

EXECUTIVE BOARD

18 NOVEMBER 2019

PRESENT: Councillor E. Dole (Chair)

Councillors:

C.A. Campbell, G. Davies, H.A.L. Evans, L.D. Evans, P.M. Hughes, P. Hughes-Griffiths, D.M. Jenkins, L.M. Stephens and J. Tremlett.

Also in attendance:

Councillor D.C. Cundy

The following Officers were in attendance:

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

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP: 10:00am - 10:55am

[Note: due to a declaration made by Cllr E. Dole (Chair), Cllr. L.M Stephens chaired the meeting for the duration of Agenda Item 8. The Leader returned to Chamber and resumed as Chair from Agenda Item 9 until conclusion of the meeting].

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST.

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
E. Dole	8 - Council Tax Discount for Long Term Voids.	Family owned holiday let.
The Chief Executive and Head of Administration and Law left the meeting during the consideration and determination of Agenda Item 8 – Council Tax Discount for Long Term Voids.		

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HELD ON THE 21ST OCTOBER 2019

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 21st October, 2019 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

5.1. QUESTION BY MR DAVID THORPE TO COUNCILLOR EMLYN DOLE, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

“Following the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration at the beginning of the year, and the anticipated publication of a ‘Carbon NetZero’ Strategy, would Carmarthenshire County Council, as part of these initiatives, investigate adopting the ‘One Planet Framework’ – a framework to guide the council in operating according to the principle that we use resources within the planet’s limits. As an accounting method it captures the financial, environmental and social costs and benefits of all procurement and planning decisions (as required by the Well-Being of Future Generations Act). This framework could also be implemented with other members of the Public Services Board in order for it to be more cost-effective and to capture more benefits. Ecological footprinting shows that if everyone in the world had the same impacts as the population of Wales we’d need three planets to support us, and adopting the ‘One Planet Framework’ can start to remedy this fundamental problem that is driving the climate and extinction emergencies and create a safer, better future for us here in Swansea Bay City Region.”

Response by Councillor Emlyn Dole, Leader of the Council:-

Yes, the Council will consider the ‘One Planet Framework’, alongside any other potential frameworks and we will do that in consultation with colleagues across the Welsh Public Sector, which is what we are aligned to do giving that so many have done the same as us and declared a climate emergency. So yes we will.

Supplementary Question by Mr David Thorpe:-

Would you then like to arrange a meeting with me to discuss this further?

Response by Councillor Emlyn Dole, Leader of the Council:-

I am happy to have a meeting but I am aware that you have already had a meeting with my colleagues and with Officers and I think that was the starting point was that meeting. I am aware in that the meeting you gave a presentation on the ‘one planet framework’ and they have responded to that and they have been in touch with the Welsh Government around that and the Welsh Government have responded around that. They’re response is that they are not keen to look at any tool but they’ll be asking for the different responses from different Authorities as to what Framework they’re using and we’ll use that response in terms of that overall ambition that they have.

I am perfectly willing to have a meeting with you Mr Thorpe, but I am not sure as to what end that would be given that a meeting has already taken place with Officers, but yes should you want to come in please arrange that and we'll have a meeting, thank you.

For clarification purposes at the request of Mr Thorpe, the Leader of the Council, advised that the Council would consider adopting the framework.

6. SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT

The Executive Board considered a report which appended the Safeguarding Annual report which provided an overview of the objectives and achievements of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Children and Adults Board.

The report acknowledged that during 2018/19 a number of significant Board projects had been established, which required substantial input from dedicated multi-agency safeguarding professionals across the Mid and West Wales region. The Boards had progressed to a combined all-age Safeguarding People agenda in line with the spirit and ethos of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

The joint and integrated work between the CYSUR and CWMPAS Boards at regional Executive and Sub Group level was now fully embedded into the Boards' structures. The Report included the progress made against the outcomes set by the Boards in March, 2018 and was part of the joint Annual Strategic Plan.

It was noted that the bespoke projects had successfully laid the foundations for the delivery of safeguarding services and professional practice in the coming three to five years.

RESOLVED that the Safeguarding Annual Report be received.

7. NEW RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

The Executive Board considered a report on the new Recruitment and Selection Policy. The Policy appended to the report had been re-written as a result of the review of recruitment which encompassed a wholesale review of recruitment in consultation with a number of recruiting managers and reflected current employment legislation and best practice.

The new policy included feedback from the People Managers conference in relation to the recruitment and selection process and the recommendations of the TIC review.

It was emphasised that all external appointees would continue to be subject to the completion of a satisfactory probationary period of 6 months or as allowed for in the contract of employment. During the probationary period the aspects of work and personal progress would be monitored included the necessary Welsh Language skill level.

The Assistant Chief Executive (People Management and Performance) added that in addition to the probationary period, learning agreements would be developed in order to focus on requirements. Furthermore, Members of the Board were informed that a meeting had been scheduled in December to re-evaluate the Welsh Language Strategy.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the New Recruitment and Selection Policy be endorsed and implemented across the Council.

8. COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR LONG TERM VOIDS

[Note:

- i. The Leader, Councillor E. Dole declared an interest in this item left the meeting during the consideration and determination of this item.
- ii. The Chief Executive and Head of Administration and Law left the meeting during the consideration and determination of this item.
- iii. In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader, Councillor Mair Stephens took the place of Chair for this item.]

