

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SPECIAL CABINET

**HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA. ON MONDAY,
15 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 3.00 PM**

PRESENT: Councillor Rob Stewart (Leader) presided

Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)	Councillor(s)
M C Child	J E C Harris	C E Lloyd
W Evans	D H Hopkins	J A Raynor
R Francis-Davies	A S Lewis	C Richards

154. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

No apologies for absence were received.

155. **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:

Councillor D H Hopkins – Minute No. 162 - Revenue Budget 2016-2017 - Personal – Deputy Lord Mayor.

Councillor C Richards – Minute No. 167 – Review of Employment Training – Personal – Member of the Management Board.

156. **LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S REPORT(S).**

The Leader of the Council made no announcements.

157. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME.**

A question was asked by Mr Thraves in respect of Minute No. 162 - Revenue Budget 2016/17 in relation to providing protection against the job losses.

The Leader responded accordingly and the Section 151 Officer detailed the reserves to gross revenue expenditure (excluding HRA, Schools, Unapplied Grants & Group Reserves) at March 2015; Earmarked Reserves to Gross Revenue Expenditure at March 2015 and General/Unallocated Reserves to Gross Revenue Expenditure at March 2015.

A question was asked by Mrs R Jones in respect of Minute No. 162 - Revenue Budget 2016/17 in relation to the proposed removal of the remaining Council contribution to the Music Service through restructure, changes in delivery and review of charges.

The Leader and the Cabinet Member for Education responded accordingly.

158. **COUNCILLORS' QUESTION TIME.**

No questions were asked.

159. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - FEEDBACK ON THE ANNUAL BUDGET.**

The Leader invited Councillor C A Holley, Convenor of the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to present their views on the budget proposals.

He detailed the Engagement with Scrutiny; Issues Raised; Transformation of Adult Services Scrutiny Panel – Budget Discussion Points; and Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel Budget Discussion Points.

Councillor C A Holley requested written responses in respect of the following questions:

Public Questions:

1. A question was provided by Peter Hewitt (member of the public). He was not present at the meeting and the Leader agreed to provide a written response directly to Mr Hewitt:
Why is the Council cutting the budget for Victoria Park when they are in breach of a noise abatement order and a planning condition?
2. Mr Perrott asked for specific examples of where the Council is developing use of co-operative working.

Questions raised by the Schools Scrutiny Performance Panel

Reducing the need for formal statements Page 46 (3rd bullet point)

3. Are we on target for reducing statements? The budget on page 123 has an increase in SEN Statementing and support.

School Budget Forum Letter Page 118

4. Behaviour Review Outcomes (the School Budget Forum urges the Council to consider additional funding to facilitate the major cultural and service changes required): Panel agree with this and presume this is being addressed by the increase in the budget line on page 123. If the increase is not for this will that be considered in the future?

Questions raised by the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

Summary of consultation p95

5. How many people attended the events in Gorseinon, Civic Centre and Townhill?
6. How many ethnic minority persons responded to the public consultation - info provided only supplied a breakdown of Welsh or English speaking
7. Do we know the geographical area that the respondents came from?

Council Tax p87

8. Panel to be provided with a copy of the last report to Cabinet/Council on discretionary pensioner grant in order to understand the proposed cut better
9. The current draft figure for council tax is 3% what factors could change this figure

Parking Enforcement p85

10. What will increased parking enforcement in resident parking areas mean in practice? Will this mean more enforcement officers or greater use of the mobile camera service or fees for parking permits?

Social Care Protection para 4.12 p 52

Panel requested further information about the £10m national all wales social care protection. Is further information available regarding whether this money will be directly available to the Council and how much would be allocated to Swansea?

The Leader thanked Councillor C A Holley for the contribution on the Budget proposals and indicated that written responses would be provided to the questions submitted.

160. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 3RD QUARTER 2015/16.**

The Section 151 Officer presented a report regarding the financial monitoring of the 2015/16 Revenue and Capital Budgets.

RESOLVED that:

That the comments and variations in the report be noted and the actions in hand to address these are noted.

161. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING 2017/18 - 2019/20.**

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:

That the Medium Term Financial Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20 be noted and recommended to Council as the basis for future service financial planning.

162. **REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17.**

The Section 151 Officer presented a report which proposed a Revenue Budget and Council Tax Levy for 2016/17 and detailed:

- Financial Monitoring 2015/16
- The Local Government Finance Settlement 2016/17
- Budget Forecast 2016/17
- Specific Saving Proposals
- Outcome of Budget Consultation
- Staffing Implications
- Reserves and Contingency Fund Requirements
- The Budget Requirement and Council Tax 2016/17
- Summary of funding proposals
- Risks and uncertainties

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Cabinet noted the outcome of the formal consultation exercise and agreed changes to the Savings Proposals in Appendix D, together with the position regarding delegated budgets as set out in section 4.10 of the report.
- 2) Cabinet noted the current Resource Gap identified in Section 4.5 of this report and in line with the potential actions identified in Section 9 and 10 of this report agreed a course of action to achieve a balanced Revenue Budget for 2016/17.
- 3) In addition to a review of current savings proposals Cabinet reviewed and approved the reserve transfers as set out in the report.
- 4) **Agreed the proposed changes as moved by The Leader to be recommended to Council.**

