

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

21 February 2018

The Mayor: **Councillor D.Keogh**

The Deputy Mayor: **Councillor S.Jones**

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, S.Bamsey, D.Cawsey, H.C.Clarke,
C.Clement-Williams, S. ap Dafydd,
A.P.H.Davies, D.W.Davies, N.J.E.Davies,
O.S.Davies, R.Davies, C.Edwards, M.Ellis,
J.Evans, C.Galsworthy, M.Harvey, N.T.Hunt,
S.K.Hunt, C.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones,
H.Jones, L.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.A.Knoyle,
E.V.Latham, A.Llewelyn, A.R.Lockyer,
A.McGrath, J.Miller, S.Miller, R.Mizen,
J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry,
D.M.Peters, R.Phillips, M.Protheroe,
L.M.Purcell, S.Pursey, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees,
S.H.Reynolds, A.J.Richards, P.D.Richards,
A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, A.L.Thomas, R.Thomas,
J.Warman, D.Whitelock, A.Wingrave,
R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock

Officers in Attendance: S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, A.Jarrett, G.Nutt,
D.Michael, K.Jones, C.Griffiths, R.George and
J.Woodman-Ralph

Representatives of the Translation Service: Present

1. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members made declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting:

Councillor A. Llewelyn Re: the report of the Corporate Director's Group re: Revenue Budget 2018/19 as he is a Member of the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

Councillor M. Harvey Re: the report of the Corporate Directors' Group re: Revenue Budget 2018/19 and the report of the Head of Financial Services re: Capital Programme 2018/19 to 2020/21 as he is employed by South Wales Police.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF COUNCIL**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the previous meeting of Council be confirmed:

Council 10 January 2018

3. **CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING**

RESOLVED: that the budget for 2017/18 of £75.513m, be approved and that the position in relation to expenditure as at 31 December 2017, as contained in the circulated report, be noted.

4. **REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19**

Members received an overview of the Report of the Corporate Director's Group on the proposed Budget for 2018/19.

Members raised the following:-

- Members thanked Officers, Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Members for all the work that had been undertaken to bring the Budget together for consideration at Council today and were pleased that the Council Tax increase had been reduced to 3.7% and not as previously proposed 4.5%.

- Members sought clarification that Tourism was not being treated as a priority within the Budget 18/19 proposals.

Council was informed that a report had been commissioned on how best to maximise opportunities from Tourism for increased income generation for communities and businesses and would be considered during 2018/19.

- Members sought clarification as to the Council's strategy for the Valley's area and the lack of investment in these areas to enable them to be sustainable.

It was confirmed that the Valley's Task Force had been set up to look at what was needed to address the issues affecting the Valley's and to bring to the attention of the Executive for consideration. In addition, the Leader of the Council had written to the Chair of the Valley's Task Force asking for an update on outcomes.

- Concern was also expressed that the additional funding of £970,000 allocated in 2017/18 budget to address the poor condition of some areas within communities was not being re-allocated in the 18/19 budget.
- In addition, Member sought clarification as to whether the savings within the Social Services, Health and Housing budget were achievable and Members asked for assurances that the proposal would not have a negative impact on the safety of service users.

The Director of Social Services, Health and Housing advised that the savings were challenging but Officers were confident that these could be delivered without compromising the safety of service users. Also it gave the opportunity to service users to consider how they would like to have their individual care needs met. The proposals also enabled some services to be commissioned in a more effective way which would benefit service users. Currently, a mapping out exercise was being undertaken to ascertain what was working well in communities and sharing good practice.

- Concern was expressed at the proposal to reduce the funding to Pontardawe Arts Centre which would have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of all residents of Neath Port Talbot

County Borough Council and the users of the arts centre which included schools and voluntary groups. It was highlighted that plans had been commissioned by the Friends of Pontardawe Arts Centre to make the centre financially sustainable in the long term by developing a cinema, atrium developing further the film and events programme which would raise the profile of the arts centre and ensure it was financially sustainable. Members queried why the Council was not supporting these initiatives rather than reducing the support.