The Executive Board considered a report which recommended to amend the authority's discretionary powers in order to remove the discount awarded in respect of long term empty properties and charge the full Council tax liability with effect from 2020/21.

The report highlighted that the Welsh Government were proposing to change the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) allocation in order to maintain the 50% discount in Council Tax on long term empty properties which would likely impact on level of RSG.

The Board noted the current situation with regard to vacant dwellings, advantages of the proposal and the financial impact as detailed within the report.

In response to suggestion raised regarding further analyses to identify which properties would be impacted upon the Director of Community Services stated that further work would be undertaken and proactive initiatives would be utilised.

The Director of Corporate Services assured the Board that those property owners impacted by the changes would be notified as a matter of routine through the Council Tax system. Furthermore, it was reported that as this was cash neutral situation for the County Council as it would be arising from the RSG, it would be an increase in the Tax base for the Police and the Town and Community Councils resulting in an extra income.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the recommendation for the removal of the 50% discount on long term empty properties and the full council tax charge apply to class C properties from 1st April 2020 be adopted.

9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019-20 UPDATE

The Executive Board considered a report which provided an update on the capital programme spend against the budget for 2019/20 as at the 31st August, 2019.

It was noted that the capital programme indicated a net spend of £63,854k compared with a working net budget of £63,349k giving a £505k variance.

The net budget had been re-profiled, by £2,379m from 2019/20 to future years in order to take account of updated spend profile information and the budget slippage from 2018/19 was also included.

The Board noted that an Education and CS budget re-profiling exercise was currently being undertaken to reflect the progress of schemes within the 5 year capital programme on the MEP programme.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the capital programme budget monitoring update report, as detailed in Appendix A and B, be received.

10. COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Executive Board considered the revenue budget monitoring report which provided an update on the latest budgetary position as at the 31st August, 2019 in respect of 2019/20.

Overall, the report forecasted an end of year overspend of £3,831k on the Authority's net revenue budget, with an overspend at departmental level of £5,560k.

The Board noted that the most significant pressure points were within Education and Children's Services, with a forecasted a net overspend of £1,059k at year end. The Executive Board Member for Education and Children acknowledged the current pressures and stated that serious discussions were taking place within the education sector and were working closely with head teachers.

The Housing Revenue account appended to the report at appendix B was predicting to be underspent by £32k for 2019/20.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report be received.

11. DEVELOPMENT OF FORMER PROVISIONS MARKET LLANDEILO

The Executive Board considered a report which followed from a previous report which was considered at Executive Board in November 2018 where it was identified further consideration would need to be given to setting aside an additional £2m capital funding to enable the project to proceed.

The Board noted that the Council's application for Welsh Government's Building for the Future funding had been successful and an approval in principle letter for £1.4m of funding had been received.

It was reported that should the Council commit to providing sufficient match funding as recommended within the report, it was anticipated that this project would give rise to:

- Creation of some 45 new jobs
- Support for 17 SME's through creation of top quality business space providing the base for local companies to develop
- Refurbishment of a landmark building
- Anticipate that the project would act as a catalyst resulting in new businesses operating within the market town, creation of additional employment opportunities and attraction of more visitors.

The report included revised project costs and funding package and recommended that the Council agree to commit an additional capital match funding sum over and above the original Executive Board approved sum, as detailed in the report, to enable the redevelopment of former provisions market project to proceed and draw down the external funding committed to the project from the joint ERDF and Welsh Government Funded 'Building For The Future Project'. In addition, the report recommended that the Council agree to acquire additional area of land to accommodate car parking requirements for the building, the terms set out in the draft heads of terms to accommodate building car parking requirements were appended to the report.

In order to provide clarity the Director of Corporate Services explained that the remaining £991,008 would be utilised as part of the re-prioritisation and reconstruction of the whole Capital programme going forward.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 11.1 additional match funding as detailed in the report to enable delivery of the proposed comprehensive redevelopment scheme be provided;**
- 11.2 the acquisition of the additional land as per the terms set out in the draft heads of terms to accommodate building car parking requirements be approved.**

12. PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE YSGOL HEOL GOFFA TO A NEW SITE AND INCREASE ITS CAPACITY FROM 75 TO 120

The Executive Board considered a report and consultation document which proposed to relocate Ysgol Heol Goffa to a new site and increase its capacity from 75 to 120.

The report outlined that Ysgol Heol Goffa was a special school currently located in Llanelli maintained by Carmarthenshire County Council. Currently, the school catered for 75 pupils between the ages of 3-19 years old who have severe learning difficulties or profound and multiple learning difficulties. All pupils had a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Individual Development Plan.

The Board noted that Ysgol Heol Goffa was currently over-subscribed and that the trend was likely to continue and/or increase for the foreseeable future. In addition the increase in demand for places was putting significant pressure on the Local Authority to place pupils.

The consultation period for the proposal would begin on 13th January 2020 and would ends on 23rd February 2020.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 12.1 the proposal as outlined in the report and attached consultation document be approved;**
- 12.2 officers initiate the formal consultation on the proposal during the spring term;**
- 12.3 a report be submitted to the Executive Board at the end of the consultation period.**

13. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business to be considered.

CHAIR

DATE