

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor E. Morgan [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen	D.J.R. Bartlett	S.M. Caiach	C.A. Campbell
J.M. Charles	A.P. Cooper	D.M. Cundy	A. Davies
D.B. Davies	G. Davies	I.W. Davies	S.L. Davies
W.R.A. Davies	T.T. Defis	T. Devichand	E. Dole
J.S. Edmunds	P.M. Edwards	D.C. Evans	L.D. Evans
W.J.W. Evans	W.T. Evans	M. Gravell	A.D. Harries
C.P. Higgins	W.G. Hopkins	J.K. Howell	P. Hughes-Griffiths
P.M. Hughes	I.J. Jackson	A. James	J.D. James
D.M. Jenkins	J.P. Jenkins	A.W. Jones	G.O. Jones
H.I. Jones	A. Lenny	M.J.A. Lewis	D.J.R. Llewellyn
K. Madge	J. Owen	P.A. Palmer	D.W.H. Richards
B.A.L. Roberts	H.B. Shepardson	A.D.T. Speake	L.M. Stephens
E.G. Thomas	G.B. Thomas	J. Thomas	M.K. Thomas
R. Thomas	S.E. Thomas	W.G. Thomas	D. Tomos
J. Tremlett	D.E. Williams	J. Williams	J.E. Williams
J.S. Williams			

Also Present:

Mr M. James	-	Chief Executive
Mr C. Moore	-	Director of Corporate Services
Mr G. Morgans	-	Interim Director of Education & Children's Services
Mr O. Bowen	-	Head of Financial Services
Mr J. Fearn	-	Head of Property
Ms L. Quelch	-	Head of Planning
Ms L. Rees Jones	-	Head of Administration & Law
Mr R. Staines	-	Head of Housing & Public Protection
Mr P. Thomas	-	Assistant Chief Executive (People Mgmt & Performance)
Ms W. Walters	-	Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy)
Mrs M. Evans Thomas	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen : 10.00 am - 1.00 pm. and 2.00 p.m. – 3.20 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.A. Davies, T. Davies, H.A.L. Evans, P.E.M. Jones, T.J. Jones, W.J. Lemon, S. Matthews, A.G. Morgan, D. Price and G. Thomas.

Council was informed that Councillor Gwyneth Thomas was recovering well following her operation and the Chair agreed to send her a get well message on behalf of the Council.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute number	Nature of Interest
J.S. Edmunds	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His daughter works in a school.
D.C. Evans	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His wife works in the Call Centre.
L.D. Evans	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	Her daughter teaches in one of the Authority's schools.
P. Hughes Griffiths	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His daughter teaches in the county.
G.O. Jones	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His wife is a headteacher in the county.
K. Madge	10 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20	His daughter works in social care.
H.B.Shepardson	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His daughter is a teacher in one of the Authority's schools.
J. Thomas	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His daughter teaches in the county.
D.O. Tomos	18 - Executive Board Minutes 23 rd January, 2017 (minute 9)	His daughter teaches in the county.
J. Williams	10 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20	She is an unpaid carer for her husband.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

3.1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Chair extended congratulations to Councillor Kevin Madge and his family on the birth of his grandson, Jac;
- Condolences were extended to the family of former County Councillor Jimmy Morgan, Whitland, who passed away recently;
- Condolences were extended to former County Councillor Gerald Meyler and his family on the death of his wife, Elaine;
- Congratulations were extended to the officers involved with the Dyfed Pension Fund on their success in achieving independent status for Wales under the new pension regulations introduced by central government recently;
- Reference was made to the recent retirement of the Whitland Postmaster and his wife, Mr and Mrs Parri-Roberts, after 53 years of service. They were thanked for their dedication and wished well for the future.

