

COUNTY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2022

PRESENT: Councillor J.E. Williams (Chair)

Councillors:

K.V. Broom	C.A. Campbell	J.M. Charles	S.A. Curry
C.A. Davies	W.R.A. Davies	T.A.J. Davies	G. Davies
H.L. Davies	I.W. Davies	J.A. Davies	K. Davies
S.L. Davies	E. Dole	J.S. Edmunds	D.C. Evans
H.A.L. Evans	L.D. Evans	R.E. Evans	W.T. Evans
S.J.G. Gilasbey	C.J. Harris	P. Hughes-Griffiths	A.D. Harries
T.M. Higgins	J.K. Howell	P.M. Hughes	R. James
D.M. Jenkins	J.P. Jenkins	G.H. John	C. Jones
B.W. Jones	D. Jones	G.R. Jones	H.I. Jones
A. Lenny	M.J.A. Lewis	K. Lloyd	K. Madge
S. Matthews	A.S.J. McPherson	E. Morgan	A.G. Morgan
S. Najmi	D. Nicholas	B.D.J. Phillips	J.S. Phillips
D. Price	J.G. Prosser	B.A.L. Roberts	H.B. Shepardson
E.M.J.G. Schiavone	A.D.T. Speake	B. Thomas	D. Thomas
E.G. Thomas	G. Thomas	J. Tremlett	A. Vaughan Owen
D.T. Williams	D.E. Williams		

Also Present:

W. Walters, Chief Executive;
J. Morgan, Director of Community Services;
P.R. Thomas, Assistant Chief Executive (People Management & Performance);
C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services;
G. Morgans, Director of Education & Children's Services;
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;
G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services;
R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services;
L. Jenkins, Cabinet Support Officer;
N. Daniel, Head of ICT and Corporate Policy;
A. Williams, Head of Waste and Environmental Services;
C.J. Warwick, Digital Support Engineer;
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator;
M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer;
E. Evans, Principal Democratic Services Officer;
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer (Assist);
R. Morris, Members Support Officer (Webcaster);
J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer (Observer);
J. Owen, Democratic Services Officer (Minute Taker).

Virtual Meeting: 10:00am – 1:45pm

[Note:

- At 12.40p.m the Council meeting adjourned for a comfort break and reconvened at 12.45p.m.
- At 12:45pm the Committee's attention was drawn to Council Procedure Rule (CPR) 9 – Duration of Meeting and, as the meeting would have been underway for three hours at 1:00pm, it was resolved to suspend standing orders, in accordance with CPR 23.1, to enable the Committee to complete the remaining business on the agenda.]

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F. Akhtar, S. Allen, L. Bowen, D. Cundy, P.E.M. Edwards, A, Fox, A. James, J. James, T.J. Jones and G. B. Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

Councillor	Minute Number	Nature of Interest
C. Campbell	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Family members work for the Authority as teachers.
H.A.L. Evans	5.3 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Housing Rent Setting for 2021/22 Revenue and Capital	Sister is Chief Executive of a Housing Association.
H.A.L. Evans	5.4 – Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-25 - Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme	Sister is the Chief Executive of a Housing Association.
A. Davies	5.3 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2021/22 to 2023/24 and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23 Revenue and Capital	The Tywi Valley Cycle Path passes through their farmland.
J.A. Davies	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Son works for the Authority. as a teacher.
E. Dole	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Son works for the Authority.
E. Dole	5.2 – Five Year Capital Programme (Council Fund) 2022/23 to 2026/27	Son works for the Authority.
J. S. Edmunds	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Family member works for the Authority.
L.D. Evans	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Daughter works for the Authority as a teacher.
S.J.G Gilasbey	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Family member works as a teacher in one of the schools mentioned in the report and is an LA Governor at Ysgol Gwenllian.

