



Dinas a Sir Abertawe

Cofnodion Cyfarfod y Panel Perfformiad Craffu - Gwella Gwasanaethau a Chyllid

Cyfarfod Aml-Leoliad - Ystafell Gloucester, Neuadd y Ddinas /
MS Teams

Dydd Mawrth, 14 Chwefror 2023 am 10.00 am

Yn Bresennol: Y Cyngorydd C A Holley (Cadeirydd) oedd yn llywyddu

Y Cyngorydd(wyr)

P M Black
L James
M W Locke

Y Cyngorydd(wyr)

R Fogarty
D H Jenkins
B J Rowlands

Y Cyngorydd(wyr)

P R Hood-Williams
J W Jones

Mynychwyr eraill

Y Cyng. Rob Stewart
(Arweinydd)

Aelod y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Cyllid a Strategaeth

Swyddog(ion)

Ben Smith
Brij Madahar

Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a'r Swyddog Adran 151
Cydlynnydd Craffu

Ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb

Y Cyngorydd(wy): M Jones

46 **Datgeliadau o fuddiannau personol a rhagfarnol**

Yn unol â'r Côd Ymddygiad a fabwysiadwyd gan Ddinas a Sir Abertawe, datganwyd y buddiannau canlynol:

Datganodd y Cyngorwyr Chris Holley, Dai Jenkins a Jeff Jones gysylltiad personol â Chofnod Rhif 50.

47 **Gwahardd Pleidleisiau Chwip a Datgan Chwipiau'r Pleidiau**

Dim.

48 **Cofnodion**

Cytunwyd ar gofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol.

49 **Cwestiynau gan y Cyhoedd**

Ni chafwyd cwestiynau gan y cyhoedd.

50 Craffu cyn Penderfynu ar Adroddiadau'r Cabinet: Y Gyllideb Flynyddol

Roedd yr Arweinydd a Ben Smith, Y Cyfarwyddwr Cyllid a'r Swyddog Adran 151 yn bresennol. Trafodwyd y canlynol:

Cyffredinol

- Mae'r cyngor yn wynebu pwysau costau o £60m gyda gwariant net o £35m yn cael ei ychwanegu at y gyllideb sy'n cynnwys £31m o Gyllid Allanol Cyfun Llywodraeth Cymru a £4m o godiadau Treth y Cyngor amcangyfrifedig. Mae hyn yn golygu bod angen arbedion o £25m.
- Er bod £35m yn fuddsoddiad sylweddol, rhaid ei weld yng nghyd-destun prisiau ynni uchel a chwyddiant.
- Mae cronfa o £15m wedi'i hailgyfeirio o'r Gronfa Adferiad Economaidd i dalu costau ynni i gefnogi darparwyr gwasanaethau, er enghraifft ysgolion a darparwyr gofal.
- Mae'r rhagolygon tymor hir yn parhau i fod yn heriol gydag effeithiau gwirioneddol i bawb.
- Mae'r gyllideb yn rhagweld cynnydd o 4.95% yn nhreth y cyngor i'w ystyried gan y Cabinet a'r cyngor maes o law, ond gyda chynghor i ystyried amrywiaeth o gynnydd.
- Mae hysbysiad wedi dod i law y bydd cynnydd cyfartalog cyffredinol o 16.5% i ardoll yr awdurdod tân. Er ein bod yn aros am hysbysiad terfynol o addasiad y Grant Cynnal Refeniw, ni ddisgwylir unrhyw newidiadau sylweddol. Mae hyn yn cyfateb i gynnydd o 2% yn nhreth y cyngor.
- Mae 61 o swyddi cyfwerth ag amser llawn mewn llywodraeth leol yn dal i fod mewn perygl ond amcangyfrifir bod 40%/50% o'r rhain yn cynnwys swyddi gwag ac ymddediad cynnar/diswyddiadau gwirfoddol. Ceisir osgoi ymddiswyddiadau gorfodol lle bo modd.
- Disgwylir i gostau parcio yng nghanol y ddinas gynyddu tra bydd ap dinasyddion yn lleihau'r gost i breswylwyr gyda chynlluniau i gyflwyno gostyngiad sy'n cael ei gymhwyso ar y mesurydd i'w rhoi ar waith eleni.
- Mae'r gyllideb yn cynnig cynnydd yn rhenti Marchnad Abertawe gan greu arbediad o £50,000. Mae hyn yn adlewyrchu pwysau chwyddiant, wedi'i gydbwysu â chymorth ychwanegol i fasnachwyr y farchnad y maent yn wynebu amodau masnachu anodd.