3.2. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised Council that the Welsh Government has recognised that providing care for longer and stability can impact positively on care leavers' outcomes. The "*When I am Ready*" scheme, which allows young people to remain with foster carers until they are 21, was pioneered during 2013-14 and implemented across Wales in 2015. From 2016, young people in Wales have had a right to remain in foster care up to 21. "*Action for Children – Gweithredu dros Blant*" advocated this change through the Authority's "*Chance to Stay – Cyfle i Aros*" campaign, which has already made an enormous difference to young people who wish to remain in stable, familial foster homes.

Not all young people leaving care will benefit from these reforms, however, and there was a risk that some of the most vulnerable young people who have not had stable care journeys will be excluded. More needs to be done to identify the best ways to make it possible for all care leavers to remain in settled accommodation, including residential care, or to move on to housing in a supported and flexible way. To effectively support adolescents in and on the edge of care, resources need to be invested effectively and early intervention approaches are needed to prevent future crises.

In Carmarthenshire we recognise that young people leaving care need somewhere safe and suitable to live, to help them make a positive transition into adulthood. After all, good housing underpins success in other areas of life.

Certain weaknesses have been identified in terms of the quality and location of supportive housing options available to care leavers within Carmarthenshire and the corporate parenting panel have expressed their concerns on more than one occasion.

The Leader advised Council that work is ongoing within the Authority on this issue and officers from the supporting people division are currently awaiting a detailed specification from children's services with regard to the re-commissioning of some projects. A significant amount of money has been allocated to the children's services department in this respect.

Whilst there was no barrier in terms of need for any care leaver to get a flat or a house, the challenge was to ensure that they are ready for independent living and that they are placed in the right location.

The Leader wished to make it clear that a policy statement will be issued by the Executive Board reaffirming the Authority's commitment to the provision of suitable housing for this group of young people as a matter of priority.

4. MINUTES

4.1. 18TH JANUARY 2017

Reference was made to the fact that Councillor Eryl Morgan's name was missing from the list of members who voted for the amendment and the list of members who voted against the motion (minute 11.1 refers).

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 18th January, 2017 be signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of the above-mentioned amendment.

4.2. 25TH JANUARY 2017

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 25th January, 2017 be signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of the above-mentioned amendment.

5. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SIAN CAIACH

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sian Caiach:-

“Carmarthenshire County Council confirms its commitment to public health and the safety of bathers and beach users in areas where there may be risks of contaminated water. In order to improve the current service we aim in future to not only test designated bathing beaches, but also other beaches used by the public where there is any suspicion of poor water quality. In future there should be monitoring of selected non designated beaches in the swimming season. Specifically we will monitor those next to bathing beaches which produce high readings of bacteria and also non designated bathing beaches which have had high readings of bacteria previously. In essence, beaches in public use with any health risk should be treated the same as bathing beaches for monitoring purposes where suspicion of contamination arises.”

The Motion was duly seconded.

The proposer and seconder of the Motion were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and outlined the reasons for its submission, as set out in the Motion.

Following a requisition by more than 10 members, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, a recorded vote was taken with the votes cast being as follows:-

For the Motion (31)

Councillors D.J.R. Bartlett, S.M. Caiach, C.A. Campbell, J.M. Charles, A. P. Cooper, D.M. Cundy, A. Davies, G. Davies, S.L. Davies, T. Devichand, J.S. Edmunds, P.M. Edwards, D.C. Evans, A.D. Harries, C.P. Higgins, J.K. Howell, J.D. James, J.P. Jenkins, A.W. Jones, M.J.A. Lewis, K. Madge, E. Morgan, J. Owen, B.A.L. Roberts, H.B. Shepardson, A.D.T. Speake, M.K. Thomas, R. Thomas, W.G. Thomas, J. Williams and J.S. Williams.