S.J.G Gilasbey	5.2 – Five Year Capital Programme (Council Fund) 2022/23 to 2026/27	Family member works as a teacher in one of the schools mentioned in the report and is an LA Governor at Ysgol Gwenllian.
S.J.G. Gilasbey	5.3 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Housing Rent Setting for 2021/22 Revenue and Capital	Family member is a council tenant.
S.J.G. Gilasbey	5.4 – Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-25 - Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme	Family member is a council tenant.
B.W. Jones	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Son works for the Authority as a teacher.
K. Madge	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24	Daughter works in Social Care.
B.A.L. Roberts	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Family member works in Social Care
T. Higgins	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Niece works in the Library Service
P.M. Hughes	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Daughter works for the Authority
R. James	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Partner works in the Library Service.
A.D.T. Speake	5.3 – Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Housing Rent Setting for 2021/22 Revenue and Capital	Family member is a council tenant.
A. Vaughan Owen	5.1 – Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25	Wife works for the Authority as a teacher.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

- The Chair, behalf of the Council, conveyed his condolences to the family of former Councillor Dilwyn Williams following his passing and informed Council members of the funeral arrangements.
- The Chair, on behalf of the Council, conveyed his condolences to former Councillor Peter Cooper, following the passing of his wife, Jennifer.
- The Chair stated that he had attended the production of Grease in the Lyric Theatre in Carmarthen in the company of the Town's Mayor. The show was thoroughly enjoyable.
- On Friday, 25th February, 2022 the Chair attended a charity event Cawl a Chân organised by Llanelli Rural Council. The event was the Chair of Llanelli Rural Council's last fundraising which was held in EJ's in Llanelli.

- The Chair announced that tomorrow (3rd March) he would be visiting Mrs Keir on her 110th Birthday. Mrs Keir currently resides in AwelTwyi, Llandeilo. Many Happy Returns would be extended to Mrs Keir on her birthday.
- The Chair invited the Vice Chair Councillor Ken Lloyd to make his announcements to Council. The Vice Chair informed the Council that on 20th February, 2022 he and his wife attended the Swansea City Council's Civic Service on behalf of the Chair and reported that it was a pleasure to be able to attend a physical event which had been postponed from May 2021.
- Councillor Handel Davies, with the Chair's permission announced that on 17th February 2022, he as Mayor of Llandovery had the pleasure of welcoming and congratulating Mathew Page's return to Llandovery following his fantastic achievement to become Llandovery's first ever Guinness World Record holder. Over six days, Mr Page had cycled over a thousand kilometres (625 miles) visiting sixty-seven castles across south Wales and the borders. The media and coverage raised the profile of Llandovery and especially the Llandovery Cycle Club, which had only been re-established in the last year under Mathew's leadership, would benefit the town and in the ambition in being known as a cycling friendly destination.
- The Leader, with the Chair's permission updated the Council on the efforts of the residents and businesses within Carmarthenshire in response to the recent Russian invasion on Ukraine. Over the past few days, the unbroken spirit of the people of Ukraine defending their independence, democracy and country has been witnessed through the depressing news and pictures of innocent people injured in attacks and fleeing the country with everything they can carry is not something should be happening in this modern world.

Since the beginning of the conflict, groups had gathered across Wales to show their unity with the people of Ukraine and that unity had been evident across Carmarthenshire over the weekend. Many scenes of generosity and solidarity had taken place with people collecting donations of clothes, toiletries, and medical supplies to support refugees who have had to flee from their homes. Local haulage and delivery companies were supporting the efforts by offering to deliver the donations.

In conclusion. the Leader stated that Carmarthenshire, as a proud County of sanctuary, which had already provided homes and safety for people fleeing the war in Syria and Afghanistan that the Council would be prepared once again to play its part if needed to do so by the UK and Welsh Governments. Until then thoughts and prayers were with the Ukrainian people and those residents of Carmarthenshire who were affected by the conflict.

4. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH FEBRUARY 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 9th February, 2022 be signed as a correct record.

5. TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

5.1. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2022/23 TO 2024/25

[NOTE:

1. The Monitoring Officer advised Councillors that if they had declared an earlier interest, they need not declare that interest again at this point as the report related to the Council's general Revenue Budget, and that they can remain in the meeting unless the discussion turns directly and specifically towards the matter of interest.
2. Councillors C. Campbell, J.A. Davies, E. Dole, J.S. Edmunds, L.D. Evans, S.J.G. Gilasbey, P.M. Hughes, B.W. Jones, B.A.L. Roberts, T. Higgins, A. Vaughan Owen and R. James earlier declared an interest that they had family members employed by the Authority.
3. Councillor K. Madge, repeated his earlier declaration.]

Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 21st February, 2022 (Minute 5 refers) had considered the Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25 and made a number of recommendations, as detailed within the report of the Director of Corporate Services, for Council's consideration.

Council received a presentation by the Cabinet Member for Resources, on behalf of the Cabinet, in which he set out the background to the budget proposals being presented to the Council for consideration together with the responses received to the budget consultation. The full details of the provisional settlement were included within the report, but the headline was on all Wales basis, the funding for Local Government had increased by 9.4% on the 2021/22 settlement, with Carmarthenshire's allocation being 9.2% (£311.597m).

It was explained that with the Welsh Governments budget process being much later than normal, with the final settlement figures only being published the previous day (1st March). Members were able to view the latest summary of the budget which had been updated with the WG final settlement figures and had been published as an addition to the agenda as 'updated Table 1. It was reported that the final settlement figures provided an increase of £5,905 for Carmarthenshire which was as a result of a technical adjustment to the formula, it was proposed that the sum be added to the contingency in respect of COVID that had already been set aside.

It was noted that the Director of Corporate Services had made some adjustments to some of the other figures within the report, as part of the normal routine as clearer information had become available, with current total validation adding some £16.2m to the budget.

It was advised that the budget maintained the pay assumption of 4% allowance for 2022/23 for both NJC as well as teaching staff, and that this remained the most significant validation included within the assumptions, however it was in line with the general expectations of Authorities and acknowledged that inflation was escalating well above 5%.

It was reported that the original budget proposals consulted upon throughout January 2022 assumed validation of confirmed pay and inflationary pressures to schools, and that this remained the case for the final proposals. Furthermore, there were no savings allocated to delegated school budgets for 2022/23, enabling headteachers and all schools staff to continue to place a focus into helping Carmarthenshire's learners get back on track after what has been a disruptive 2 years.

It was advised that changes to some of the key assumptions such as energy price increases, and the release of last year's economic development capital contribution provided scope to make some changes with the following highlighted:

- an additional £50k to fund additional capacity in the public rights section
- an additional £190k for school meal costs, in response to a recent notification of supplier price increases.

It was reported that the following adjustments thereto, had been recommended by Cabinet and took into account the outcome of the consultation process and responding to the feedback from both public and councillors:

- removal of the proposed £15k reduction to 3rd sector grants,
- removal of the £95k staffing reduction to ICT,
- halt the plans introducing charges to additional car parks.

It was reported that with those changes sufficient funding would be available to cap the council tax increase at 2.5% for 2022/23. It was highlighted that the public's response had clearly indicated a majority favoured the lowest increase possible, and in recognising that the cost of living was rising rapidly, it was important to do as much as reasonably possible to support the residents of Carmarthenshire. Furthermore, it was highlighted that to set a Council Tax increase as low as 2.5%, was a great achievement considering that the many financial risks and pressures within the budget, including the recognition that inflation was running well in excess of 5%.