Addysg

- ran ysgolion, mae'n parhau i fod yn wir y bydd angen arbedion sylweddol a pharhaus mewn perthynas â blaengynlluniau ariannol y cyngor. Nid yw'n bosib eithrio cyllidebau ysgolion yn llawn rhag toriadau gwirioneddol tymor hwy. Mae hyn wedi'i drafod yn y Fforwm Cyllideb Ysgolion.
- Mae dyfarniadau cyflog i athrawon eleni a'r flwyddyn nesaf, ynghyd â dyfarniad cyflog llywodraeth leol ar gyfer y flwyddyn nesaf yn dal i wynebu pwysau costau anhysbys.
- Mae ffioedd rheoli plâu yn cynnwys cynnydd arfaethedig o 15% a allai roi pwysau ychwanegol ar ysgolion a chontractau, fodd bynnag mae'r ffi yn gyson â chodiadau eraill am daliadau a phwysau ar y gwasanaeth ac mae angen adnoddau ychwanegol er mwyn sicrhau bod y gwasanaeth yn parhau.

Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

- Bydd y cyflog byw gwirioneddol dan bwysau oherwydd rhwymedigaethau cyfreithiol ar bob cyflogwr a disgwyliadau cyflog byw gwirioneddol gan ddarparwyr gofal cymdeithasol i gyflawni dyheadau Llywodraeth Cymru ohonom fel cyllidwr gofal.
- Er bod y Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol yn derbyn y cynnydd cymesur mwyaf o 8%, mae angen buddsoddiad tymor hwy pellach a newid strwythurol sylweddol o ran gofal cymdeithasol.
- Mae recriwtio yn parhau i fod yn her o fewn Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol.

Cronfeydd wrth Gefn

- Mae'r cronfeydd wrth gefn a glustnodwyd a'r rhai cyffredinol yn ddigonol o ystyried yr argyfwng costau byw, ond efallai y bydd angen cynyddu'r cronfeydd wrth gefn cyffredinol sydd heb eu newid i fod yn gymharol ac yn gymesur â'r gyllideb refeniw gyffredinol sydd wedi tyfu'n sylweddol dros y blynyddoedd.
- Amcangyfrifir y bydd £60m yn cael ei ddefnyddio o'r cronfeydd arian parod wrth gefn yn ystod y flwyddyn ariannol hon a'r flwyddyn ariannol nesaf gan adael tua £100m yn weddill. Mae hwn yn cael ei ddefnyddio i sefydlogi'r pwysau cyllidebol a wynebir gan y cyngor.

Y Gyllideb a'r Rhaglen Gyfalaf

- Mae'r gyllideb yn nodi rhaglen gyfalaf y gronfa gyffredinol gwerth £400m.
- Mae cyngor swyddogion yn awgrymu y bydd digon o fenthycy a chronfeydd arian parod wrth gefn yn ariannu'r rhaglen yn y tymor byr ac nid oes angen unrhyw ofyniad benthyca digymorth mewnol yn y gyllideb sylfaenol ar gyfer yr ychydig flynyddoedd nesaf.
- Mae'n bosib y bydd angen i'r Cabinet a'r cyngor ystyried benthyca pellach os caiff cynlluniau cyfalaf pellach eu hychwanegu.
- Mae rhagdybiaeth o fewn y gyllideb y gall fod angen benthyca hyd at £50m. Bydd y penderfyniad hwn yn ymwneud ag arian cyfatebol gydag, er enghraifft, cynigion Codi'r Gwastad a phwysau chwyddiant.
- Mae un cais Codi'r Gwastad wedi bod yn llwyddiannus a bydd dau gais aflwyddiannus yn cael eu hailgyflwyno. Bydd yn ofynnol i'r Cabinet a'r cyngor gydbwyso'r dewis fforddiadwyedd rhwng arian cyfatebol cyfalaf, pwysau refeniw a buddion i'r economi.

51 Crynhoi Barn a Chyflwyno Argymhellion

- Trafododd Aelodau'r Panel eu hadborth i'r Cabinet yn seiliedig ar eu trafodaethau a fydd yn cael sylw mewn llythyr at yr Arweinydd a'i gyflwyno i'r Cabinet gan y Cadeirydd ar 16 Chwefror 2023.

52 Cynllun Gwaith

Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 11.30am.

Cadeirydd

Minutes of the Panel Perfformiad Craffu - Gwella Gwasanaethau a Chyllid (Dydd Mawrth, 14
Chwefror 2023)
Cont'd



**To/
Councillor Rob Stewart
Cabinet Member for Economy,
Finance & Strategy (Leader)**

BY EMAIL

cc: Cabinet Members

*Please ask for:
Gofynnwch am:*

*Direct Line:
Linell Uniongyrochol:*

*e-Mail
e-Bost:*

*Our Ref
Ein Cyf:*

*Your Ref
Eich Cyf:*

*Date
Dyddiad:*

Scrutiny

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15 February 2023

Summary: This is a letter from the Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Leader / Cabinet Member following the meeting of the Panel on 14 February 2023. It relates to pre-decision scrutiny of the Annual Budget.

Dear Councillor Stewart,

Pre-decision Scrutiny of Cabinet Reports: Annual Budget

The Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel met on 14 February 2023 to consider the Annual Budget reports that are being considered by Cabinet on 16 February.

We thank you and the Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer for attending the meeting to present the reports and answer questions. This letter reflects on what we gained from the information presented, questions, and discussion.