Against the Motion (25)

Councillors D.B. Davies, I.W. Davies, T.T. Defis, E. Dole, L.D. Evans, W.J.W. Evans, W.T. Evans, M. Gravell, P. Hughes Griffiths, P.M. Hughes, I.J. Jackson, A. James, D.M. Jenkins, G.O. Jones, H.I. Jones, A. Lenny, D.J.R. Llewellyn, P.A. Palmer, D.W.H. Richards, L.M. Stephens, J. Thomas, S.E. Thomas, J. Tremlett, D.E. Williams and J.E. Williams.

Abstentions (6)

Councillors S.M. Allen, W.R.A. Davies, W.G. Hopkins, E.G. Thomas, G.B. Thomas and D. Tomos.

The Chief Executive advised that the issue referred to in the Notice of Motion was an executive function and consequently Council was only able to refer the matter to the Executive Board for consideration.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

6. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PETER HUGHES GRIFFITHS

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Peter Hughes Griffiths:-

“The rural areas within Carmarthenshire need special and direct attention and that this Council establishes a RURAL WORKING GROUP consisting of members from the three Groups on the Council. The Working Group (following the pattern set by the Language Working Group) would collect information, research and invite and receive evidence in relation to rural areas in Carmarthenshire, before presenting, in due course, strategies, policies and an action plan before full Council.”

The motion was duly seconded

The proposer and seconder of the Motion were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and outlined the reasons for its submission, as set out in the Motion.

The following Amendment to the Motion was proposed by Councillor Jeff Edmunds and duly seconded:-

“The rural areas of Carmarthenshire need special and direct attention, but also there are common issues throughout our county such as poverty and the lack of adequate public transport that also needs our attention. We ask that this Council establish a working group consisting of members from all the county parties to look at issues that face everyone both in the rural and urban areas. The working group (following the pattern set by the Language Working Group) would collect information, research and invite and receive evidence in relation to rural and urban areas in Carmarthenshire, before presenting, in due course strategies, policies and an action plan before full council.”

The proposer and seconder of the Amendment were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and outlined the reasons for its submission.

A number of statements were made both in support of and against the Amendment and the Motion.

The Chief Executive advised that the issue referred to in the Notice of Motion was an executive function and consequently Council was only able to refer the matter to the Executive Board for consideration.

Following a vote, it was

RESOLVED that the Amendment to the Motion be not supported.

Council thereupon proceeded to vote on the substantive Motion and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

7. NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ALUN LENNY

Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Alun Lenny:-

“This Council acknowledges the hymn writer William Williams, Pantycelyn, Carmarthenshire, as one of the greatest Welshmen who ever lived and commit to holding a special event to celebrate his tricentenary, in recognition of his huge contribution to hymnology on an international scale and its impact on the life of our nation, as well as promoting knowledge about his life and work in all suitable and possible publicity by the council during the rest of this year.”

The Motion was duly seconded.

The proposer and seconder of the Motion were afforded the opportunity of speaking in support thereof and outlined the reasons for its submission, as set out in the Motion.

A number of statements were made in support of the Motion.

The Chief Executive advised that the issue referred to in the Notice of Motion was an executive function and consequently Council was only able to refer the matter to the Executive Board for consideration.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD that the Notice of Motion be adopted.

8. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions by members had been received.

9. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

10. EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION - REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2017/18 TO 2019/20

[NOTE: Councillors K. Madge and J. Williams had previously declared an interest in this item.]

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 6th February, 2017 (minute 5 refers) considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2017/18

to 2019/20 and made a number of recommendations, as detailed within the report of the Director of Corporate Services, for consideration by Council.

Council received a presentation by the Executive Board Member for Resources, on behalf of the Executive Board, in which he set out the background to the budget proposals being presented for Council's consideration, incorporating the latest position on the Welsh Government Settlement, feedback on the budget consultation process together with updates on growth and validation data.

He advised that, for a number of years the Authority has acknowledged the difficult funding scenario it has faced, and has recognised the need to do things differently and prioritise how it wishes to spend its increasingly scarce resources.

