



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON THURSDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY 2019 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor M. Adams - Mayor
Councillor J. Simmonds - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

Mrs E. Aldworth, C. Andrews, A. Angel, C. Bezzina, L. Binding, S. Cook, D. Cushing, C. Cuss, W. David, M. Davies, D.T. Davies, N. Dix, K. Etheridge, A. Farina-Childs, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Gair, Ms J. Gale, N. George, C. Gordon, R.W. Gough, D.T. Hardacre, D. Harse, D. Havard, A. Higgs, A. Hussey, M. James, G. Johnston, Mrs B. Jones, G. Kirby, Mrs A. Leonard, Ms P. Leonard, C.P. Mann, Mrs P. Marsden, B. Miles, S. Morgan, Mrs G. Oliver, Mrs G. Oliver, T. Parry, Mrs L. Phipps, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, J. Pritchard, J. Ridgewell, J.E. Roberts, R. Saralis, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Scriven, G. Simmonds, J. Simmonds, S. Skivens, Mss E. Stenner, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, L G. . Whittle, T. Williams, W. Williams, B. Zaplatynski.

Together with:-

C. Harray (Interim Chief Executive), M.S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director of Communities), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services), N. Scammell (Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), L. Donovan (Head of People Services), A. Southcombe (Finance Manager), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer) and E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer).

WEB-CASTING FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Interim Chief Executive reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed and would be made publically available in live and archive form via the Council's website. She advised that decisions would be made via the electronic voting system.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, A. Collis, K. Dawson, C. Elsbury, M. Evans, Ms E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, L. Harding, V. James, L. Jeremiah, S. Kent, B. Owen, Mrs D. Price, J. Taylor, C. Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J. Bevan declared a person and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No. 3, details are minuted with the respective item.

REPORTS REFERRED FROM CABINET

Consideration was given to the following reports referred from Cabinet.

3. BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20 TO 2023/2024.

Councillor J. Bevan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in that his Daughter works for the Barnardo's organisation and their contract funding forms part of the budget proposals. Following advice from the Monitoring Officer and in noting that the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing would be making an announcement in relation to the contract, Councillor Bevan left the Chamber when that matter was discussed but was present for the wider budget discussions and vote.

Consideration was given to the report which had been presented to Cabinet on the 13th February 2019. The Section 151 Officer provided a summary of the budget process and detailed the key points of the Welsh Government (WG) Provisional and Final 2019/20 Local Government Financial Settlement. Members were referred to Table 1 which illustrated the adjusted cash position for Caerphilly which provided an effective cash increase of £549k.

It was noted that the final proposals before Members presented a balanced budget based on a 6.9% Council Tax increase. The Section 151 Officer welcomed the prudent approach taken in relation to savings in advance. Various cost pressures were outlined and it was explained that to date there had been no indication from Welsh Government with regard to Teachers and Fire Service employer pension contributions. Due to this continued uncertainty this budget did not take into account any potential funding, should any one off funding become available at a later date further reports will be presented to Council for Members to determine its allocation.

The position of General Fund balances was explained and Members were referred to Appendix 4 of the report. Due to the worsening financial outlook, the Section 151 Officer advised that General Fund balances should be retained at a higher than usual level at £11.6m, it was noted that this could be revisited once the provisional settlement for 2020/21 in October is announced.

Members expressed their thanks to those Officers who had worked so diligently on the preparation of a balanced budget. Members then referred to the consultation process and thanked all those who had taken the time to participate. It was noted that as a result of the Final 2019/20 Local Government Financial Settlement and the feedback from the consultation a number of changes had been made to the draft budget and these were highlighted in Table 6 of report. These included the deferral of the closure of 2 Civic Amenity sites pending the outcome of the wider waste review, the partial reinstatement of Community Safety Wardens, the deferral of charges for rat treatments, the deferral of any reduction in the Meals Direct Service, pending the outcome a wider catering review and match funding for Community Schemes at Bargoed Ice Rink and Senghenydd Splash pad. Regret was expressed regarding the need to impose a 6.95% increase in Council tax however this was required in order to protect the provision of front line services. Despite continuing austerity the budget also included positives for the 21st Century Schools Band B programme, the Capital programme and Regeneration projects.

At this point in the debate Councillor J. Bevan left the Chamber. The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing confirmed that Home Office grant funding had been secured by Barnardo's which would offset the funding reduction and secure the continuation of the contract for 12 months. As a result there would be little to no impact on service users for 2019/20. Councillor J. Bevan then returned to the Chamber.

Members expressed concerns in relation to the rise in Council Tax and the impact of further cuts. Reference was made to the fact that this increase was higher than neighbouring authorities, although the deferred savings were welcomed, as were the investments in schools and regeneration there seemed to be little in the way of alternative delivery models within the proposals. Members asked that more serious consideration be given to asset transfer opportunities and highlighted the big impact that the withdrawal of even small amounts of funding would have on local communities.

Clarification was sought in relation to Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) regarding the level of annual payments. The Section 151 Officer briefly outlined the operation of PFI's and confirmed that further information could be circulated to Members following the meeting. Members were advised that a PFI review was currently underway and would be subject of a further report to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee in the summer.

A Member having regard to continuing austerity and further cuts to come emphasised the need to protect Third Sector providers and volunteers.

