

EXECUTIVE BOARD

27TH MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillor E. Dole (Chair)

Councillors:

L.D. Evans, H.A.L. Evans, D.M. Jenkins, G.O. Jones, T.J. Jones, P.A. Palmer, L.M. Stephens and J. Tremlett

Present as Observers:-

Councillor T. Evans

The following Officers were in attendance:

J. Morgan, Director of Community Services
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
G. Morgans, Interim Director of Education & Children's Services
R. Mullen, Director of Environment
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance)
W. Walters, Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy)
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
D. Hockenhull, Marketing and Media Manager
J. Jones, Property and Major Projects Manager
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall - 10.00am - 10.50 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M. Gravell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST.

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
H.A.L. Evans	9 – Affordable Housing Delivery Plan – Our Performance	Sister is the Chief Executive of Bro Myrddin Housing Association
G.O. Jones	15 – Appointment of LA Governor	Chair of School Governors for Ysgol Gyfun Bro Myrddin

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

3.1. 23RD JANUARY, 2017

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 23rd January, 2017 be signed as a correct record.

3.2. 13TH FEBRUARY, 2017

The Chair highlighted that the title of agenda item 3.2, should read 13th March 2017 and not the 13th February 2017.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 13th March, 2017 be signed as a correct record.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BY MEMBERS

The Chair advised that no questions on notice had been submitted by members.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Chair advised that no public questions on notice had been received.

6. COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Executive Board considered the revenue budget monitoring report for the period 1st April, 2016 to 31st December, 2016 which provided an update on the revenue budgetary position as at 31st December, 2016 in respect of 2016/17.

The overall forecasted position at the year-end indicated a potential overspend of £833k with the departmental budgeted variance being in the region of £2.3m.

It was noted that the most significant pressure points were within Education and Children Services department, and whilst there were some budget pressure issues in other departments those were generally offset by underspend on other budget heads.

A query was raised in relation to debt write-offs. It was asked if any interventions took place at the early stage of the debt in order to avoid the debt worsening. The Executive Board Member for Housing stated that the Enforcement Team worked closely with tenants in order to reduce debt. Furthermore, the outstanding amount of debt had reached its lowest point. Ongoing campaigns and slogans such as "Rent Matters" had also helped to reduce the amount of debt.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED;

6.1 that the Budget Monitoring report be received;

6.2 that Chief Officers and Heads of Service critically review their budgetary positions and implement appropriate action to keep within allocated budget.

7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016-17 UPDATE

The Executive Board considered a report providing an update on the capital programme spend against budget for 2016/17 as at the 31st December, 2016. The report included details of the main variances and virements for approval.

The report indicated that based on a net projected spend of £68m on capital projects, there was a variance of £21m. Members noted the difficulties to profile capital projects into financial years, often due to external factors that can influence when a project can commence and the timeline of the construction. Therefore, the variance was mainly due to the slippage of projects between financial years as opposed to any changes in cost.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the capital programme update report be received and the virement detailed therein be approved.

8. INCOME AND CHARGING POLICY

The Executive Board considered the Corporate Draft Income and Charging Policy for the Council which would be used to underpin the development of a more strategic and commercial approach to the Council's income generation and debt recovery processes.

Members noted that, as part of the TIC work programme an Income and Charging Steering Group had been established, with the aim of examining the potential for increasing income from fees and charges and reviewing the robustness of current income collection and debt recovery processes. One of the initial findings of the group was that there was a need to adopt a more strategic approach to its income and charging activities, which would be supported by having a Corporate Income and Charging Policy.

The Policy provided a set of key principles which would be used to underpin the Authority's approach to income and charging and to further develop a more commercial approach to these activities. The new policy sets out the expectations in respect of the robustness of its income collection and debt recovery processes.

An extensive consultation with internal departments had assisted in the development of the policy and principles. In addition, the new Policy was drafted in response to the recent Wales Audit Office (WAO) Local Government Study: 'Charging for services and generating income by Local Authorities', which had identified the need for all Local Authorities to have an Income and Charging policy in place.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE COUNCIL that the Corporate Income and Charging Policy be approved.

9. AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY PLAN - OUR PERFORMANCE

[NOTE: Councillor H.A.L. Evans, having earlier declared an interest in this item, took no part in its determination].

The Board considered a report on the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan which included performance information for 2016/17. The Affordable Homes Delivery Plan had set a clear target of delivering over 1,000 additional homes over the next five years.

The Board noted that the target set to deliver 129 additional affordable homes by the end of quarter 3 had been exceeded by nearly 30 homes. It was also noted that the performance achieved so far this year demonstrated that the Authority were on track to exceed the target to deliver 160 homes by the end of 2016/17.

The excellent performance already achieved during the first year of delivery 2016/17 was noted.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan be received

10. ENVIRONMENT ACT FORWARD PLAN

The Executive Board considered a report on the Carmarthenshire County Council's Environment Act Forward Plan. The report highlighted that under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, all public bodies had to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the proper exercise of their functions and in doing so, promote the resilience of ecosystems'. The new duty had been named the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty, which strengthened and superseded the Biodiversity Duty placed on public bodies under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2016.

