

COUNCIL

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present:

14 February, 2019

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,
N.J.E.Davies, O.S.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,
C.James, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones,
J.Jones, L.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.A.Knoyle,
E.V.Latham, A.Llewelyn, A.McGrath, J.Miller,
S.Miller, R.Mizen, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison,
S.M.Penry, D.M.Peters, R.Phillips, M.Protheroe,
S.Pursey, P.A.Rees, S.H.Reynolds,
P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor,
A.L.Thomas, J.Warman, D.Whitelock,
A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock

Officers in Attendance: S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, G.Nutt, A.Evans,
A.Jarrett, K.Jones, H.Jones, C.Griffiths
C.Furlow and A.Manchipp,

Representatives of the Translation Service: Present

1. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

It was with great sadness that the Mayor advised Council of the death of the father in law of Councillor Clement-Williams. As a mark of respect Members stood for a minute's silence.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Members made declaration of interest at the commencement of the meeting:-

Councillor H.C.Clarke	Re the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the Capital Programme as she is Chair of Governors of YGG Tyle'r Ynn and Vice Chair of Governors of Ystalyfera Bro Dur and confirmed her dispensation to both speak and vote thereon.
Councillor M.Harvey	Re the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the Capital Programme as he is Chair of Abbey Primary School and the report of the Corporate Directors' Group on the Revenue Budget as he is employed by the South Wales Police and the report refers to the Police and Crime Commissioner and CCTV.
Councillor H.N.James	Re the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the Capital Programme as he is Governor of Ysgol Gyfan Ystalyfera, Bro Hir and Carrig Hir and confirmed his dispensation to both speak and vote thereon.
Councillor L.Jones	Re the report of the Corporate Directors' Group on the Revenue Budget as her father works for the security firm which provides services.
Councillor M.Peters	Re the report on major investment initiatives as he is a Governor.

Councillor A.Llewelyn

Re the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the Capital Programme as he is a Governor at Ysgol Gynraeg Ystalyfera Bro-dur and confirmed his dispensation to both speak and vote thereon.

Councillor A.Thomas

Re the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the Capital Programme as it refer to investment in Rhos Primary school and he is a school Governor and confirmed his dispensation to both speak and vote thereon.

3. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 - 2021/22**

The report was introduced by the relevant Cabinet member wherein it was noted that the report had been commended to Council, by Cabinet, on 13 February 2019.

RESOLVED: That the Capital Programme for 2019/20 to 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report, be approved and that the Programme be kept under review and updated over the coming year.

4. **REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20**

The report was introduced by the relevant Cabinet member and Council was pleased to note that the increase in Council Tax had been kept to a minimum at 4%. Members thanked officers for the work that had been undertaken in achieving the budget position. The shortfall in teachers' pensions was highlighted in particular the increase on employers' contributions to 23.6% which left the Council with a shortfall of £845k.

Members then raised the following:

- More money had been invested into the Environment Directorate to address problems being experienced in Wards such as fly tipping, etc

- Members noted that the Council had a commitment to education within schools which was evidenced by the 4.5% increase in the delegated budget.
- In relation to the impact of the public consultation on the final budget proposals, Members noted that changes had been made to the schools' music service, the welfare rights section and libraries. Welsh Government had been lobbied by both the Council and also Trade Unions which had resulted in a more favourable Revenue Support Grant settlement.
- It was noted that the Welsh Government had not amended the funding formula to take into account social deprivation which was a major indicator in Neath Port Talbot.
- Members were pleased that the increase in Council Tax had been kept to a minimum and was lower than most other authorities.
- Council noted that the pay grade of catering staff in schools was not yet resolved but nearing completion.
- Some Members expressed concern at the proposed 300% increase in charges for the pest control service ie. from £40 to £120 per call out and advised that alternative costed amendments had been put forward. In addition Members were concerned that companies such as Welsh Water and British Rail did not address the issue of rodent infestations on their land. In response it was noted that private companies charges were in excess of the Authority's proposed increases.
- Concern was again expressed at the lateness of the Specific Grant allocations, as this could impact on jobs within the Council.
- The current position in relation to the Cefn Coed Museum was discussed and concern was expressed in relation to the lack of clarity from Welsh Government.
- Members supported the additional money to the Environment Directorate particularly the setting up of a deep cleansing team.
- The increase in the number of consultation responses was welcomed and Members asked for officers to consider ways of improving consultation going forward.
- Some Members welcomed the use of reserves in achieving a balance budget.