It was advised that should the budget proposals be adopted, it would allow the Council to set a fair and balanced budget which not only responded to the major concerns fed back from the consultation, but also recognised the significant inflationary pressures and the financial risks of any future response to Covid 19.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

- 5.1.1 That the Budget Strategy including the updated Table 1 for 2022/23, be approved;**
- 5.1.2 That the Band D Council Tax for 2022/23 be set at £1,396.04 (an increase of 2.50% for 2022/23);**
- 5.1.3 The removal of specific savings proposals as identified in paragraph 3.2.5 of the report and detailed above;**
- 5.1.4 That the budget amendments as summarised in paragraph 4.1.4 of the report taking into account the range of responses received during the consultation process and the additional pressures as identified in the report be approved;**
- 5.1.5 That the provisional Medium Term Financial Plan be approved as a basis for future years financial planning;**
- 5.1.6 That the Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources, be delegated authority to make any amendment necessary as a consequence of the Welsh Government final settlement due on the 1st March 2022.**

5.2. FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME (COUNCIL FUND) - 2022/23 TO 2026/27

(NOTE: Councillors S.J.G Gilasbey and A. Davies having earlier made declarations on this item repeated those declarations)

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented to the Council, on behalf of the Cabinet, the Five-Year Capital Programme (Council Fund) 2022/23 to 2026/2027, which took into account the consultation exercise undertaken. The Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 21st February, 2022 [minute 6 refers] had considered the Programme and had made a number of recommendations for Council's consideration.

The new programme would see £275m of investment over five years. The programme would be supported by funding from Welsh Government, the UK Government, and the council's own resources.

It was noted that the detailed provisional capital programme was presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 2nd February 2022 for consultation. Following concerns raised regarding the lack of Welsh Government grant funding available for highways, the programme had been revised to include further commitments in this area. An extract from the relevant minute of the meeting was appended to the report as Appendix B for information.

It was reported that the programme included two new transformational projects. The first, a £19.6m hub at the heart of Carmarthen Town Centre and the second being a £19m investment to complete the Tywi Valley Path between Carmarthen and Llandeilo. As part of the project, £366k would be available to upgrade parking provision. Furthermore, an additional funding of £16m would be made available for Zone 1 of the Pentre Awel development in Llanelli, bringing the total investment on the project to £87m.

Council was advised that in addition to the above there was continued support for the following:

- £2.5m for Disability Facilities Grants
- £250k to improve Road Safety
- £600k for ongoing Highway Refurbishment
- £400k for Public Lighting
- £3m for Capital Maintenance for investment in property estate.

The creation of a new annual award of £250k starting in 2022/23 for highway drainage infrastructure would help make the highway network more resilient to future weather events and reduce flood risks. 2026/27 also saw the proposed continuation of the £66k annual allocation to Rights of Ways and Byways.

It was reported that further investments would be made across the programme:

- Education would see funds made available to complete the replacement bus bays at Ysgol Dyffryn Taf, and the introduction of a £500k annual award for general education works.
- Communities would be provided with a Disability Facilities Grants with an uplifted 2025/26 investment by £500k to £2.5m per annum, bringing the total investment over the 5 years to £10.5m. Within the leisure portfolio an uplift of £1m in funding was proposed for the upgrade of the 3G pitch at Amman Valley Leisure Centre bringing the total funding available for the project to £2m.

- In Environment, £150k across 2022/23 and 2023/24 to match fund flood management and flood mitigation works was planned. £4.7m for the replacement of refuse and recycling vehicles, together with an additional £1m from reserves as the Authority's match funding contribution to the Waste Strategy which would see the rollout of kerbside sorting for recycling collections.

Council was advised that to mitigate for the lack of Welsh Government support specifically for investment in highways the programme included £2.4m of new money funded from the council's reserves. This would be in addition to the £600k in the annual rolling programme. It was confirmed that £1.3m of hypothecated general capital funding that had been made available to the Authority late in the current financial year 2021-22 had also been earmarked for highway improvements. Taken together this was the biggest single investment of £4.3m in local highway infrastructure by the Council in recent years.

An estimated award of £1.34m funding from Welsh Government from 2023/24 onwards was anticipated to fund decarbonisation projects and therefore included in the programme. However, given that this funding would not be available until the second year of the programme it was proposed to provide £500k from council reserves in 2022/23 to kickstart decarbonisation measures across the built estate.

£2.7m allocated for Information Communication Technology (ICT) across the programme would be maintained, including annual funding of £200k to support digital transformational projects across council services.