Members were informed that Pontardawe Arts Centre budget had been reduced by £40,000 but it still received £240,000 support from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and that the Friends of Pontardawe Arts Centre had been asked to investigate other avenues of funding to support the Arts Centre going forward.

- Concern was also expressed at the increase in Car Parking charges at the Gnoll Country Park which would have a detrimental effect on the numbers of people visiting the Park and discourage people from taking exercise which was part of the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Residents in the area of the Park were also concerned at the impact on street parking.

It was confirmed that over 31,000 tickets were purchased in Gnoll Park last year and only 21 consultation responses had been received against the increase in the charges.

- Members also expressed concern at the reduction in subsidy to Cefn Coed Museum. It was highlighted that the museum was site of global importance and a memorial to men who worked in the mines. Also, it should be protected for future generations to have an understanding of the history of the miners. In addition, if the museum was to be assisted in developing a marketing strategy it could generate an income which would ensure it was sustainable for the future.
- Members asked that consideration be given to the impact on valley communities with the proposed savings contained within the budget report presented to Members today.

- Members were also concerned at the impact on children by the reduction in the music service. Also, the proposals sought to recover costs for school cleaning in primary would this put an additional cost to budgets?

Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning explained that children's music learning would not be affected and that the savings were efficiency savings within the service. In regard to primary school cleaning costs, work was ongoing to bring additional secondary schools cleaning in-house which will assist with overall costs and funding of the service.

- Members asked whether the current staffing levels would be able to undertake the number of additional Social Services assessments proposed in the report.

Director of Social Services, Health and Housing explained that additional staff had been recruited but that the assessments would be undertaken as part of the regular reviews of service users' needs.

- Members asked why savings identified in the proposals for Gnoll Country Park, Pontardawe Arts Centre and Cefn Coed Colliery Museum be taken from reserves.

The Leader of the Council then summed up and responded to the previous questions as below prior to commending the proposals to Council for approval and highlighted that all the proposals for consideration had been subject to indepth scrutiny by the individual Scrutiny Committees. In addition, the budget had been subject to public consultation and where possible changes had been made to the proposals.

The Leader explained that the reserves could only be used for emergencies for example the recent landslides at Pantteg when the Council has sufficient reserves. In addition, they would be used continue assisting with the provision of school uniforms when the grant funding had been withdrawn. Reserves will be used to re-introduce areas of tourism which had been cut in previous budgets and could no longer be supported by the Environment budgets. But if the reserves were used for non-emergencies as other Local Authorities had done the Council risks not being able to balance the budget at the end of the financial year.

The Mayor put the proposals as contained within the circulated report, which were proposed and seconded.

The Mayor then received the following amendment which was duly seconded.

That £75,000 be transferred from General Reserves to mitigate the £40,000 reduction in Pontardawe Arts Centre budget, £10,000 reduction in the Cefn Coed Museum budget and to remove the increase in Gnoll Park Car Parking charges estimated to be £25,000.

There followed a request for a recorded vote 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 Amendment:

S.Bamsey, H.C.Clarke, N.E.Davies, R.Davies, C.Edwards, M.Ellis, J.Evans, N.T.Hunt, S.K.Hunt, H.Jones, A.Llewelyn, J.D.Morgan, D.M.Peters, R.Phillips, L.M.Purcell, and A.J.Richards.

Against the Amendment:

A.R.Aubrey, G.M.D.Cawsey, C.Clement-Williams, S.ap Dafydd, A.P.H.Davies, D.W.Davies, O.S.Davies, C.Galworthy, M.Harvey, C.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, L.C.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.A. Knoyle, E.V.Latham, A.R. Lockyer, A.McGrath, J.Miller, S.Miller, R.Mizen, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, M.Protheroe, S.M.Pursey, S.Rahaman, P.A.Rees, S.H. Reynolds, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, A.L.Thomas, D. Whitelock, A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.R. Woolcock.

Abstentions:

S.Jones and D.Keogh.

As a result the amendment fell.

Council then voted on the initial proposals contained in the report.