The Leader of Council then summed up.

An amendment was then 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.

'approve the budget/forward financial plan savings (outlined in Appendix 4) save for ENVT918 (pest Control) which shall see an increase to £60 only for 3 visits and therefore excluding £37,500 of savings with the funding for this being made available from General Reserves and a report being brought forward to Members to consider improved enforcement measures and work with external agencies.'

For the Amendment:

Councillors: S.Bamsey, C.Edwards, J.Evans, W.F.Griffiths, J.Hale, N.T.Hunt, A.Llewelyn, J.D.Morgan, D.M.Peters and R.Phillips.

Against the Amendment:

Councillors: A.R.Aubrey, D.Cawsey, H.C.Clarke, C.Clement-Williams, S.ap Dafydd, N.E.Davies, O.S.Davies, S.E.Freeguard, C.Galsworthy, S.Harris, M.Harvey, S.K.Hunt, C.James, H.N.James, C.J.Jones, D.Jones, J.Jones, L.C.Jones, R.G.Jones, S.A.Knoyle, E.V.Latham, A.McGrath, J.Miller, S.Miller, R.Mizen, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry, M.Protheroe, S.M.Pursey, P.A.Rees, S.H.Reynolds, P.D.Richards, A.J.Taylor, R.L.Taylor, A.L.Thomas, J.Warman, D.Whitelock, A.Wingrave, R.W.Wood and A.N.Woolcock.

Abstention:

Councillors: S.Jones and D.Keogh

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

Abstention:

Councillors: H.C.Clarke, S.Jones and D.Keogh

RESOLVED: That having due regard of the Integrated Impact Assessment, as contained in Appendix 7 to the circulated report:

1. the following matters be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director, following consultation with the Council Leader, relevant Cabinet Member and Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:-

- Fees and charges applicable for the financial year 2019/20
- Fees and Charges 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;

2. the revised budget position and arrangements for 2018/19, be approved;

3. Having taken into account the Integrated Impact Assessment and Crime and Disorder impacts,

the Net Revenue Budget requirement of £288.168m for 2019/20, and the service plans for the delivery of the budgets, be approved together with the budget/forward financial plan savings, as contained in Appendix 4 to the circulated report;

4. that Corporate Directors be instructed to progress the savings and improvement programme for the Authority;
5. Fees and charges for non-executive functions be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Council Leader, Deputy Leader and Chair of the relevant Non Executive Committee
 - Fees and charges applicable in 2019/20,
 - 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;
6. That the 2019/20 Council Tax Band D equivalent for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council be £1,556.59.

5. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2019/20**

RESOLVED: That the following Strategies and Policies as set out in the circulated report, be adopted:

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

6. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2018/19**

RESOLVED: That the proposed 2018/19 budget totalling £44.821m, be approved and the position in relation to expenditure as at 31 December, 2018, be noted.

7. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2018/19**

RESOLVED: That the budget monitoring information, be noted; together with the additional grant received.

8. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2018/19**

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

9. **STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF COUNCIL**

The Leader of Council made the following statements to Council.

New Parkway Station at Felindre

‘ What South West Wales needs is sustained medium to long term investment in its rail and transport infrastructure, not a single new station which would produce only marginal benefits on the basis of the information available to us.

Welsh Government Ministers have previously joined us in making clear that they would not support a proposal which potentially takes

Neath and other stations off the main line to a significant extent. It is also difficult to see what the Felindre proposal adds in terms of promoting footfall in our town and city centres or on cutting east bound journey times by car and rail given the relatively recent investment at the widely used Port Talbot Parkway station.

Councillor Jones added that time and resources might be better spent concentrating on a new regional transport project working with the Welsh Government and local authorities.'

Nuclear Waste

'I shall be brief. There have been a number of articles in the media this last week concerning public meetings to be organised, apparently, by an agency of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to consult on the possibility of sites being identified for the disposal of nuclear waste.

I want to make it absolutely crystal clear that Neath Port Talbot Council will not be engaging in this process at any level.

The Welsh Government has made it clear that they would only support such a proposal if the community concerned was willing. Well, ours is not – and that is the end of the matter.

Moreover, in the unlikely event that a credible proposal emerged in any adjacent area, we would very strongly oppose that also.'

CHAIRPERSON