

## COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

**Members Present:**

**1 March 2022**

**The Mayor:**                      **Councillor**

**The Deputy Mayor:**        **Councillor J.D.Morgan**

**Councillors:**                      A.R.Aubrey, S.Bamsey, D.Cawsey, H.C.Clarke,  
C.Clement-Williams, M.Crowley, A.P.H.Davies,  
N.J.E.Davies, O.S.Davies, R.Davies,  
C.Edwards, J.Evans, S.E.Freeguard,  
C.Galsworthy, W.F.Griffiths, J.Hale, S.Harris,  
M.Harvey, N.T.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley,  
C.James, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones,  
H.Jones, J.Jones, L.Jones, R.G.Jones,  
S.Jones, D.Keogh, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham,  
D.Lewis, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer, S.Lynch,  
J.Miller, S.Miller, R.Mizen, S.Paddison,  
S.M.Penry, D.M.Peters, R.Phillips, M.Protheroe,  
L.M.Purcell, S.Pursey, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees,  
S.Renkes, S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards,  
P.D.Richards, M.Spooner, A.J.Taylor,  
R.L.Taylor, D.Whitelock, C.Williams,  
A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock

**Officers in Attendance:**                      N.Blackmore, S.Curran, C.Furlow-Harris,  
C.Griffiths, A.Jarrett, H.Jones, K.Jones,  
N.Pearce, M.Shaw, A.Thomas and J.Woodman-  
Ralph

**Representative of the  
Wales Audit Office**

**Representatives of the Translation  
Service:**                      Present

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### 1. **Welcome and Roll Call**

Councillor J.D. Morgan welcomed all to the meeting and a roll call was completed.

2. **Mayor's Announcements**

Deputy Mayor commented that our thoughts are with the Ukrainian people at this present time and called upon the Leader of Council, Councillor E.V.Latham to make a joint statement.

*“The Council condemns in the strongest possible terms the actions of Vladimire Putin and the Russian Government and express our dismay at the disregard for human life, national sovereignty and the international rule of law.*

*The council stands with the people of the Ukraine and their friends and relatives living in Neath Port Talbot and we are ready to play our part in helping those who may be displaced from their homes.*

*Our unity and support for the democratically elected government and the people of the Ukraine and call on the UK Government and our NATO allies to offer the maximum support for the Ukrainian people including humanitarian aid and military support in line with treaties and international law.”*

Councillors A.Llewelyn, Leader of Plaid Cymru and S.Jones , Leader of the Independent Democrats endorsed the joint statement.

The Deputy Mayor asked Council to join with him in congratulating Cllr A.R. Aubrey and family on the recent birth of a girl, Enfys.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

The following Member made a declaration of interest:

Councillor M.Harvey    Re: Agenda Items 4,5,7,8 as he works for South Wales Police but did not feel his interest was prejudicial.

4. **Draft Corporate Plan 2022-2027**

Councillor E.V.Latham, Leader of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council introduced the report and recommended it to Council for adoption.

Members were supportive of the objectives contained within the plan especially the emphasis on heritage and culture and thanked the Chief Executive for undertaking visits to the individual wards to gather Members and residents views which had contributed to the objectives before Council today.

**RESOLVED:** That the Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report be adopted.

## 5. Revenue Budget 2022/2023

Councillor C. Clement-Williams, Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which had been commended to Council from Cabinet on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. It was highlighted that this year was a landmark budget as Council was being asked to freeze Council Tax at 2021/2022 levels for the first time since its formation. The budget also included monies to improve essential services, schools and education. In addition, 2.8 million from reserves would be utilized to support one off Covid recovery investments. Also, to increase investments to improve the look of streets and neighbourhoods and youth services to help the young people of Neath Port Talbot. It was noted that this positive financial position was not only due to the financial settlement received from Welsh Government but due to the management of previous budgets. Members thanked the Chief Finance Officer asked that their appreciation be cascaded to the Finance Team for all the work they have undertaken in developing the budget report being considered at Council today.

Following on, discussion took place on the proposal to continue Council Tax at 2021/2022 levels. Members queried whether there was any opportunity to reduce Council Tax by 2.75% rather than freeze it at 2021/2022 levels, funded from general reserves. Concern was expressed at the level of deprivation in Neath Port Talbot County Borough and the continuing rise in the cost of living and it's effect on residents.

Members were reminded of the recent proposal to develop a Neath Port Talbot Hardship Fund by setting aside £2 million from reserve with the detail of the fund to be developed and reported back for Members consideration at a future date.

Following on, it was highlighted that any reduction in Council Tax and reducing general reserves would not be prudent or sustainable going forward into future years.

An amendment was put to Council and there followed a request for a recorded vote, on the following amendment, which received the requisite support in accordance with the requirements of Section 14.5 of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution – Rules of Procedure.

*That the 2022/2023 Band D equivalent for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will be £1,614.37 and that there be a 2.75% reduction in Council Tax as opposed to a freeze as derailed in the report with the gap of 2.75% being funded from the general reserve (representing a sum of £1.669m be taken for 2022/2023).*

For the Amendment:

Councillors: S. Bamsey, H.C.Clarke, N.E.Davies, R.Davies, C.Edwards, J. Evans, W.Griffiths, J.Hale, S.Harris, N.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, C.James, H.Jones, J.Jones, S.Jones, S.Knoyle, D.Lewis, A.Llewelyn, L.M.Purcell, A.J. Richards, M.Spooner and C.Williams.