RESOLVED:

That having due regard to the Equality Impact Assessment, set out in the circulated report and Appendix 7 attached thereto:

- a) The following matters be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Leader of Council, relevant Cabinet Member and Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee;-
 - Fees and charges applicable for the financial year 2018/19;
 - Fees and charges 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.
- b) That the latest budget position 2017/18 – the revised budget position and arrangements for 2017/18 be approved;
- c) That the Council's Revenue Budget 2018/19 be approved taking into account the Equality Impact Assessment and Crime and Disorder impacts;
- d) That the Net Revenue Budget requirement for 2018/19 and the service plans for the delivery of the budgets be approved;
- e) That the budget/forward financial plan savings outlined in Appendix 4, to the circulated report be approved;
- f) That Corporate Directors be instructed to progress the savings and improvement programme for the Authority;
- g) That the fees and charges for non-executive functions be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Leader of Council, Deputy Leader and Chair of the relevant Non Executive Committee as follows:
 - Fees and Charges applicable in 2018/19
 - Fees and Charges 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

- h) That Council Tax 2018/19 B and D equivalent for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will be £1,496.71.
- i) That in relation to the delegation of fees and charges Ward Members be consulted should the proposal be specifically in relation to their Ward.

5. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 TO 2020/21**

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Programme for 2018/19 to 2020/21 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report, be approved and that the Programme be kept under review and updated as appropriate.

6. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY**

RESOLVED:

That the Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment, Minimum Revenue Provision and Prudential Indicators as detailed in the circulated report be approved.

7. **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED:

That the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council be amended in line with the amendments as detailed in the circulated report and as detailed in Appendix 1.

8. **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS ON THE NEATH
PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL STANDARDS
COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED:

1. That the appointment of Independent Members Document as contained in Annex 1 to the circulated report be approved.
2. That the advisory panel be constituted as follows:
 - County Borough Council Members – The Mayor and Councillor Del Morgan;
 - Lay Member – Mrs. Gaynor Richards
 - Standards Committee – Ms Julie Howells Vice Chair of Standards Committee and a further member of Standards Committee drawn from the remaining independent members.

9. **SECTION 85(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED:

That in view of the absence at the present time of Councillor Ralph Thomas from Council business, due to illness. Approval be granted for his absence until further notice pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. **CHANGES TO COMMITTEE AND OUTSIDE BODY MEMBERSHIP,
AND THE DATE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the following changes to Committee and Outside Body membership arrangements be approved:

1. That in line with the Membership of the parent Committee Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee the membership of the Leisure and Culture Sub Committee be as follows:

Cllr Chris Williams be replaced by Cllr. Anthony Richards and Cllr. N. Hunt replaces Cllr.J.Evans.

2. That Cllr. S Reynolds replaces Cllr. A. Wingrave as the Authority's representative on Tai Tarian.
3. That the current Vice Chairman on Streetscene and Engineering Scrutiny Committee Cllr.R.Thomas be replaced by Cllr. S.ap Dafydd, with Cllr.R.Thomas remaining as a Member of the Scrutiny Committee. As a result of this change Cllr.S.ap Dafydd replaces Cllr.R.Thomas on the Corporate Parenting Panel by virtue of his position as Vice Chair.

CHAIRPERSON

APPENDIX 1

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (10/11)	
Chairperson:	D Jones
Vice Chairperson:	M.Harvey
Members: Labour	<p>M.Crowley, S.Paddison, S.Reynolds, A.Woolcock</p> <p>*and <u>one</u> of the following Cabinet Members for Heads of Service appointments: <u>two</u> of the following Cabinet Members for Corporate Directors appointments</p> <p><i>Chief Executive's and Finance and Corporate Services</i> <i>Social Care, Health and Well-being</i> <i>Education, Skills and Culture</i> <i>Regeneration and Sustainable Development</i> <i>Streetscene and Engineering</i></p> <p><i>*In relation to the post of Assistant Chief Executive this would include the Leader and the Deputy Leader. In relation to the Head of Social Work this would include the two relevant Cabinet Members.</i></p>
Members: Plaid Cymru	L.M.Purcell, R.Phillips
Members: Independent Democrats	S.Knoyle
<p><i>Note: the relevant Regulatory Chairs or relevant Scrutiny Chair to be invited to attend as a non-voting adviser as appropriate to the appointment</i></p>	

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