



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Council

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Thursday, 12 January 2023 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillor J P Curtice (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
P M Black
A M Day
P Downing
C R Doyle
M Durke
C R Evans
V M Evans
E W Fitzgerald
R Francis-Davies
L S Gibbard
F M Gordon
K M Griffiths
J A Hale
T J Hennegan
C A Holley
P R Hood-Williams
B Hopkins
D H Hopkins
L James
O G James
Y V Jardine

Councillor(s)

J W Jones
L R Jones
M H Jones
M Jones
S M Jones
E T Kirchner
H Lawson
A S Lewis
M B Lewis
P Lloyd
P M Matthews
P N May
C L Philpott
S Pritchard
A Pugh
K M Roberts
B J Rowlands
R V Smith
A H Stevens
R C Stewart
L G Thomas
W G Thomas

Councillor(s)

G D Walker
L V Walton
T M White
R Fogarty
S Bennett
A Davis
H J Gwilliam
V A Holland
D H Jenkins
S Joy
S E Keeton
M W Locke
N L Matthews
J D McGettrick
F D O'Brien
A J O'Connor
J E Pritchard
M S Tribe
R A Williams
A J Jeffery

Officer(s)

Huw Evans	Head of Democratic Services
Ben Smith	Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer
Samantha Woon	Democratic Services Officer
Martin Nicholls	Chief Executive
Debbie Smith	Deputy Chief Legal Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): P N Bentu, C M J Evans, N Furlong, E J King, R D Lewis, W G Lewis and D Phillips

100. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

The Chief Legal Officer gave advice regarding the potential personal and prejudicial interests that Councillors and / Officers may have on the agenda.

The Head of Democratic Services reminded Councillors and Officers that the "Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests" sheet should only be completed if the Councillor / Officer actually had an interest to declare. Nil returns were not required. Councillors and Officers were also informed that any declarable interest must be made orally and in writing on the sheet.

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea the following interests were declared:

- 1) Councillors P Lloyd & A Pugh declared a Personal Interest in Minute 104 "Adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme".
- 2) Councillors P R Hood-Williams, L James, S E Keeton, P Lloyd, N L Matthews & A H Stevens declared a Personal Interest in Minute 105 "Gower AONB Advisory Group - Amendments to Terms of Reference".
- 3) Councillor A Davis, P Downing, A S Lewis & T M White declared a Personal Interest in Minute 107 "Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting 2023/24".
- 4) Councillor T J Hennegan declared a Personal & Prejudicial Interest in Minute 107 "Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting 2023/24" and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

101. Announcements of the Presiding Member.

a) Lillian Lloyd, Former Mayoress & Former Lady Mayoress

The Presiding Member reported with sadness to the recent death of Lillian Lloyd, former Mayoress & former Lady Mayoress. Lillian Lloyd was the wife of Honorary Alderman, former Councillor & former Mayor and former Lord Mayor Alan Lloyd and mother of former Councillor Clive Lloyd.

b) New Year's Honours

The Presiding Member congratulated the Citizens of Swansea who received awards in the New Year Honours.

a) Commander of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

- i) Simon Phillip Tse. Chief Executive, Crown Commercial Service. For services to the Public Sector and to Race Equality.

b) Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

- i) Dr Mohammed Qasim. Lecturer and Welfare Officer, Gower College, Swansea. For services to Academic Research and to Young People

c) Local Authority Pension Fund (LAPF) Investment Awards 2022

The Presiding Member stated that the Council's Pension Fund Team won the Best Climate Change Strategy Award at the Local Authority Pension Fund (LAPF) Investment Awards 2022. The Award was for the great strides being made towards delivering a net zero investment portfolio by 2037. The Pension Fund Team looks after the pensions of 48,000 members with a scheme worth £2.9bn. The Pension Fund Team were also shortlisted by LAPF for Pension Fund of the Year and Best Investment Strategy.

d) Yvonne Lewis, Winner of the Jeremy Allen Award 2022 for Excellence in Licensing

The Presiding Member stated that Yvonne Lewis (Licensing, Swansea Council) won the Jeremy Allen Award 2022 for Excellence in Licensing. The Award by the Institute of Licensing and Poppleston Allen Solicitors is open to anyone working in licensing and related fields and seeks to recognise exceptional practitioners.

e) Urgent Item – Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting 2023/24

The Presiding Member stated that an Urgent Item had been received and that it would be considered later in the meeting.

102. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.

a) Budget Consultation

The Leader of the Council stated that the Budget Consultation was underway. The uplifted offer from Welsh Government would assist with the additional pressures but the situation remained challenging. The final budget decision was scheduled for March 2023.

b) Fire Service Levy

The Leader of the Council stated that he was supportive of the Fire and other Emergency Services. He believed that more money should be forthcoming from UK Government to adequately fund these Services. The Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service is considering placing an 18% levy on Swansea Council, this would add 2.2% to the Council Tax bill of each household.

c) Levelling Up Bids

The Leader of the Council stated that Swansea Council was awaiting the decision of UK Government regarding the Levelling Up Bid. The decision was due at end of January 2023. He stated that they were excellent bids and was hopeful of a positive result.

d) Sports & Wellbeing Investment

The Leader of the Council provided an update on the Council's Sports & Wellbeing Investment. He stated that the Council was committed to continued invest in Parks, Play Areas and Skate Facilities.

103. Public Questions.

There were no questions.

104. Adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

The Section 151 Officer presented a report which outlined the requirement to annually consider whether to revise or replace the Council's existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the requirement to either adopt a new scheme or re-adopt the existing scheme by 31 January 2023.

The report also sought the re-adoption of the current scheme as set out in Section 3 of the report for the period 2023/24.

Resolved that

- 1) The Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") by the National Assembly for Wales (Now the Senedd Cymru) on 26 November 2013, as amended be noted.
- 2) The amendments to "the Prescribed Requirements Regulations" contained in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, to be considered by the Senedd Cymru on 17 January 2023 be noted.
- 3) The outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken by the Council in November 2018 on the discretionary areas of the current scheme be noted.
- 4) The discretionary areas of the current scheme (2022/23) (as set out in section 3 of this report) to remain unchanged for the period 2023/24.
- 5) The Council adopts the scheme as set out in section 3 of the report, to include any mandatory amendments which may be necessary as a result of, The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, subject to those regulations being approved by the Senedd Cymru and coming into force.

105. Gower AONB Advisory Group – Amendments to Terms of Reference.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Service & Performance submitted a report that outlined the role of the Gower AONB Partnership in that it advises and supports the Council in its management of the Gower AONB. The report sought to amend the terms of reference, and procedures, which set out how the partnership operates, principally the appointment process for stakeholder members of the formal advisory group.

Resolved that the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Gower AONB Partnership as set out in the report be adopted.

106. Urgent Item - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting 2023/24

The Presiding Member stated that pursuant to paragraph 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, she considered that the "Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting 2023/24" report should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

107. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rent Setting 2023/24

Reason for Urgency: The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (Amendment of Schedule 9A) Regulations 2022 was implemented on 1 December 2022. The Act introduced a new statutory notice period of 2 months. The report must be approved prior to the end of January to ensure the Council meets the statutory requirements for notice in the Act.

The Head of Housing & Public Health submitted a report that proposed an increase in rents and fees and charges for properties within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2023/24.

Resolved that:

- 1) The proposed increases in Council housing rents and fees and charges be approved:
 - i) Rents to be increased in line with the Welsh Government Policy as detailed in Section 3.1 of the report.
 - ii) Fees, charges, and allowances be approved as outlined in Section 3.2 of the report.

The meeting ended at 5.35 pm

Chair