

Minutes of the Meeting of THRIVING COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held at the held remotely via video-conference on Friday, 18 February 2022

PRESENT; Councillor Marc Davies (Chairman), Councillors Euros Davies (Vice-Chair), John Adams-Lewis, Clive Davies, Gareth Davies, Gethin Davies, Ifan Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Davies, Elizabeth Evans, Keith Evans, Gwyn James, Maldwyn Lewis, Dai Mason and John Roberts

Also in attendance: Councillors Ellen ap Gwyn, Catrin Miles, Ray Quant, Alun Williams, Dafydd Edwards, Rhodri Evans, Catherine Hughes, Gareth Lloyd, Ceredig Davies, Rowland Rees Evans, and Daniel Potter.

(9.30 am - 12.38 pm)

1 **Apologies**

Councillor Lyndon Lloyd apologised for his inability to attend the meeting.

2 **Disclosures of personal interest (including whipping declarations) - Members are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct. In addition, Members must declare any prohibited party whip which the Member has been given in relation to the meeting as per the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.**

None

3 **Report on the draft Budget for 2022/23**

The Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members met to consider the Service budget for those service areas that are within the Committee's remit and to consider the following recommendations:

1. To consider the overall Revenue and Capital Budgets proposed.
2. To consider the estimated Cost pressures being faced (£13.173m across all aspects).
3. To consider the proposed Fees & charges and the resulting estimated £155k additional income to assist with the Savings required.
4. To note the proposed £230k Travelling Savings Target for Officers & Members.
5. To note the £113k Savings Balance still required to be found.
6. To consider the 3 options proposed for Council Tax levels of 4.75%, 5.0% & 5.25%.
7. To provide any other appropriate Draft Budget related feedback to Cabinet.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ellen ap Gwynn, presented the report on the draft budget for 2022/2023 including the three year capital

programme, explaining that this is a provisional settlement, and that the final settlement is due on the 1st March, 2022.

The Leader also stated that a letter had been received on 17th February 2022 from Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government announcing an increase of £50m for the local government settlement for 2021-2022. The amount to be allocated to Ceredigion County Council is unknown to date but is likely to be circa £1m. The funding is un-hypothecated (i.e. not allocated to specific services) and can be carried forward in reserves to the 2022-2023 financial year. It was explained that the implications of this additional funding would need to be considered and how that would be allocated for the 2022-2023 budget.

Members welcomed the additional funding but expressed their disappointment that the announcement was late and that it didn't allow for scrutiny to take place based on the new information. The Chief Executive confirmed that information would be presented for Council on 3rd March 2022 and that there would be an opportunity for further debate.

The relevant Cabinet Member presented the information relevant to their Service Area. Members were then given the opportunity for questions which were answered in turn by Cabinet Members and/or Officers.

Committee Members considered the Cost Pressures for those service areas that are within the Committee's remit; namely:

- Highways & Environmental Services
- Economy & Regeneration

And:

Committee Members considered the proposed Fees and Charges changes under the

Committee's remit in Appendix D, pages 14 to 15 of 51, of the agenda papers.

The Committee agreed that the 3 options proposed for Council Tax levels would not be discussed at today's meeting due the Welsh Government announcement that an estimated additional £1million had been allocated to Ceredigion Council. Further discussions will take place at Council.

Recommendations:

Following consideration, Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:

1. **APPROVE** the overall Revenue and Capital Budgets proposed;
2. **APPROVE** the estimated Cost Pressures;
3. **APPROVE** the proposed Fees and Charges as outlined in Enclosure D, appendix 2 of the agenda papers, (pages 16-44 of 51)
4. **AGREED** to note the proposed £230k Travelling Savings Target for Officers & Members;
5. **AGREED** to note the £113k Savings Balance still required to be found; and

6. The Committee also agreed to provide the following appropriate Draft Budget related **recommendations** to Cabinet:

a) that a catamaran is treated the same as a monohull boat for the 2022/23 fees and charges whilst a review of the policy is undertaken. Catamarans should not be discouraged as they are the same size as a mono hull boat, safer, more stable, easier manoeuvrability and better for the environment.

b) that car parking fees are removed at Tregaron and Llandysul.

4 To confirm the Minutes of the previous Meeting and to consider any matters arising from those Minutes

The Committee resolved to confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20th January 2022 as a correct record.

Matters arising

None.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 March 2022

Chairman:_____

Date:_____