The medium term financial plan for the past 3 years has been based on negative financial settlements that ranged from -1% to -3.8% which has been made worse each year by the ever increasing commitments on various service areas of the Authority, such as social care. However, the Authority has always been able to set a balanced budget despite decreasing resources, whilst at the same time, to a large degree, maintaining service standards.

The Executive Board Member reported that once again this year we have only received a settlement for 1 year and although for this year we have been fortunate to have a cash standstill settlement, it was forecast that negative settlements will return to local government in future years. He therefore reiterated that the focus on efficiency or cost reductions needed to continue to ensure that the Authority's financial sustainability can be achieved and a balanced budget set into the future.

He advised that the final settlement was received on 21st December and he was pleased to confirm that the settlement this year was more favourable and supportive of local government than it had originally been anticipated, both within Welsh Government and local government circles. This therefore meant that the Executive Board had been able to revisit some of the proposals within the original budget outline and consider further options. However, as the Welsh Government had only provided figures for one year, the scope in terms of medium term forecasting within the medium term financial plan was restricted.

The Executive Board Member advised that, in addressing the continued pressures and real term reduction in funding, at the same time ensuring that Council Tax increases were, as far as possible, minimised, the Authority has had to continue to seek efficiencies in the way it delivers services and unfortunately, in some instances, had to look at the level of service provision itself. In the last 3 years approximately £37m of recurring expenditure has been stripped away from the Council's annual spending and this was set to continue over the next three years, with a further reduction of £25m assuming a 1% reduction in local government funding in years 2 and 3.

The Executive Board Member also referred to the widespread consultation undertaken on the budget which provided significant feedback on the original proposals put forward. It was clear that local people taking part in the consultation process appreciated that difficult choices need to be made.

As a result of the consultation and the fact that the Authority has benefited from a positive settlement, changes in validation and an opportunity to review the Minimum

Revenue Provision, all of which had collectively provided the Authority with a positive budget position, the Executive Board had recommended some changes to the initial proposals considered as part of the consultation, and these were detailed in the report of the Director of Corporate Services. He advised that adopting the proposals would inject a further £1.92m into the budget and would recognise and respond to the major concerns fed back from the consultation process. With these adjustments, he recommended that the Council Tax increase remained at the proposed level of 2.5%, which was supported by the majority of the respondents to the consultation.

The Executive Board Member stated that throughout the budgetary process the Executive Board had three clear objectives in mind:-

1. to prepare the Authority for any reductions in funding that may lie ahead;
2. to ensure as far as possible that service levels and standards are maintained;
3. recognising that our citizens were also finding it hard in the current climate and minimising as far as possible any increase in the council tax.

He added that unfortunately these objectives were not mutually exclusive. A low council tax increase next year would compound budgetary problems in the future and conversely a high council tax increase, whilst assisting with future budget planning and maintaining services, would unduly penalise current council tax payers.

He believed that the spending plans presented to Council with a Council Tax increase of 2.50%, which was likely to be lower than many across Wales, achieved a fair balance between all these objectives. However, he stressed that, in achieving this, balances had again been left at the lowest prudent level the Director could support and assumptions had been made that substantial cost reductions will be delivered. These were just two of the risk contained in the strategy and any potential overspends or service pressure points during would have to be carefully monitored during the year.

The Executive Board Member referred to the earmarked reserves balances held by the Authority and stressed that great care must be taken when considering utilising such funds for purposes other than those for which they were created as this could lead to the Authority facing substantial unfunded liabilities in the future.

In conclusion, the Executive Board Member thanked the public for responding so positively to the consultation and commended the hard work of the Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and all officers involved in the budget process for their efforts in helping to sustain the Council's performance and delivery of services at reasonable cost to the taxpayer.

He thereupon moved the recommendations of the Executive Board in respect of the Budget Strategy 2017/18, the Council Tax increase of 2.50% and approval of the medium term financial plan as a basis for the future years financial planning. The proposal was duly seconded.