It was highlighted that the County Council funding available for this programme was currently estimated at £141m and included borrowing, both supported and short-term unsupported, reserves, private finance and direct revenue funding. Capital grants and contributions of £134m would come from external grant funding bodies.

As part of this year's settlement Welsh Government provided indicative general capital funding figures up to 2024/25 which was reflected in the programme. Funding for years four and five of the programme was based on an assumed level of support equivalent to that received in 2024/25 going forward. It was noted that Welsh Government funding for 2022/23 was £1.8m less than that received in 2021/22 which was unexpected. Given the significant investments in years 1 and 2 of the programme and the reduced capital settlement from Welsh Government it was proposed to make use of unsupported borrowing, short-term, to prevent what would otherwise be a shortfall in funding at the start of the programme. This would be repaid in years 3, 4 and 5 of the programme.

Appendix A appended to the report detailed the full programme, which was fully funded for the five years.

It was noted that as required by the prudential code of capital finance the Council's Capital Strategy document was appended as Appendix C. This document sets out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions were made and gave due consideration to both risk and reward and the impact on achievement of priority outcomes.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

- 5.2.1 The Five-Year Capital Programme and its funding detailed in Appendix A to the report with 2022/23 being a hard budget and 2023/24 to 2026/27 soft/indicative budgets be approved;**
- 5.2.2 The programme be reviewed, as usual, if anticipated external or County Council funding did not materialise;**
- 5.2.3 The Capital Strategy, as detailed in Appendix C be approved;**
- 5.2.4 The Director of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources be delegated authority to make any adjustments necessary as a consequence of the Welsh Governments final settlement due on the 1st March 2022.**

At 12.40p.m. the meeting was adjourned for a comfort break and reconvened at 12.45 p.m.

5.3. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2022/23 TO 2024/25 REVENUE AND CAPITAL AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2022/23

DURATION OF MEETING

During the consideration of this item the Council's attention was drawn to Corporate Procedure Rule 9 – Duration of meeting and the fact the meeting had been underway for nearly three hours. It was therefore:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Corporate Procedure Rule 9 be suspended to enable the remaining items on the agenda to be considered.

[NOTE: Councillors, S.J.G. Gilasbey, H.A.L. Evans, having earlier declared an interest in this item, reiterated those declarations and left the meeting during its consideration]

Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 21st February, 2022 [minute 7 refers] had considered the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23 and had made a number of recommendations, as detailed within the Director of Corporate Services' report, for Council's consideration. It was noted that the report had also been considered, and endorsed, by the Community Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on the 31st January 2022 as part of the budget consultation process.

The report had been prepared reflecting the latest proposals contained in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, being the primary financial planning tool for delivering the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+) for the future.

It was advised that capital investment in the region of £231m had delivered the Carmarthenshire Home Standard for tenants and more recently, up to the end of this financial year a further £83m had been spent on maintaining the CHS+ home standard for properties and tenants. Over the next 3 years a further £64m was expected to be spent in maintaining and upgrading the housing stock.

The budget also provided funding of some £56m over the next 3 years to maintain the CHS+ and £56m to support the Housing Development Programme.

The Council was reminded that since 2015 the Authority had been required to adopt the Welsh Government Policy for Social Housing Rent Harmonisation, meaning that the proposed rent increase was prescribed by Welsh Government guidance and provided an equitable distribution of the rents for the social sector tenants. While that policy ended in 2018/19, and an interim policy applied for 2019/20 the Welsh Government had subsequently developed a new policy for implementation in 2020/21 to apply for a period of 5 years from 2020/21 and contained some additional/amended requirements, as detailed within the report.

The main elements of that policy allowed Local Authorities to uplift the total rent envelope by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) +1% for each of the five years to 2024/25. It also allowed for the level of rent for individual tenants to rise by up to an additional £2 over and above CPI +1% for rent harmonisation, on condition that total rental income collected by the social landlord increased by no more than CPI +1%.