PROPOSAL	£000	RATIONALE
Removal of remaining Council contribution to Music Service through restructure, changes in delivery, & review of charges	97	Although we did not specifically ask about this proposal we still received many comments supporting the continuation of the Music Service within the consultation.
Minimum savings arising out of the Commissioning Review of Public Toilets provision. Consultation to take place on completion of review	88	The Council has consulted on various options around the provision of public toilets in previous years (including transfer running and maintenance of toilets to suitable local groups and closure of urban toilets) - our proposals have been met with opposition from the public.
Review of winter gritting provision	24	We consulted on this proposals with the majority of respondents (53%) stating they disagree with this.
Increased parking enforcement in resident parking areas	120	Extremely sensitive area with high interest from the public – received lots of letters and comments when we consulted on charging for residents parking. A further consultation would be required before proceeding with any proposal in this area. After consultation with officers involved it has been determined that the saving target is unachievable and current enforcement fines are already considered to be suitable.
Reduce the Lord Mayor hospitality budget by approx 70%	25	The Lord Mayor is the First Citizen of the City and County of Swansea and plays a huge ceremonial and civic role in city life. The inauguration celebrates not only the inauguration of the Lord Mayor elect, but is

		<p>also the culmination of the work of the year of office of the outgoing Lord Mayor.</p> <p>Funding a ceremony to mark this occasion for the city's only high profile civic and ceremonial role ensures it's profile is maintained.</p>
Delete the Lord Mayor inauguration budget. Savings to be achieved by sponsorship of events and other income opportunities	11	<p>The Lord Mayor is the First Citizen of the City and County of Swansea and plays a huge ceremonial and civic role in city life. The inauguration celebrates not only the inauguration of the Lord Mayor elect, but is also the culmination of the work of the year of office of the outgoing Lord Mayor.</p> <p>Funding a ceremony to mark this occasion for the city's only high profile civic and ceremonial role ensures it's profile is maintained.</p>
Reduce funding for the provision of childcare and early years support	39	<p>This budget proposal relates to supporting existing and new child care providers to set up and improve their services. We have just agreed a significant expansion of our work to promote the Early Years, including a new Early Years Strategy agreed with our Health partners in the ABMU for the first time, it is not the right time to be considering a reduction.</p> <p>We know that a positive child care experience in early years can give children an excellent start in life and we are reflecting that in our work to promote early intervention.</p> <p>We will be reviewing all of our child care provision next year during our Childcare Sufficiency Audit process, and we may choose to reconsider options for investment after the conclusion of this Audit.</p>
Remodel Council funding provision to third sector organisations.	150	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with third sector organisations outside of the main consultation.</p> <p>Huge concerns were raised within the consultation about the potential impact on organisations and groups they support with a most being unable to sustain any further reduction in funding on top on the £35,000 already agreed.</p> <p>There was an overarching concern expressed at the short timescale as the decision making process is very late in the financial year, which could potentially result in a funding gap if grants/agreements.</p> <p>We have a good relationship with the third sector and we wish to remain at this</p>

		crucial time where we are changing the way we run services. But reintroducing this is only a temporary measure for 2016/17 to allow bodies to explore other sources of finance.
Support for bus services and community transport services	250	To build into base budgets on permanent basis.
Tidy City – focus on cleansing and dog fouling	150	To build into base budgets on permanent basis.
Democratic support	100	Current changes within the Council's Senior Management Team offers a further opportunity to strengthen the Council as a Member led Authority. Overall restructuring, including this sum, is intended to provide a net saving to the Council.
Total	1,054	

Funding of Changes

Transformation Fund	150	Relating to one year additional funding to allow for remodelling of funding provision for third sector organisations
Council tax	904	All other changes as detailed above.

- 5) Agreed a proposed increase of 3.9 % increase in the level of Council Tax for 2016/17 to be recommended to Council.
- 6) Subject to these changes, Cabinet recommends to Council for approval:-
 - a) A Revenue Budget for 2016/17
 - b) A Budget Requirement and Council Tax levy for 2016/17

163. **CAPITAL BUDGET & PROGRAMME 2015/16 - 2019/20.**

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report which proposed a revised Capital Budget for 2015/16 and a Capital Budget for 2016/17 – 2019/20.

RESOLVED that:

That the revised Capital Budget for 2015/16 and a Capital Budget for 2016/17 – 2019/20 as detailed in Appendices A, B, C, D and E of the report be recommended to Council for approval (including an extra £200,000 to School Capital Improvements).

164. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17.**

The Section 151 Officer submitted a joint report which proposed a Revenue Budget for 2016/17 and a rent increase for properties within the HRA.

RESOLVED that:

The following budget proposals be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval:

- 1) Rents be increased in line with the Welsh Government new rent setting policy as detailed in Section 4 of the report.
- 2) Fees, charges and allowances be approved as outlined in Section 4 of the report.
- 3) The Revenue Budget Proposals as detailed in Section 4 of the Report are recommended to Council for approval.

165. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - CAPITAL BUDGET AND PROGRAMME 2015/16 -2019/20.**

The Section 151 Officer submitted a joint report which proposed a revised Capital Budget for 2015/16 and Capital Budget for 2016/17 - 2019/20.

RESOLVED that the following budget proposals be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval:

- 1) The transfers between schemes and the revised budgets for schemes in 2015/16.
- 2) The budget proposals for 2016/17 - 2019/20.
- 3) That, where individual schemes as shown in Appendix B of the report are programmed over 4 year period, then these are committed and approved and that their financial implications for funding over subsequent years also be approved.
- 4) Authorisation be granted to officers to submit planning applications in relation to capital repair schemes of Council owned land where planning permission is considered necessary.

166. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC.**

Cabinet were requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendations to the report(s) on the grounds that it / they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 relevant to the items of business set out in the report(s).

Cabinet considered the Public Interest Test in deciding whether to exclude the public from the meeting for the item of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the public be excluded for the following item(s) of business.

CLOSED SESSION

167. **REVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT TRAINING.**

The Cabinet Member for Education submitted a report which detailed the current position regarding the Employment Training Service.

CABINET DECISION

That the recommendations detailed in the report be agreed with the amended timeline of 4 April, 2016.

The meeting ended at 4.39 pm

CHAIR

Published on: 16 February 2016