The following amendment was thereupon proposed and seconded:-

To raise the Council Tax to 4.5% in order to implement the following proposals:-

- contribute £400,000 to the education budget with the proviso that this money is used to protect the neediest schools' staff allocation;
- remove the cut of £70,000 in Special Education Needs
- an investment of £150,000 to jump start new business initiatives, replenished annually through the Council Tax;
- take £100,000 per annum from the Council Tax to expand and improve the park and ride scheme at Glangwili Hospital;
- invest £250,000 from the Council Tax to expand staffing in the Grounds and Cleansing Departments;
- remove the £10,000 reduction in the budget for free school breakfasts;
- withdraw the increase in the price of school meals at a cost of £100,000 to the revenue budget;
- £25,000 is put into the budget from the Council Tax to fund pilots to look at way to feed children and take the pressures off parents;
- withdraw the £30,000 reduction in core funding for the music service in schools;
- withdraw the reduction in funding for school crossing operatives at a cost of £55,000;
- withdraw the proposed reduction in libraries at a cost of £30,000;
- allocate £60,000 from the Council Tax to make up the shortfall needed to increase the provision of on-site wards at Sheltered Housing Schemes;
- remove the proposed cuts around double handed domiciliary care at a cost of £100,000;
- remove the cuts from both re-ablement programs at a cost of £30,000 and £50,000 respectively;
- that the proposed cut of £20,000 on Meals on Wheels be removed from the budget;
- that an investment of £60,000 be made for extra staff linked to the Housing and Accounts Departments to provide advice on benefit claims etc.
- that a sum of £30,000 be set aside for a person to co-ordinate data analysis;
- that an investment of £30,000 be allocated annually to the TIC team to enable them to work collaboratively with the Unions.

The proposer and seconder outlined the rationale for these amendments.

Following a requisition by more than 10 members, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, a recorded vote was taken on the amendments with the votes casts being as follows:-

For the Amendment (19)

Councillors D.J.R. Bartlett, S.M. Caiach, A.P. Cooper, D.M. Cundy, S.L. Davies, T Devichand, J.S. Edmunds, P.M. Edwards, D.C. Evans, C.P. Higgins, J.D. James, A.W. Jones, K. Madge, E. Morgan, B.A.L. Roberts, M.K. Thomas, R. Thomas, W.G. Thomas and J. Williams

Against the Amendment (41)

Councillors S.M. Allen, C.A. Campbell, J.M. Charles, A. Davies, D.B. Davies, G. Davies, I.W. Davies, W.R.A. Davies, T.T. Defis, E. Dole, L.D. Evans, W.J.W. Evans, W.T. Evans, M. Gravell, A.D. Harries, W.G. Hopkins, J.K. Howell, P. Hughes-

Griffiths, P.M. Hughes, I.J. Jackson, A. James, D.M. Jenkins, G.O. Jones, H.I. Jones, A. Lenny, M.J.A. Lewis, D.J.R. Llewellyn, J. Owen, P.A. Palmer, D.W.H. Richards, A.D.T. Speake, L.M. Stephens, E.G. Thomas, G.B. Thomas, J. Thomas, S.E. Thomas, D. Tomos, J. Tremlett, D.E. Williams, J.E. Williams and J.S. Williams

Abstentions (1)

Councillor J.P. Jenkins

RESOLVED that the Amendment to the Motion be not supported.

