



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Cabinet**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 15 February 2024 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor R C Stewart (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

C Anderson
L S Gibbard
E J King
A H Stevens

Councillor(s)

A Anthony
H J Gwilliam
A S Lewis

Councillor(s)

R Francis-Davies
D H Hopkins
R V Smith

Officer(s)

Allison Lowe
Helen Morgan-Rees
Martin Nicholls
Ben Smith
Ness Young

Democratic Services Officer
Director of Education
Chief Executive
Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer
Director of Corporate Services

Also present

Councillor(s): C A Holley

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): N/A

104. 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 R V Smith declared a Personal & Prejudicial Interest in Minute 118 "Local Authority Governor Appointments" and stated that he had dispensation from the Standards Committee to stay, speak but not vote on matters relating to the Appointment of Local Authority Governors.

105. Minutes.

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

- 1) Cabinet held on 18 January 2024.

106. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.

The Leader of Council made no announcements.

107. Public Question Time.

Alec Thraves (Swansea Trades Union Council), Dave Warren (Swansea and District Trades Union Council) and Linda Thraves (Swansea Trades Union Council) asked questions in relation to Minute 111 "Revenue Budget 2024/25".

The Leader of the Council responded.

108. Councillors' Question Time.

No questions were asked.

109. Pre-Decision Scrutiny Feedback - Budget Reports. (Verbal)

Councillor C A Holley provided pre-decision feedback in relation to the budget reports.

110. Medium Term Financial Planning 2025/26 – 2027/28.*

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 that set out the rationale and purpose of the Medium Term Financial Plan and details the major funding assumptions for the period and proposes a strategy to maintain a balanced budget.

Resolved that:

- 1) The Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2027/28 be recommended to Council as the basis for future service financial planning.

111. Revenue Budget 2024/25.*

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 that set out the current position with regard to the Revenue Budget for 2024/25 for consideration by Cabinet.

Resolved that:

- 1) The outcome of the formal consultation exercise be noted and any changes to the Budget Proposals in Appendix D of the report be agreed, together with the

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position regarding delegated budgets as set out in Section 4.15 and 4.17 of the report subject to the following amendments:

- A reduction in the previous additional social services uplift funded by council tax from £1m to £0.6m.
 - An allocation of £0.4m of the additional expected £1.1m core grant be made to Social Services, in lieu
 - Noting, crucially thus fully maintaining our intended commitment to increase Social Services budgets by that overall extra £1m, just varying the mix of funding by grant and council tax.
 - Allocate the remaining £0.7m of the expected £1.1m extra grant funding to reinstate £0.7m per annum funding of the Schools ICT Reserve but do not otherwise increase the overall total schools cash offer for 2024-25 itself recognising we have already pre advanced more than £7m one off from the reserve, in anticipation of extra funding, thus conserving some money in the reserve for 2025-26.
 - Redirect the freed up £0.4m of spending power from the currently proposed council tax funding to extend the free local bus offer into 2024-25.
 - The S151 Officer to reflect these anticipated £1.1m of changes due to late grant in the council papers but also be delegated to make only very minor consequential amendments to contingency and/or inflation provision as he sees fit should the actual additional offer vary at all from the assumed £1.1m. The S151 Officer to clearly advise Council on 6th March 2024 of any such minor changes he makes on receipt of the final local government settlement.
- 2) The current Total Funding Requirement identified in Section 4.6 of the report be noted and in line with the potential actions identified in Section 9 and 10 of this report, a course of action be agreed to achieve a balanced Revenue Budget for 2024/25.

In addition to a review of current savings proposals Cabinet:

- a) Reviewed and approved the Reserve transfers recommended in the report.
 - b) Agreed a level of Council Tax for 2024/25 to be recommended to Council.
- 3) Subject to the changes identified and listed above, Cabinet recommends to Council for approval:
- a) A Revenue Budget for 2024/25;
 - b) A Budget Requirement and Council Tax Levy for 2024/25.

112. Capital Budget & Programme 2023/24 - 2028/29.*

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 that proposed a revised capital budget for 2023/24 and a capital budget for 2024/25 – 2028/29.

Resolved that:

- 1) The revised capital budget for 2023/24 and the capital budget for 2024/25 - 2028/29 as detailed in Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F and G be approved.

113. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue Budget 2024/25.*

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 that proposed a Revenue Budget for 2024/25 for the Housing Revenue Account.

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

- 1) The Revenue Budget proposals as detailed in Section 4 of the report.

114. Housing Revenue Account – Capital Budget and Programme 2023/24 – 2027/28.*

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 & Director of Place submitted a report that proposed a revised capital budget for 2023/24 and a capital budget for 2024/25 – 2027/28.

Resolved that the following be recommended to Council for approval:

- 1) The transfers between schemes and the revised budgets for schemes in 2023/24 be approved.
- 2) The budget proposals for 2024/25 – 2027/28 be approved.
- 3) Where individual schemes in Appendix B are programmed over the 4 year period as described in the report, then these be committed and approved and their financial implications for funding over the 4 years also be approved.

- 4) The prioritised approach to setting the work programme that is set out in the report be approved.

115. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 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 Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy submitted a report that outlined the financial monitoring of the 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets, including the delivery of budget savings.

