

Minutes of the Meeting of THRIVING COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held at the Hybrid - Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron / remotely via video conference on Friday, 9 February 2024

PRESENT; Councillor Gwyn Wigley Evans (Chair), Councillors Marc Davies (Vice-Chair), Shelley Childs, Gethin Davies, Meirion Davies, Rhodri Davies, Rhodri Evans, Chris James, Maldwyn Lewis, Sian Maehrlein, Ann Bowen Morgan and John Roberts

Also in attendance: Councillors Bryan Davies, Catrin M S Davies, Clive Davies, Euros Davies, Gareth Davies, Ifan Davies, Endaf Edwards, Elizabeth Evans, Eryl Evans, Keith Evans, Keith Henson, Hugh R M Hughes, Gareth Lloyd, Wyn Thomas, Matthew Vaux and Alun Williams

Officers in attendance: Eifion Evans, Chief Executive, Barry Rees, Corporate Director; James Starbuck, Corporate Director, Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement, Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer Democratic Services, Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer and Monitoring Officer, Rhodri Llwyd, Corporate Lead Officer, Russell Hughes-Pickering, Corporate Lead Officer, Lisa Evans, Scrutiny and Standards Office

(9.30am-1.30pm)

1 Welcome and Apologies

None

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 24/25 Budget

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bryan Davies, presented the report on the draft budget for 2024/2025 (Enclosure A). The Leader stated that this was an extraordinarily difficult financial situation faced by the Council with considerable financial pressures.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement, Councillor Gareth Davies, presented the remaining information in Enclosure A of the report. Councillor Davies also stated that this is by far the worst financial situation he has faced as Councillor in setting the budget.

Duncan Hall, Corporate Lead Officer, Finance and Procurement, then provided a brief verbal update on the latest Budget situation.

Cabinet Members then in turn provided detailed information regarding Enclosures B and C and the specific saving proposals shown in Enclosure D, as follows:

D1 - Highways and Environmental

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Councillor Keith Henson

Cabinet Member for Highways and Environmental Services and Carbon Management

Target Cost Reduction / Savings 2024/25: £1.576m

Current Budget: £19.4m

D2 - Economy and Regeneration

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:

Councillor Clive Davies

Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration

Target Cost Reduction / Savings 2024/25: £255k (part of £419k of E&R total proposed reductions)

Current Budget: £4.0m

Members then considered Enclosure E, Fees and Charges relating to the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, pages 17-42 of the agenda papers.

Members then considered Enclosure F and Enclosure G.

Following discussion, Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendations.

Recommendation(s):

For the respective Services that are within the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. To consider:

a) the overall draft 24/25 Budget position.

b) the relevant elements of the Revenue Budget Movements.

c) the relevant elements of the Revenue Budget Cost Pressures.

d) the relevant elements of the Revenue Budget Reductions Proposals.

e) the relevant elements of the Fees & Charges proposals.

f) Cabinet's proposal on Council Tax Premiums.

g) the relevant elements of the Multi-year Capital Programme.

2. To make recommendation(s) for Cabinet to consider on 20/02/24, as the

Committee deems appropriate, in relation to the Budget.

Reasons for recommendations:

To assist with the preparation of a balanced budget, to ensure appropriate scrutiny of the overall Budget being proposed and to make

recommendation(s), as appropriate, for Cabinet to consider at their next meeting on 20/02/24.

Following discussion, Committee Members AGREED that they had considered the above-mentioned recommendations and AGREED to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The proposal to remove separate/dedicated AHP collection is not considered as part of the proposed savings;
2. Integrated Impact Assessments are undertaken on the identified cost reduction / savings proposals;
3. Further detail is provided on the identified cost reduction / savings proposals e.g. the public conveniences proposal and the proposal to limit the number of black bags collected from each household.

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

It was agreed to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2023.

Matters arising: None.

Confirmed at the Meeting of the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 March 2024

Chairman: _____

Date: _____