Council thereupon proceeded to vote on the substantive Motion and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Motion be adopted and that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted:-

“10.1 the Budget Strategy for 2017/18 be approved, subject to the following amendments:-

10.1.1 the proposal in respect of grants to the voluntary sector be phased over a longer period of time and that £135k of the proposed reduction be reversed and a reduction of £35k per annum be phased over the future years commencing in 2017/18;

10.1.2 the proposal to transfer or close St. Clears Leisure Centre be reconsidered resulting in the withdrawal of the 3 year savings of £96k, of which £16k was in respect of the 2017/18 financial year;

10.1.3 the proposed savings for the Youth Service in respect of The Quay Centre, Carmarthen, be halved thereby allowing a further £10k to support the Youth Service;

10.1.4 an additional £1.76m be added to the Delegated Schools Budget, thereby bringing it back to a cash neutral position;

10.2 That the Band D Council Tax for 2017/18 be set at £1,145.61 (an increase of 2.50% for 2017/18);

10.3 That the provisional medium term financial plan (inclusive of the amendments noted above) be approved as a basis for future years planning.”

11. ADJOURNMENT

At 1.00 p.m. Council’s attention was drawn to Council Procedure Rule 9.1 “Duration of Meeting” And as the meeting had been underway for three hours, it was

RESOLVED that the remainder of the business on the agenda should stand adjournment until 2.00 p.m. that day.

12. RECONVENED MEETING

Council reconvened in the Chamber at County Hall, Carmarthen at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor E. Morgan [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen	E. Dole	J.D. James	G.B. Thomas
D.J.R. Bartlett	J.S. Edmunds	D.M. Jenkins	J. Thomas
S.M. Caiach	P.M. Edwards	A.W. Jones	M.K. Thomas
C.A. Campbell	D.C. Evans	G.O. Jones	R. Thomas
J.M. Charles	L.D. Evans	H.I. Jones	W.G. Thomas
A.P. Cooper	W.T. Evans	M.J.A. Lewis	J. Tremlett
D.M. Cundy	M. Gravell	K. Madge	D.E. Williams
A. Davies	A.D. Harries	P.A. Palmer	J.E. Williams
D.B. Davies	C.P. Higgins	D.W.H. Richards	J.S. Williams
G. Davies	J.K. Howell	B.A.L. Roberts	
S.L. Davies	P. Hughes Griffiths	A.D.T. Speake	
T. Devichand	I.J. Jackson	L.M. Stephens	

The following officers were in attendance:-

Mr M. James	-	Chief Executive
Mr C. Moore	-	Director of Corporate Services
Mr G. Morgans	-	Interim Director of Education & Children's Services
Mr O. Bowen	-	Head of Financial Services
Mr J. Fearn	-	Head of Property
Ms L. Quelch	-	Head of Planning
Ms L. Rees Jones	-	Head of Administration & Law
Mr R. Staines	-	Head of Housing & Public Protection
Mr P. Thomas	-	Assistant Chief Executive (People Management)
Mrs W. Walters	-	Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy)
Mrs M. Evans Thomas	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

13. EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION - FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME (COUNCIL FUND) 2017/18 TO 2021/22

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 6th February, 2017 (minute 6 refers) considered the Five Year Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 and made a number of recommendations, as detailed within the report of the Director of Corporate Services, for consideration by Council.

Council received a presentation by the Executive Board Member for Resources, on behalf of the Executive Board, on the Five Year Capital Programme which was aligned to the current Corporate Strategy and supported the Authority's strategic priorities and aspirations.

The Executive Board Member advised Council that the capital programme anticipated an estimated spend in excess of £210m over the 5 years and was aimed at delivering a number of key projects that will create jobs and improve the quality of life for the people of Carmarthenshire.

The Executive Board Member informed Council that funding for this programme was currently estimated at £124m with a further £85m coming from external grand funding bodies. As with the revenue budget, Welsh Government has only provided settlement figures for 1 year and therefore the programme was based on future years supported borrowing and general grant being of the same level as 2017/18.

Whilst the basis of the capital programme was a rolling programme, year on year, which included significant investment in areas like the 21st Century Schools Programme, Highways, Regeneration and Housing, the Authority has yet again been able to include some new projects and priorities in the programme which it was felt are important for the county. Identifying funding for these additional projects within the capital programme had been a challenge this year and in particular the urgent works required in Burry Port Harbour, however, the review of the MRP policy had helped to facilitate these additional funds.