However, it was advised that should the CPI fall outside the range of 0% to 3%, the policy provided for the Minister with responsibility for Housing to determine the appropriate change to rent levels to be applied for that year only. As CPI was 3.1% in September 2021 this clause had been activated this year and the Government Minister for Climate Change had instructed that the maximum increase in the rent envelope for any local authority should not exceed 3.1%

Furthermore, this current policy would apply until 2024/25 and contained some additional criteria around tenant satisfaction, space standards, minimising evictions and energy efficiency. The Welsh Government recognises the need to decarbonise social housing stock, which would be a major investment for local Authorities and a priority for this Authority.

The Council was advised that setting the rent within the current Government policy, recognised the need to set the rent at an affordable level for tenants, delivering on the aspirations and trying to ensure the previous commitment to tenants of implementing the harmonisation policy and establishing a fairer rent level for all tenants was a fine balance to achieve.

In response to the priorities and balancing the business plan, the rent increase at an overall increase of 2.9%, would produce an average rent of £94.26 for tenants.

Included within the overall rent increase envelope it was proposed that the Authority continues with the rent progression set at a maximum of £1 for properties below target rent. This would produce an increase on the average housing rent of £2.66 per week, which is below the Welsh Government maximum increase level and would produce a rent level which would be one of the lowest rent levels set across the eleven housing stock retaining Welsh Authorities.

Furthermore, the report also provided Council with the proposal that the garage rents were maintained at £9.00 per week with no increase and that the Service Charge policy continued to be implemented where the charges are set to cover the additional services that are provided at certain locations and not covered by the rent.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

5.3.1 To increase the average housing rent as per the Welsh Government's Social Housing Rents Policy:-

- a) Properties at target rents to increase by 2.74%**
- b) Properties where rent was below target rent, rent to increase by 2.74% plus a maximum progression of £1.00**
- c) Those rents above target rent be frozen until such time as they met the target**
- d) This will produce an increase on the average housing rent of 2.9% or £2.66 per week**

Thereby producing a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+, resource our Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan and was supported by the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team.

5.3.2 To implement a maximum progression of £1.00 for rents below target, until target rents were achieved;

5.3.3 To maintain garage rents at £9.00 per week and garage bases at £2.25 per week;

5.3.4 To apply the service charge policy to ensure tenants who received the benefit from specific services paid for those services;

- 5.3.5 To increase charges for using the Council's sewerage treatment works in line with the rent increases;
- 5.3.6 To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2022/23 (with 2023/24 and 2024/25 being soft budgets) as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- 5.3.7 To approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding for 2022/23 and the indicative spends for 2023/24 to 2024/25, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

5.4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2022-25 - CARMARTHENSHIRE HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

(NOTE: Councillors H.A.L. Evans and S.J.G. Gilasbey having earlier declared an interest in this item was not in attendance during the consideration or voting of this item.)

The Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on the 21st February 2022 (Minute 8 refers) had considered the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+) Business Plan 2022-2025, the purpose of which was to:-

- Explain the vision and detail of the housing investment programme over the next three years, including housing stock improvement plans, the new build programme, plans to become net zero carbon and what this meant for tenants.
- To confirm the income received from tenants and other funding sources afforded a capital programme of £120m over the next three years to:
 - Improve and maintain the existing stock;
 - Support the delivery of over 2,000 new homes in communities;
 - Support the Councils Net Zero Carbon Principles, creating energy efficient homes, minimising carbon emissions and promoting affordable warmth for tenants;
 - Help stimulate economic growth and recovery following the Covid 19 pandemic;
 - Help build strong sustainable communities – places where people are proud to call home.
- To confirm the financial profile, based on current assumptions, for the delivery of housing investment programme and Council new build over the next three years.
- Produce a business plan for the annual application to Welsh Government for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) grant for 2022/23, equating to £6.2m.