Resolved that:

- 1) The comments and variations, including the continued material uncertainties around the equal pay provision, set out in the report and the actions in hand to seek to address them be noted.
- 2) The updated virements and the use of the Contingency fund as set out in 3.2 of the report and the Inflation provision as set out in 4.3 of the report be approved subject to any further advice from the S.151 officer during the year.
- 3) Cabinet reinforces the need for all Directors to continue to minimise service spending in year, providing clear recovery plans where they are overspending, recognising that the budget overall is currently balanced only by relying on future (but far from wholly assured) reimbursement from Welsh Government, centrally held contingency budgets and increasingly more than ideal levels of earmarked reserves.
- 4) Cabinet recognises that directorate cost overspends must be absolutely minimised, through recovery plans in current year by targeted recovery action with a clear expectation of 'tough' rebasing choices to achieve a balanced budget for the 2024/25 budget round.
- 5) The indicative overspend in 6.1 with further actions to be confirmed at outturn once it is clearer as to the likely final cost of the equal pay award provision be noted.

116. Annual Review of Charges (Social Services) 2023/24.

The Cabinet Member for Care Services submitted a report that was the latest annual review of social services charges, improvements undertaken in year and a proposed list of changes to apply in 2024/25.

Resolved that:

- 1) The findings of the annual review of charges report be noted.

- 2) An inflationary increase of 6% to be applied to all social services charges to come into effect on 1st April 2024 be approved.
- 3) The list of social services charges to apply from 1st April 2024, for the year 2024/25 be approved.
- 4) Permission be granted to Adult Services for further work to be undertaken in 2024/25 on additional lifeline charging, to cover installation and replacement costs.
- 5) The revised list of social services charges 2024/25 (Appendix 1), be agreed and appended to the Council's Charging (Social Services) policy.

117. Quality In Education (Qed) – Emerging Proposals And Investment Priorities For The Sustainable Communities For Learning Strategic Outline Programme.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning submitted a report to consider and endorse the Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme (Rolling) for submission to the Welsh Government.

Resolved that:

- 1) The key aims and focus of the Strategic Outline Programme previously supported by the Welsh Government be re-affirmed.
- 2) The proposed future capital investment priorities for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme (Rolling) be endorsed, recognising that there is no absolute commitment to the funding on either Council or Welsh Government as it is approved in due course on a case-by-case basis even if the SOP is otherwise approved by both Council or Welsh Government.
- 3) The scale of the overall funding ask and proposed funding strategy to meet Council's local contribution be noted, recognising the future detailed funding and affordability decisions will be for future Councils, future budgets and medium term plans in the early 2030's.

118. LA Governor Appointments.

The Local Authority Governors Appointment Group submitted a report, which sought approval of the nominations submitted to fill Local Authority (LA) Governor vacancies on School Governing Bodies.

Resolved that:

- 1) The following nominations recommended by the Director of Education in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning be approved:

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| 1. Gendros Primary | Mrs Kathryn David |
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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2. YGG Gellionen | Mr Ian Tolley |
| 3. Bishopston Comprehensive | Mrs Joanne Meller |

119. Contract Award Report – Contracts for Local Bus Services.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure submitted a report which detailed the outcome of recent tenders for Local Bus Services and sought approval to award contracts.

Resolved that:

- 1) The tender prices recommended by the Tender Evaluation Panel and set out in Schedule B be accepted as representing the Most Economically Advantageous Tenders.
- 2) Contracts be awarded to the companies as set out in Schedule B.

120. Approval to Receive Grant – HAPS City Deal Financial Incentive Fund and Green Transition Ecosystems (GTE) – Transforming Housing and Homes for Future Generations Project.

The Cabinet Member for Service Transformation submitted a report which sought retrospective approval for 3 grant applications relating to:

- HAPS City Deal HAPS Financial Incentive fund (x2) and
- Green Transition Ecosystems (GTE) - Transforming Housing and Homes for Future Generations Project

Resolved that:

- 1) The grant funding bid for the Green Transition Ecosystems (GTE) - Transforming Housing and Homes for Future Generations Project set out in 2.0 be approved.
- 2) The 2 x grant funding bids set out in 3.0 for:
 - City Deal HAPS Financial Incentive Fund for Brondeg House More Homes New Build Scheme and
 - Green Transition Ecosystems (GTE) - Transforming Housing and Homes for Future Generations Project be approved.
- 3) Authority be delegated to the Director of Place, the Chief Legal Officer and Chief Finance Officer to enter into any agreements necessary to ensure the delivery of the projects and to protect the Council's interests.
- 4) Authority be delegated to the Director of Place and the Chief Finance Officer to recover all relevant expenditure associated with the delivery of the projects from HAPS City Deal Financial Incentive Fund and Bath University.

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- 5) Any further decisions relating to this funding be delegated to the Director of Place and the Cabinet Member for Service Transformation. The funding will support schemes approved via the annual HRA Capital Budget report.

The meeting ended at 11.42 am

Chair

| Call In Procedure – Relevant Dates | |
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| Minutes Published: | 15 February 2024 |
| Call In Period Expires (3 Clear Working Days after Publication): | 23.59 on 20 February 2024 |
| Decision Comes into force: | 21 February 2024 |