The Executive Board Member advised that monitoring both the schemes and the funding would be critical going forward and would need to be closely managed. He was pleased to report that the programme as presented was fully funded until 2020/21 with only a small shortfall in the final year of the programme 2021/22.

He thereupon moved the recommendations of the Executive Board in respect of the Five Year Capital Programme (Council Fund) and its proposed funding, as detailed in the report. The proposal was duly seconded.

The following observations were made:-

- Concern was expressed over the lack of allocated money in the budget statements to accommodate and support over 30,000 people destined to move into the county over the next 4 years, as agreed in the Local Development Plan;
- Concern was expressed that the new primary school build in the Amman Valley has been downgraded when it is so desperately needed;
- Reference was made to highways infrastructure and concern was expressed that more investment has not been allocated for this purpose.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted:-

- “13.1 That the Five Year Capital Programme and funding as detailed in Appendix B with 2017/18 being a hard budget and 2018/19 and 2021/22 being soft/indicative budgets;**
- 13.2 That the 2021/22 budget be reviewed over the coming year in order to address the funding shortfall;**
- 13.3 That the programme be reviewed, as is usual, if anticipated external or County Council funding does not materialise.”**

14. EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2017/18 TO 2019/20 AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2017/18

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 6th February, 2017 (minute 7 refers) considered the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2017/18 to 2019/20 and Housing Rent Setting for 2017/18 and made a number of recommendations, as detailed within the report of the Director of Corporate Services, for consideration by Council.

Council received a presentation by the Executive Board Member for Resources, on behalf of the Executive Board, on the Revenue and Capital Budget proposals for the Housing Revenue Account for 2017 to 2020 reflecting the Authority's aims within

the 30 year Business Plan/18 to 2019/20, which was the primary financial planning tool for delivery of the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+) and the Affordable Housing Strategy.

The Executive Board Member advised that the capital investment of £231m within the current business plan had delivered the CHS+ for our tenants and the further budget going forward had been developed to ensure appropriate funding is allocated to maintain the CHS+ standard for all the Council's properties into the future. Over the next 5 years it was anticipated that in the region of £50m would be spent maintaining and upgrading our stock. The budget also provided funding of some £36m over the next 5 years to support the Affordable Housing Strategy which will see an increase in the supply of affordable housing throughout the county through various solutions including the new build programme and the buyback scheme.

The Executive Board Member explained that since 2015 the Authority has been required to adopt the Welsh Government Social Housing Rent Harmonisation Policy, which effectively meant the proposed rent increase before members was prescribed by Welsh Government guidance. Implementation of the proposed increases would provide an average rent increase for the county of £2.84 per week and the Authority would need to continue with this Welsh Government policy until properties hit the target rent set by Welsh Government.

He added that, for Carmarthenshire, our average mid-point target rent for next year was £84.67 and if the recommendations within the report were approved our average rent would be set at £81.77, which was slightly below the mid-point target rent.

The Executive Board Member stated that it was difficult to balance the impact of the rent increase on tenants against the need to set the rent in line with Welsh Government policy, whilst ensuring that the Authority can continue to produce a sustainable business plan to take the CHS+ and Affordable Housing Strategy forward.

In moving the recommendations within the report, he advised that the proposals had been unanimously supported by the Community Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 20th January, 2017.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted:-

“14.1 Increase the rent in line with Welsh Government guidelines i.e.:-

- **Properties at target rents to increase by 2.5% (CPI + 1.5%)**
- **Properties where rent is below target rent to increase by 2.5% (CPI + 1.5%) plus a maximum progression of £2**
- **Properties above target rent be frozen until such time that they meet the target**

Thereby producing an average housing rent increase of £2.84, a sustainable business plan, maintain CHS+ and resource the Affordable Homes programme;

