



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN, ON WEDNESDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY 2014 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor H.A. Andrews - Chairman.

Councillors:

Mrs. C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), G. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing), K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), Mrs. R. Passmore (Education and Lifelong Learning), D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), K.V. Reynolds (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering), R. Woodyatt (Social Services).

Together with:

S.A. Rosser (Interim Chief Executive), Mrs S. Aspinall (Acting Deputy Chief Executive), Mrs. N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer), D. Street (Corporate Director of Social Services).

Also in Attendance:

S.M. Kauczok (Committee Services Officer).

302. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

303. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors H.A. Andrews, K. James, D.V. Poole, K.V. Reynolds, T.J. Williams and R. Woodyatt declared personal interests in relation to agenda item 3.1 as they have relatives/friends employed by the Council who may be affected by the savings proposals.

Councillor Hardacre declared a personal interest in that his wife receives a Social Services provision. Councillor G. Jones declared a personal interest in that he is employed by GAVO.

As the interests were of a personal rather than a prejudicial nature, the Members concerned remained in the meeting and participated in the debate.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**304. BUDGET PROPOSALS 2014/2015 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014/2017**

The Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer presented the report, which set out the budget proposals for 2014/15 and the medium term financial strategy 2014/2017 following an extensive consultation process.

It was noted that additional consultation responses, including a 700 signature petition had been received by the Authority in relation to the proposal to cease funding for the Senghenydd Splash Pad since the report had been prepared and these had been incorporated in a paper to be tabled at the special Council meeting at 5pm. Cabinet members had been made aware of these late consultation responses prior to the meeting.

Following detailed consideration and discussion it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved and referred to Council for consideration. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report:-

1. The Authority operate the 2013/14 WG scheme in 2014/15 in respect of the Council Tax Pensioners Grant.
2. The Living Wage increase to £7.65 per hour be backdated to 1st November 2013.
3. The Revenue Budget proposals for 2014/15 of £332,032m as set out in Appendix 1, be approved.
4. The Council Tax level for the financial year 2014/15 be increased by 3.90% (Council Tax Band D £954.78).
5. The indicative proposals contained in the Medium Term Financial Planning assumptions be approved as the basis for delivering a balanced budget over the forthcoming 3 years (i.e. 2014/15 to 2016/17) (see Appendix 2a and 2b).
6. The Capital Programme for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2017 as set out in Appendix 5 be approved.
7. The use of the General Fund balances as detailed in Appendix 6 be approved, including the establishment of provisions for the 2013/14 pension deficit, 2014/15 Senior Officer suspension costs, 2013/14 arrears in respect of the Living Wage and potential delays in delivering 2014/15 savings proposals.
8. Up to £2.499m be released from General Fund balances to fund one-off capital expenditure as cost avoidance or Invest to Save schemes. Bids to be considered on a case-by-case basis and agreed by Cabinet.
9. The financial strategy for 2015/16 and 2016/17 as set out in Section 8 of the report be agreed.

The meeting closed at 2.20 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 19th March 2014.

CHAIRMAN