset to the community for no consideration or consideration less than the best that can be reasonably obtained would set a new precedent and represent a departure from Council policy on the disposal of property. It would also undermine Council policy on asset disposal, likely encourage similar requests from other communities on the basis of the new precedent, and could potentially reduce future capital receipts from comparable sites.
- The Town Council's business plan suggests that the primary purpose of the request is to maintain the precept at a low level. It does not state that income from the car park is being invested in the Gaol and Court, which was the original intention behind granting the lease. The Beaumaris Town Council's current precept is £39k which is considerably lower than that of each of the four other town councils.

The Head of Highways, Waste and Property emphasised that the car park would remain available to the town and other users for parking purposes and that the issue under consideration relates solely to the future of the income. In his view, returning the asset to the County Council's management would support improved parking enforcement in the town.

In response to Executive members' questions about how the Town Council had used the car park income, whether it had engaged with the County Council before the lease expired and what charging arrangements would apply if the car park returned to the Council's control, Officers clarified –

- That according to the business plan, the Castle Car Park generated £113k in revenue in 2024/25 with direct expenses of £48k and gross profit of £64,572. Of this, £25,670 was reinvested in the car park though no breakdown is provided, and £13,181 was allocated to the Gaol and Court leaving £25,721 to support the precept. The Town Council's accounts show that its balances increased from £419k in 2020 to £798k in 2025.
- That the Town Council has continued to collect income from the car park since the lease expired in July 2025. It is recommended that the Town Council be allowed to retain this income as compensation for the nine months of lost income during the Covid-19 disruption.
- That near the end of the lease period, the County Council contacted the Town Council to notify it of the lease expiry date and the Council's intention to resume control of the Castle Car Park. The July 2025 end date was not ideal for transferring control and changing income collection arrangements, as there was a risk of income loss. During discussions at that time, the Town Council expressed a desire to take ownership of the car park and the Council requested a formal application and business plan. The expectation was that the plan would set out projected and actual expenditure on the Gaol and Court over the five year period, alongside projected and actual income from the car park.
- If the car park returns to the County Council's management, the intention is to introduce charges for one-hour, two-hour, four-hour, and all-day stays, with a separate tariff for coaches.

The Executive considered that there were gaps in the Business Plan submitted by Beaumaris Town Council, most notably the absence of evidence showing how income from the car park had been used for the Gaol and Court over the five year lease period. Members noted that the plan appeared primarily focused on maintaining a low precept with continued control of the car park contributing to that aim. Neither does the plan set out a clear future reinvestment strategy for the Gaol and Court. For the reasons stated, members concluded that they were unable to approve the request.

It was resolved to refuse the request presented in a business plan by Beaumaris Town Council to transfer the Castle Car Park, Beaumaris to the Town Council, and to offer them a new lease instead, until 31 March 2026 on the same terms as the original lease.

20. SMALLHOLDINGS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

The report of the Head of Highways, Waste and Property incorporating the Smallholdings Management Strategic Plan 2026-2032 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Alun Roberts, Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism, Maritime and Property presented the Strategic Plan outlining how the Council will manage its agricultural smallholdings estate over the next five years. The plan aims to secure the estate's long-term viability by ensuring it delivers appropriate financial, environmental and social returns that reflect its capital value. It identifies four priority areas – a financially sustainable estate, a well-managed estate, an estate where risk is minimised and managed, and an estate that supports the Council Plan objectives. Councillor Alun Roberts emphasised that the smallholdings estate is a source of pride and that the plan seeks to place it on a secure footing for the future.

The Head of Highways, Waste and Property reported on the work of the multi-party Smallholdings Steering Group which was established to review the previous policy adopted more than 15 years ago. The group met four times and recommends the revised plan as presented. He reiterated the pride in the estate and its contribution to the farming sector, rural communities and the Welsh language. There is a strong view that the estate should be retained, with no desire for large scale disposals.

The estate currently generates a profit of around £200k for the Council and its value and management justify continued investment. However, maintenance costs are rising faster than the budget and the plan recommends increasing the annual repair and maintenance budget by £102k in 2026/27 to address the backlog. While there is no intention to sell units, the group considers it reasonable to assess the business case for retention or disposal when holdings become vacant, retain land where possible and reinvest any capital receipts back into the estate. Tenants should be protected, but rents need to be reviewed in accordance with the provisions and fair agreements established. Anglesey's smallholdings estate is the second largest in Wales and varies in size, use and location. The aim is to manage it as effectively as possible.

Councillor Jeff Evans, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee reported on the committee's meeting of 18 February 2026, at which members considered the Smallholdings Management Strategic Plan. Members reviewed the documentation and received assurances that consideration will be given to how progress will be reported. They discussed value for money and tenant engagement. Following discussion and taking account of the matters raised and responses provided, the committee resolved to recommend the Smallholdings Management Strategic Plan 2026-2031 to the Executive for approval.

Councillor Gary Pritchard thanked the Smallholdings Steering Group whose work provided the foundation for the strategic plan.

It was resolved to adopt the Smallholdings Management Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

**Councillor Gary Pritchard
Chair**