14.2 Continue with the maximum progression of £2 for rents below target until target rents are achieved;

- 14.3 Increase garage rents to £9.00 per week (from £8.75 in 2016/17) and garage bases to £2.25 per week (from £2.20 in 2016/17);
- 14.4 Apply the service charge policy to ensure tenants who receive the benefit from specific services pay for those services;
- 14.5 Increase charges for using our sewerage treatment works in line with rent increase;
- 14.6 Approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding For 2017/18 and the indicative spends for the future years 2018/19 to 2012/22 as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- 14.7 Approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2017/20 (with 2018/19 and 2019/20 being soft budgets) as set out in Appendix B.”

15. EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION - THE CARMARTHENSHIRE HOMES STANDARD PLUS (CHS+) "DELIVERING WHAT MATTERS" BUSINESS PLAN 2017-20

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on the 6th February, 2017 (minute 8 refers) considered the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+) “Delivering What Matters” Business Plan 2017-20, the purpose of which was to:-

- explain the vision and detail of the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus over the next three years and what it meant for tenants;
- confirm the financial profile, based on current assumptions, for the delivery of CHS+ over the next three years; and
- produce a business plan for the annual application to Welsh Government for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) for 2017/18 equating to £6.1m.

The Executive Board Member for Housing advised that if the report and its recommendations were to be adopted, it would result in some £55m being spent over the next three years in maintaining and further improving the CHS+ (£25M) and delivering the Affordable Homes Plan (£30m) through a range of solutions including, new build.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted:-

- “15.1 That the vision of the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+) and the financial and delivery programme over the next three years be confirmed;
- 15.2 That the submission of the Plan to the Welsh Government be confirmed.”

16. EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION - TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2017-18

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on 6th February, 2017 (minute 9 refers) considered the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2017/18.

The Executive Board Member advised Council that in line with the requirements of the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council must

maintain a Treasury Management Policy detailing the policies and objectives of the Authority's treasury management activities and also approve a Treasury Management Strategy annually before the start of the financial year to which it relates. In addition, under the Local Government Act 2003, the Council was required to approve the Treasury Management Indicators for the coming year.

In accordance with the above requirements, Council considered the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for the 2017/18 financial year and it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted:-

- “16.1 That the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2017-18 and the recommendations contained therein be approved;**
16.2 That the Treasury Management Indicators, Prudential Indicators, the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement and recommendations therein be approved.”

17. EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION - DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER - LLANELLI TOWN CENTRE

Council was informed that the Executive Board, at its meeting held on 6th February, 2017 (Minute 13 refers), considered a report detailing draft proposals for the introduction of a Local Development Order for Llanelli Town Centre with a view to reflecting the corporate regeneration objectives for the town centre whilst ensuring the issues of its ongoing vitality and viability were appropriately considered, utilising the provisions of national planning policy.

The Order, if introduced, would allow a range of uses within a defined spatial area to proceed without the need for the submission of a planning application to the Local Planning Authority, subject to the Authority issuing a 'certificate of conformity'.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Executive Board be adopted:-

- “17.1 That the report and scope of the proposed Local Development Order be approved for consideration through the democratic reporting process;**
17.2 That the publication of the final Local Development Order for public consultation for a minimum period of 6 weeks be approved;
17.3 That delegated authority be granted to officers to prepare evidence in support of the Local Development Order;
17.4 That delegated authority be granted to officers to make minor editorial and factual amendments to the Local Development Order.”

18. EXECUTIVE BOARD - 23RD JANUARY, 2017

[NOTE: Councillors J.S. Edmunds, D.C. Evans, L.D. Evans, P. Hughes Griffiths, G.O. Jones, H.B. Shepardson, J. Thomas and D.O. Tomos had earlier declared an interest in this item.]

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the above meeting be received.

19. EXECUTIVE BOARD - 6TH FEBRUARY, 2017

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the above meeting be received.

CHAIR

DATE