

EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

CABINET

13 FEBRUARY, 2019

Cabinet Members:

Councillors: R.G.Jones (Chairperson), A.J.Taylor, C.Clement-Williams, D.Jones, E.V.Latham, P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards and A.Wingrave

Officers in Attendance:

S.Phillips, H.Jenkins, G.Nutt, A.Jarrett, K.Jones, A.Thomas, C.Griffiths, N.Headon, C.Furlow and T.Davies

Invitees:

Councillors: S.E.Freeguard, M.Harvey, S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller, J.D.Morgan, S.Paddison, S.M.Penry and A.N.Woolcock (Scrutiny Chair)

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

Agreed that Councillor R.G.Jones be appointed Chairperson for the meeting.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the Minutes of the previous meetings of Cabinet, held on 17 December, 2018 and 16 January, 2019, be approved.

3. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

Noted by Committee.

4. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 TO 2021/22**

Decision:

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

Reason for Decision:

To approve the Authority's Capital Programme in line with the Constitution.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

5. **REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20**

Cabinet considered the concerns of the Scrutiny Committee in relation to Rodent Pest Control Charges and School Catering Staff. Cabinet responded that should any savings be withdrawn from consideration then an alternative proposal would be required in order to achieve a balanced budget.

Decisions:

1. That the following matters be delegated to the appropriate Corporate Director following consultation with the Council Leader, relevant Cabinet Member and Chairperson of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
 - a) Fees and charges applicable for the financial year 2019/20;
 - b) Fees and Charges which would be applicable in any subsequent financial year and which, in the opinion of the relevant Corporate Director, needed to be set in advance of the financial year for operational reasons.

2. That the following be commended to Council:
 - a) Latest budget position 2018/19 – that the revised budget position and arrangements for 2018/19 be approved
 - b) The Council's Revenue Budget 2019/20
 - Taking into account of the Integrated Impact Assessment and Crime and Disorder impacts in setting the budget for 2019/20;
 - Approves the Net Revenue Budget requirement of £288.168m for 2019/20, and the service plans for the delivery of the budgets;
 - Approve the budget/forward financial plan savings (outlined in Appendix 4 to the circulated report);
 - Corporate Directors be instructed to progress the savings and improvement programme for the Authority
 - c) Fees and charges for non-executive functions – that the determination of the following matters 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.
 - d) Council Tax 2019/20 – That the 2019/20 Band D equivalent for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council be £1,556.59.

Reasons for Decisions:

1. To fulfil the statutory requirement to determine the budget for 2019/20;
2. To seek support for the Council's Forward Financial Plan;
3. To agree arrangements for setting Fees and Charges.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decisions will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

6. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2019/20**

Decision:

That the following Strategies and Policies, as set out in the circulated report, be commended to Council:

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

Reason for Decision:

To approve the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy, Capital Strategy and MRP Policy as required by the Local Government Act 2003 and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (2017).

Implementation of Decision:

The decisions will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

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

Decisions:

1. That management arrangements be put in place to minimise overspends and the adverse impact on reserves;
2. That the additional grant received be noted;
3. That the proposed reserve movements and budget virements, as contained in the circulated report, be approved.

Reasons for Decisions:

To update the Council's budget for additional grants received, budget virements and reserve movements in line with the Council's Constitution.

Implementation of Decisions:

The will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

8. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME QUARTERLY MONITORING 2018/19**

Decisions:

1. That the proposed 2018/19 budget totalling £44.821m be commended to Council for approval;
2. That the position in relation to expenditure as at 31 December 2018, be noted.

Reason for Decisions:

To update the Capital Programme for 2018/19 and inform Members of the current year spend to date.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decisions will be implemented after consideration and approval by Council.

9. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2018/19**

Decision:

That the report be noted.

10. **FURTHER RESPONSES TO THE WELSH GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER - REFORM OF FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN WALES**

Decision:

That a response be forwarded to Welsh Government by the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer, highlighting the concerns raised by Members at the meetings of both Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, as below:

Elected Members considered the comments made in the consultation document regarding the competency of existing fire and rescue authority members to be insulting and disgraceful. The Members who serve on fire and rescue authorities bring considerable experience and skill to the roles they carry out.

Elected Members felt the existing fire and rescue authority membership provided robust challenge to the Chief Fire Officer and his team. Furthermore, they believed the diverse membership of the existing fire and rescue authorities ensured the community impact of the work of the fire and rescue service was fully considered in decision making processes.

Elected Members strongly disagreed with the proposal that the existing membership be replaced by members of council executives. This was not considered to be practical or in the best interests of democracy.

Members felt there was a case for reviewing the way the Fire Service was funded to ensure the funding model reflected the work of the modern day fire and rescue service – in particular the growing role the service plays in supporting the NHS in Wales.

Elected Members did not consider models such as those in place to support Local Health Boards to be a suitable basis for democratic oversight of an important public service like the fire and rescue service. There was no case made out to replace elected councillors with appointees.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure a response from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council was submitted to the Welsh Government on the proposed reforms to Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is for immediate implementation, the Chairperson of the Scrutiny Committee had agreed to this course of action and there would therefore be no call-in of this decision.

11. **URGENCY ACTION - 0036**

Decision:

That the following urgency action taken by the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer in consultation with the requisite Members, be noted:-

Officer Urgency Action No 0036 re: Welsh Government White Paper – Reform of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales – Consultation.

CHAIRPERSON

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