We asked a number of questions, which were responded to, around:

- Cost of borrowing / likely movement in interest rates during the Medium Term Financial Plan, and use of cash balances / reserves whilst rates are high.
- Level of reserves and projection for the next year, and use of the Capital Equalisation Reserve to smooth cost pressures.
- Affordability of the Capital Programme and potential future borrowing requirement for new schemes, including needing to take account of match funding successful Levelling Up bids, for example.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU

SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAWE

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- Roll back in base on some proposed revenue budget savings in specific areas across Directorates following December's budget proposals report.
- Staffing implications / Headcount reduction
- Budget Consultation
- Increases in Fees and Charges

We are writing to confirm the views of scrutiny for Cabinet to consider before making its decisions. This is based on discussion at the Service Improvement & Finance Panel meeting as well as input from our Education and Social Services Scrutiny Panels which met separately ahead of our Panel meeting with the relevant Cabinet Members and lead officers.

Scrutiny Views, including any outstanding issues / actions:

In the time available to review the reports and ask questions, the Panel wish to bring the following views / recommendations to the attention of Cabinet:

Overall

- **Budget Process / Local Government Settlement** - We share concerns about the tight timetable for the budget setting process, hindered by the timing of Welsh Government budget announcements - we note the final settlement is not expected until end of February. The Panel welcomes the increase in central funding, but this falls significantly short when considering the level of inflation and other pressures, such as energy costs.
- **Capital Charges** - The use of Capital Equalisation Reserve provides a short-term solution for financing costs and avoids direct impact on other service revenue budgets, but there is concern about its sufficiency beyond the Medium Term Financial Plan given increased capital charges.
- **Headcount Reduction** - Cabinet should clarify the extent to which the reported potential headcount reduction (61 FTEs) will be through either the deletion of vacant posts or through members of staff wishing to take ER/VR to understand how many posts are likely to mean compulsory redundancies. Cabinet will need to be satisfied that the Headcount reduction does not risk future service delivery in those areas affected. The Panel has some concerns about the proposed reduction in Scrutiny Support staff and implication on the ability for Councillors to properly carry out Scrutiny.
- **Cost of Living** - We acknowledge that it is a cost of living crisis for the Council as well, but the likely Council Tax increase, as well as planned increase in fees and charges, will be felt by all our residents.
- **Fees and Charges** - The proposed increase in Car Parking tariffs may have a detrimental effect on usage / visitor numbers, particularly footfall in the City Centre. We note the intention to introduce a residents' discount and would urge the speedy rollout of the planned Residents App. As another City Centre impact, there was concern that the proposed increase to Swansea Market Rent Charges will impact on stall occupancy.

Social Services

- **Uplift** - The Panel is encouraged to see an increase in the overall budget for Social Services for 2023/24 and welcomes the way Social Services has operated with a higher level of efficiency.
- **Fees & Charges** - Overall, the Panel understands that £6 million savings is necessary but is concerned about the 10% increase in fees and charges and the effect of this on the 25% of people affected by the increase, who are already hard pressed.
- **Staffing** - The Panel understands there is a proposed saving of £1 million to be raised from vacant posts but is concerned this could result in increased use of agency staff and will be monitoring this at future meetings.
- **Child & Family Services Placements** - The Panel understands savings of £500k are proposed by reducing placements in Child and Family Services and hopes this is achievable in the current climate.
- **Co-production** - The Panel is interested in the idea of strengthening organisational co-production and supports a common approach.
- **Re-Commissioning Services** - The impact of re-commissioning services is not fully understood, in terms of the budget set, and will have to be monitored closely.

Education

- **Uplift** - We welcome the uplift in the budget this year from £202 to £215 million but recognise this will not cover all the financial pressure on schools budgets. However, it is very welcome and we recognise that it is the largest cash allocation for any Council department in Swansea, which highlights the fact that education is a top priority.
- **School Reserves** - We heard that the school reserves have reduced substantially and are now approximately £11 million across schools in Swansea. Concern was raised about the fact that some schools reserves are high while others have very low reserves and therefore these schools will require help and support.
- **Financial Pressure** - We recognise that schools will be under a lot of pressure from a number of costs that are currently not fully known this year 2023/24, and indeed 2024/25, for example ALN, free school meals universal roll, fuel and energy costs and teacher pay increases etc. With that in mind, we would additionally question the significant increase in pest control fees being proposed for the schools contract, that will add to pressures.
- **Pressures on reducing School Meals Budget** - We must ensure there is no loss of quality or standard of the school meals provided and our aim should be to buy local.

Your Response

We hope that you find the contents of this letter helpful. I will be attending the meeting on 16 February to address Cabinet with the feedback from Scrutiny, as contained in this letter.

We would welcome comments on any of the issues raised within. However, no formal written response is required unless there are any material changes to the Annual Budget reports and/or amendments to the budget agreed by Cabinet, which the Panel should be alerted to.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Holley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

COUNCILLOR CHRIS HOLLEY

Convener, Service Improvement and Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel

✉ cllr.chris.holley@swansea.gov.uk