



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Cabinet**

Council Chamber, Guildhall, Swansea

Thursday, 14 February 2019 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Councillor R C Stewart (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

M C Child

C E Lloyd

**Councillor(s)**

E J King

J A Raynor

**Councillor(s)**

A S Lewis

M Thomas

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): J E Burtonshaw, R Francis-Davies and D H Hopkins

**Also Present:** Councillors(s) C Anderson, P M Black, W Evans, T J Hennegan, C A Holley, P Lloyd & M Sherwood

---

### 141. **Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

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

- 1) Councillor E J King declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest in Minute 148 "Medium Term Financial Planning 2020/21 - 2022/23" and Minute 149 "Revenue Budget 2019-2020" and stated that he had dispensation from the Standards Committee to Stay, Speak (but not in relation to his husband's employment) but not Vote when considering the Authority's budget.

### 142. **Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting(s) listed below be approved and signed as a correct record:

- 1) Cabinet held on 17 January 2019.

### 143. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council.**

#### 1) **Webcasting of Council Meeting**

The Leader of the Council stated that as part of the ongoing works to enable Webcasting of Council, Cabinet, Planning Committee and the Scrutiny Programme Committee; this Meeting is being recorded for Webcasting purposes. The meeting will not be streamed live as we are still in the testing period; however it will be recorded. If the trial is successful, the meeting will be published online at a later date as a Podcast.

**144. Public Question Time.**

A number of questions were asked by Members of the Public relating to the budget. The relevant Cabinet Member responded accordingly. No questions required a written response.

**145. Councillors' Question Time.**

A number of questions were asked by Councillors relating to the budget. The relevant Cabinet Member responded accordingly. No questions required a written response.

**146. Pre-decision Scrutiny Feedback on the Annual Budget. (Verbal)**

Councillor C A Holley, presented the pre decision scrutiny feedback.

**147. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2018/19. \***

*Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny: This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

The Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance submitted a report which outlined the financial monitoring of the 2018-2019 revenue and capital budgets, including the delivery of budget savings.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The comments and variations in the report, and the actions in hand to address them be noted.

**148. Medium Term Financial Planning 2020/21 – 2022/23. \***

*Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny: This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which set out the rationale and purpose of the Medium Term Financial Plan and detailed the major funding assumptions for the period and proposed a strategy to maintain a balanced budget.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The Medium Term Financial Plan 2020-2021 to 2022-2023 be recommended to Council as the basis for future service financial planning.

**149. Revenue Budget 2019/20. \***

**Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:** *This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which set out the current position with regard to the Revenue Budget for 2019-2020. It detailed:

- Financial Monitoring 2018-2019;
- The Local Government Finance Settlement 2019-2020;
- Budget Forecast 2019-2020;
- Specific Saving Proposals;
- Outcome of Budget Consultation;
- Staffing Implications;
- Reserves and Contingency Fund Requirements;
- The Budget Requirement and Council Tax 2019-2020;
- Summary of funding proposals;
- Risks and uncertainties.

The Leader of the Council, Business Transformation & Performance Cabinet Member and the Environment & Infrastructure Management Cabinet Member proposed the following amendments.

	£	£
<b>Further changes to proposals as a result of consultation responses</b>		
Remove - Library Community Service	67,000	
Remove - Professional Fees	49,000	
Remove - Charging for Free Car Parks	23,000	
	<u>139,000</u>	
<b>Funded as follows:</b>		
Reduction in Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service Precept	-60,000	
Reduce contingency fund by £79k to £7.072M		79,000

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The outcome of the formal consultation exercise be noted and changes to the Budget Proposals in Appendix D of the report as amended above be agreed, together with the position regarding delegated budgets as set out in Section 4.10 and 4.11 of the report;
- 2) The current Resource Gap identified in Section 4.5 of the report be noted, and in line with the potential actions identified in Sections 9 and 10 of the report agreed a course of action to achieve a balanced Revenue Budget for 2019-2020;
- 3) In addition to a review of current savings proposals Cabinet will need to:

- a) Review and Approve the Reserve Transfers recommended in the report;
  - b) Agree a level of Council Tax for 2019-2020 to be recommended to Council.
- 4) Subject to the changes identified and listed above, Cabinet recommends to Council for approval:
- a) A Revenue Budget for 2019-2020;
  - b) A Budget Requirement and Council Tax levy for 2019-2020.

**150. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue Budget 2019/20. \***

***Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:*** This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which proposed a Revenue Budget for 2019-2020 and a rent increase for properties within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

**Resolved** that the following budget proposals be recommended to Council for approval:

- 1) Rents be increased in line with the Welsh Government interim policy as detailed in Section 3 of the report;
- 2) Fees, charges and allowances be approved as outlined in Section 3 of the report;
- 3) The Revenue Budget Proposals as detailed in Section 3 of the report.

**151. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Capital Budget and Programme 2018/19 – 2022/23. \***

***Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:*** This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which proposed a revised Capital Budget for 2018-2019 and a Capital Budget for 2019-2020 – 2022-2023.

**Resolved** that the following be recommended to Council for approval:

- 1) The transfers between schemes and the revised budgets for schemes in 2018-2019 be approved;

- 2) The budget proposals for 2019-2020 – 20202-2023 be approved;
- 3) Where individual schemes as shown in Appendix B are programmed over the 4 year period described in the report, then these be committed and approved and their financial implications for funding over subsequent years also be approved.

**152. Capital Budget & Programme 2018/19- 2023/25. \***

***Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:*** *This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which proposed a revised Capital Budget for 2018-2019 and a Capital Budget for 2019-2020 to 2022-2023 (2023-2025 for Band B Schools).

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The revised Capital Budget for 2018-2019 and a Capital Budget for 2019-2020 – 2023-2025 as detailed in Appendices A, B, C, D, E and F of the report be approved.

**153. The Capital Strategy 2018/19 - 2023/24. \***

***Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:*** *This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which sought approval of the Capital Strategy which informs the 4 year Capital Programme.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The Capital Strategy be approved.

**154. Council Tax Premiums in Wales. \***

***Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:*** *This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

The Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) submitted a report which provided information and sought consideration of whether to continue to allow 50% Council Tax discounts on unoccupied and unfurnished properties after any statutory period of exemption expires.

**Resolved that:**

Minutes of the Cabinet (14.02.2019)  
Cont'd

- 1) The details of the discretionary powers relating to Council Tax premiums, discretionary discounts for unoccupied and unfurnished dwellings and the related issues outlined in this report be noted;
- 2) A consultation exercise be undertaken in respect of the following:
  - i) Whether to cease to allow a 50% Council Tax discount on dwellings that remain unoccupied and unfurnished after any statutory period of exemption has expired;
  - ii) Whether to charge a Council Tax Premium of up to 100% for dwellings that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 12 months (long term empty properties);
  - iii) Whether to charge a Council Tax Premium of up to 100% for dwellings occupied periodically, commonly referred to as “second homes”.

The meeting ended at 11.18 am

**Chair**

<b>Call In Procedure – Relevant Dates</b>	
Minutes Published:	14 February 2019
Call In Period Expires (3 Clear Working Days after Publication):	-
Decision Comes into force:	14 February 2019