It was advised the report was divided into the following five key themes aimed at driving the business forward for the next three years:-

1. Theme 1 – Supporting Tenants and Residents;
2. Theme 2 – Investing in Homes and Surrounding Areas;
3. Theme 3 – Providing More Homes
4. Theme 4 – Decarbonisation of Housing Stock
5. Theme 5 – The Local Economy, Community Benefits & Procurement

In conclusion, the Plan supported the Councils existing tenants as well as prospective tenants and balances what tenants need now and what will be needed in the future.

The following amendment was proposed and seconded to the first recommendation within the report:

‘To confirm the vision for our housing investment programmes over the next three years and to introduce a Council bungalow programme throughout the Councils member wards in Carmarthenshire. This will free up 3 Bedroom housing for young families. In addition, we need to identify land in members wards for new bungalows in the Carmarthenshire Housing investment programme for 2022-27.

The Proposer outlined the rationale for the amendment

Following a debate and a vote, it was

RESOLVED that the Amendment to the Motion be not supported.

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

RESOLVED that the Motion and the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

- 5.4.1 **The vision of the housing investment programmes over the next three years be confirmed;**
- 5.4.2 **The 2022/23 Business Plan be submitted to the Welsh Government;**
- 5.4.3 **The contribution the Plan makes to the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan in supporting the delivery of over 2000 homes be noted;**
- 5.4.4 **The principles behind moving towards net carbon homes and developing a Decarbonisation and Affordable Warmth Strategy to support that be noted;**
- 5.4.5 **The importance of the investment included in the plan and its role in stimulating the local economy and recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic be noted.**

5.5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2022-23

Council was informed that the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 21st February, 2022 (minute 9 refers) had considered the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report to Council and reminded Members that as part of the requirements of the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2017, the Council had agreed to maintain a Treasury Management Policy detailing the policies and objectives of the Authority's treasury management activities. It was also a requirement that the Council approve a Treasury Management Strategy annually before the start of the financial year to which it related. In addition, under the Local Government Act 2003, the Council was required to approve the Treasury Management Indicators for the coming year.

It was highlighted that the Treasury Management Practices appended to the report as Appendix A set out how the Council would seek to achieve its Treasury policies and objectives and recommended how it would manage and control those activities.

It was reported that the treasury management function ensured that cash flow was adequately planned with cash being made available when needed. Surplus monies were invested in low-risk counterparties appropriate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity before considering investment return, as set out in Appendix B of the report.

The Authority in maintaining a counterparty list must comply with the risk criteria taking account of security, liquidity and yield, with security being the primary principle. The current counterparty list was appended to the report as Appendix C.

In addition, under the Local Government Act 2003 the Council was required to approve the Treasury Management Indicators for 2022/23 which are detailed in Appendix D appended to the report.

The details of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement was provided in Appendix E appended to the report.

It was reported that the Policy and Strategy also took into account of the likely borrowing required for the Swansea Bay City Deal projects led by Carmarthenshire County Council. The Council was expected to borrow £39.1m over the period 2022-23 to 2024-25.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Cabinet be adopted:

5.5.1 The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2022-23 and the recommendations contained therein be approved;

5.5.2 The Treasury Management Indicators, Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, the Investment Strategy and recommendations therein be approved.

6. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON THE 31ST JANUARY 2022

In reference to Minute 8, of the Cabinet Meeting held on the 31st January, 2022 regarding the 2022-2032 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), a concern was expressed regarding an issue that had arisen in relation to a number of inaccurate statements which had been circulating on social media in connection to the WESP. It was requested that the Cabinet Member for Education and Children address this emerging matter with urgency.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Education and Children explained the purpose of WESP which sets out the Councils 10-year vision to create an improved planning system for Welsh-medium education.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 31st January 2022 be received.

7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF MOTION

The Chair advised that no Notices of Motion had been received.

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no questions from the public had been received.

9. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no questions from Members had been received.

10. MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

The Chair stated that the minutes outlined on the agenda 10.1 – 10.7 were available for information on the Council website.

CHAIR

DATE