Against the Amendment:

Councillors: A.Aubrey, D.Cawsey, C.Clement-Williams, S.Lynch, A.P.H. Davies, O.Davies, S.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy, M.Harvey, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, L.C.Jones, R.G.Jones, D.Keogh, E.V.Latham, A.R.Lockyer, J.Miller, S.Miller, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, M.Protheroe, S.Purse, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, S.Reynolds, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, D.Whitelock, A.Wingrave, R.W. Wood and A.R.Woolcock.

Abstention:

Councillor: J.D.Morgan

Not Present for Vote:

Councillors: C.M.Crowley, R.Mizen, D.M.Peters and R.Phillips

As a result of the above the amendment fell and there followed a request for a recorded vote, on the substantive recommendation contained in the circulated report, which received the requisite support in accordance with the requirements of Section 14.5 of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution – Rules of Procedure.

For the Recommendation:

Councillors:	A.Aubrey, D.Cawsey, C.Clement-Williams, S.Lynch, A.P.H. Davies, O.Davies, S.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy, M.Harvey, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, L.C.Jones, R.G.Jones, D.Keogh, E.V.Latham, A.R.Lockyer, J.Miller, S.Miller, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, M.Protheroe, S.Pursey, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.Renkes, S.Reynolds, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, D.Whitelock, A.Wingrave, R.W. Wood and A.R.Woolcock.
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Against the Recommendation:

Councillors:	S. Bamsey, H.C.Clarke, N.E.Davies, R.Davies, C.Edwards, J. Evans, W.Griffiths, J.Hale, S.Harris, N.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, J.Hurley, C.James, H.Jones, J.Jones, S.Jones, S.Knoyle, D.Lewis, A.Llewelyn, L.M.Purcell, A.J. Richards, M.Spooner and C.Williams.
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Abstention:

Councillor: J.D.Morgan

Not Present for Vote:

Councillors: C.M.Crowley, R.Mizen, D.M.Peters and R.Phillips

**RESOLVED:** Having given due regard to the Integrated Impact Assessment:

1. The Council's Revenue Budget and service plan investments for 2022/2023 as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 to the circulated report be approved.
2. That the £2.8m from the Insurance reserve to deliver a number of one off investments to support Covid recovery including the recruitment of staff to deliver work around the best start in life.
3. That delegated authority be granted to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Council Leader, relevant Cabinet Member and Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee too:
  - Set Fees and Charges (Executive) for the financial year 2022/2023.
  - Set Fees and Charges (Executive) which are applicable in any subsequent financial year and which, in the opinion of the relevant Corporate Director, need to be set in advance of the financial year for operational reasons.
4. That delegated authority be granted to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Council Leader, Deputy Leader and Chair of the relevant Non-executive committee to:
  - Set Fees and Charges for (non-executive) functions for the year 2022/2023.
  - Set Fees and Charges (non-executive) which are applicable in any subsequent financial year and which, in the opinion of the

Corporate Director, need to be set in advance of that financial year for operational reasons.

5. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, to make any amendment necessary through the use of general reserves, as a consequence of the final settlement due 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022.
6. That there be no increase in Council Tax in 2022/2023 with tax levels being frozen at 2021/2022 values. The 2022/2023 Band D equivalent for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will remain at £1,660.02.

## 6. Council Tax 2022/2023

Councillor C. Clement Williams, Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, which had been commended to Council by Cabinet held on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That any expenses incurred by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council in performing in part of its area, are treated as the Authority's general expenses.
2. That the levy of the Swansea Bay Port Health Authority is treated as a general expense.
3. That the following amounts are calculated in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

	Amount
Aggregate of the items estimated under Section 32(2) – expenditure	£493,679,702
Aggregate of the items estimated under section 32(3) – income	£153,258,637
Amount calculated in accordance with section 32(4) – budget requirement	£340,421,065
Aggregate payable in respect of redistributed NNDR and RSG, reduced in accordance with Section 33(3B)	£257,681,000

of the Act	
Basic amount of Council Tax in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act	£1,709.73
Aggregate of all special items referred to in section 34(1) of the Act.	£2,405,588
Basic Amount of Council Tax for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act	£1,660.02
Basic amounts of Council tax for dwellings in those parts of its area to which special items bands relates, calculated in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act	As per Appendix 1 of the circulated report.
Amounts to be taken into account in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation, calculated in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act.	As per Appendix 2 of the circulated report.

4. That the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales has stated the following amounts in a precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act.

Band A	£201.41
Band B	£234.97
Band C	£268.54
Band D	£302.11
Band E	£369.25
Band F	£436.38
Band G	£503.52
Band H	£604.22
Band I	£704.92

The total precept payable is £14,620,215.

5. That having calculated the aggregate in each case above, the Council, in accordance with section 30(2) of the Act hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 3 as the Council Tax for 2022/2023 for each of the categories of dwelling shown.

7. **Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2022/2023 to 2024/2025**

Councillor C. Clement-Williams, Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, which had been commended to Council from Cabinet held on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the Capital Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report be approved;
  2. That the Capital Programme for 2022/2023 to 2024/2025 as detailed in Appendix 2 to the circulated report be approved.
  3. That the delegated arrangements as detailed in paragraph 12 of the circulated report be approved.

8. **Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy, and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy**

**RESOLVED:** That approval be granted for the following Strategies and Policies:

- **Treasury Management Strategy**
- **Annual Investment Strategy**
- **Minimum Revenue Provision Policy**
- **Prudential Indicators.**

9. **Capital Budget Monitoring 2021/2022**

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the updated 2021/2022 budget totalling £78.834m including the budget changes as detailed in Appendix 2 to the circulate report be approved.

10. **Notice of Motion under Section 10 of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) the Council's Constitution**

No Notices of Motion were received.

11. **Questions from Members, with Notice, under Rule 9.2 of the Council's Procedure Rules**

No questions were received.

12. **Urgent Items**

**CHAIRPERSON**