It was noted that the Act, required all public authorities to provide an Environment Act Forward Plan, which would contain details on how they intended to comply with the new duty to the Welsh Government by the 31st March 2017, as set out in legislation. In addition, in 2019, Authorities would be required to report on how they had met the Biodiversity and Resilient Ecosystem Duty which would make public authorities more responsible for showing how their actions had contributed towards enhancing biodiversity and ecosystems.

Appreciation was extended to those officers who were involved in the development of the plan.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED;

10.1 that the Carmarthenshire County Council Environment Act Forward Plan be approved,

10.2 to report on the delivery of the plan to the Welsh Government in 2019.

11. CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S EDUCATION ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT 2015-2016

The Executive Board considered a report on Carmarthenshire Local Authority's Education attainment and achievement 2015-16. The comprehensive report provided members with key issues arising from an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in relation to the performance of schools during the academic year 2015/16.

Members noted the School Performance and Achievement Report 2015-16 Academic year which was divided into 3 sections and included:-

- Standards 2015/16, this section contained a summary of teacher assessments, test and examination results for pupils in the Foundation Phase, Key Stages 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- School Inspection Outcomes, this section contained a summary of performance of the schools inspected by Estyn during the 2015-16 academic year.
- Developing Values and Skills for Life Long Learning, this section contained information on a wide and exciting range of pupils' achievements.

Furthermore, members considered an attached report which focused on Carmarthenshire's GCSE and the other provided A Level Outcomes performance as compared to other Welsh Local Authorities. It was noted that it had been a successful year for Carmarthenshire schools with consistently high performance in all key indicators. The 2016 school categorisation process was also noted.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the performance report on Carmarthenshire Local Authority's Education Attainment and Achievement 2015-16.

12. SPONSORSHIP OF CELTIC MEDIA FESTIVAL 2018

The Executive Board considered a report to support the Sponsorship of Celtic Media Festival 2018. The report provided information in relation to the festival and proposed that the County Council support the festival by providing a financial commitment of up to £15,000.

The report outlined that initial discussions sought the Council to fully fund £30,000. However, following a discussion with University of Wales Trinity St David that view to a 50/50 partnership would be considered. In order to facilitate the overnight requirements, the event would be held in a holiday period in order to use the student accommodation at the Trinity St David Campus.

Members recognised that the event would benefit the area financially, whilst further consolidating the positioning of Carmarthenshire as a creative industry hub. It was noted that should the Council decide not to submit their interest the event would likely to be hosted by another county in Wales.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the funding of up to a maximum of £15,000 to support the Celtic Media Festival 2018.

13. REVISED CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

It was noted that the above-mentioned report had been withdrawn from consideration at today's meeting and would be considered at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that consideration of the Revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy be deferred to the next meeting of the Executive Board.

14. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE FOLLOWING GRANT FUND: TARGETED FINANCE FUND

The Executive Board considered an application received from the Trimsaran Village Forum, for assistance from the Targeted Finance Fund towards the initial costs of the Wellbeing project and to cover the costs to retain the Centre Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator would have responsibility to improve, expand and market Trimsaran Leisure Centre, as well as securing funding to run additional projects and initiatives creating greater sustainability for the centre.

RESOLVED that the following applications for assistance from the Targeted Finance Fund be approved subject to the usual terms and conditions and those specified in the report:-

Applicant

Trimsaran Village Forum

Award

£19,814.00

15. APPOINTMENT OF LA GOVERNOR

[NOTE Councillor G.O. Jones, having earlier declared an interest in this item left the Council Chamber during its consideration and took no part in its determination]

The Executive Board considered an application which had been received for L.A. Governor vacancy within the county.

RESOLVED that, in order to meet statutory obligations of filling vacancies on Governing Bodies and having considered the applications received, the following appointments be made to vacancies for LA Governors:-

School	Appointments
Bro Myrddin (1 vacancy – 1 nomination)	Mr D Arwel Lloyd

[Councillor G.O. Jones re-joined the meeting.]

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as the reports contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

18. DISPOSAL OF LAND WITH ASSOCIATED RISK

Following the application of the public interest test it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute 17 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting as it would involve the disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

The Executive Board considered a detailed report on Disposal of Land with Associated Risks which provided Members with the findings of a recent review of high risk, surplus land and property across Carmarthenshire.

Members noted that further to the risk assessments that had been carried out, a number of sites had been identified and prioritised for consideration, with a view to progress the sites to disposal. Members also noted that consultations had taken place with Local Members who had sites within their wards.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the recommendations as outlined in the report.

19. SOUTH LLANELLI LAND DISPOSAL

Following the application of the public interest test it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED**, pursuant to the Act referred to in Minute 17 above, to consider this matter in private, with the public excluded from the meeting as it would involve the disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

The Executive Board considered a report on Land Disposal at South East Llanelli which aimed to generate capital receipt(s) for the Authority and possible job opportunities. The report provided members with an update on the current situation.

Members considered the way forward for the plots, taking into account any potential impact of the proposals on the town centre economy.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations as outlined in the report subject to further negotiations in relation to the sale of the largest plot.

CHAIR

DATE