Reference was then made to the cuts made to public toilet provision, the current toilet strategy and the impact that their removal had on town centre footfall. It was noted that the consultation period for the CCBC Toilet Strategy was still open and Members were reminded that the legislation required Local Authorities to provide a strategy but it did not require them to provide public conveniences.

Clarification was then sought in relation to the reduction in the School Improvement Initiatives budget and the criteria that would be applied for the accessing of emergency funds if required. It was agreed that this would be forwarded to the Member following the meeting.

Members then referred to the use of Reserves, the Section 151 Officer provided clarification on the reasons for holding such reserves and how they were audited and scrutinised. The Officer also outlined how Capital and General Funds could be used and the restrictions under which they operated. It was accepted that there was further work to be done with Councillors and Members of Public in order to increase understanding of Reserves.

In conclusion the importance of presenting a balanced budget was emphasised and how the budget presented would look after the most vulnerable in our communities as austerity continued. Reference was made to the uncertainty around fire service and teacher's superannuation settlements and growth pressures in social care and the ever increasing demands placed on local authorities and Councillors. The need to be an innovative and proactive organisation in the face of future challenges such as housing, education, complex health needs, digital advancements and global warming was outlined. Services would need to be delivered differently with new operational models developed in order to respond to ever changing demands. Reference was made to the Caerphilly 2022 initiative which would drive forward business efficiency and commercial opportunity with residents and staff at its heart, truly working together for the good of all.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved.

In accordance with Rule of Procedure 15.4 (1) a request was made for a recorded vote, by way of the electronic voting system.

For the Motion:

Councillors B.A. Jones, C. Forehead, D.V. Poole, A.G. Higgs, Mrs E. Aldworth, D.T. Davies, D. Hardacre, W. David, D. Preece, G.D. Oliver, J. Bevan, E. Stenner, N. George, M. Adams, C. Gordon, G. Kirby, R. Saralis, S. Morgan, G. Johnston, J. Gale, S. Havard. J. Pritchard, C.J. Cuss, Mrs P. Leonard, T. Williams, J. Simmonds, L. Phipps, D. Harse, P. Marsden, Mrs A. Leonard, Mrs C. Andrews, B. Zaplatynski, Mrs C. Bezzina, Mrs A. Gair, W. Williams, A. Whitcombe, A. Hussey, R. Whiting, S. Cook, J. Ridgewell and Mrs B. Miles (41).

Against the Motion:

Councillors N. Dix, C.P. Mann, L. Binding, S. Skivens, Mrs M. Sargent, L. Whittle, A.P. Angel, R.W. Gough, S. Kent, J. Roberts, J. Scriven, Mrs T. Parry, Mrs D. Cushing, K. Etheridge, G. Simmonds, A. Farina-Childs and M. Davies (17).

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the proposal that the grants transferred/passported into the Financial Settlement and the funding for new responsibilities are passed directly to those services that they relate to (see para 4.2.10) be approved;
- (ii) the proposed savings for 2019/20 totalling £13.921m as set out in para 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 and Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 of this report be approved;
- (iii) the Revenue Budget proposals for 2019/20 of £337.745m as set out in this report and summarised in Appendix 1 be approved;
- (iv) the proposal to allocate £5m to 21st Century schools match funding (see paragraph 4.6.3) be approved;
- (v) the proposal to allocate £1.2m to the Regeneration Project Board (see paragraph 4.6.3) be approved;
- (vi) the proposal to allocate the £475k savings in advance to the 21st Century schools Band B programme (see paragraph 4.3.5) be approved;
- (vii) the proposed Capital Programme for the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 (see Appendix 5) be approved;
- (viii) the Updated Medium-Term-Financial Plan detailed in Appendix 6 of this report and the indicative savings requirement of £44m for the following 4 financial years (2020/21 to 2023/2024) be noted;
- (ix) the proposal to increase Council Tax by 6.95% for the 2019/20 financial year to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved (Council Tax Band D being set at £1131.21) be approved.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

4. COUNCIL TAX SETTING RESOLUTION 2019/20

Consideration was given to the report which provided details of the Authority's Council Tax for the 2019/20 financial year, prior to passing the necessary statutory resolutions.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved and by way of the electronic voting system and in noting there were 10 against and 5 abstentions this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

- That it be noted that at its meeting on the 12th December 2018 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2019/2020 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 and powers granted under The Local Authorities Executive Arrangements (Functions and Responsibilities) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

- (a) **60,183.96** Being the amount calculated by the Cabinet, in accordance with Regulation (3) of The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 (as amended), as its council tax base for the year.

- (b) **Part of Council's Area:**

	<u>Tax Base</u>
	<u>No. of D Band</u>
	<u>Equivalent Properties</u>
Aber Valley	2,011.26
Argoed	859.55
Bargoed	3,630.06
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	3,768.49
Blackwood	2,947.24
Caerphilly	6,261.53
Darren Valley	702.98
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	617.09
Gelligaer	6,271.29

	<u>Tax Base</u>
	<u>No. of D Band</u>
	<u>Equivalent Properties</u>
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	1,480.37
Maesycwmmmer	797.55
Nelson	1,601.40
New Tredegar	1,337.70
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	4,435.13
Rhymney	2,542.19
Risca East	2,040.70
Risca West	1,785.37
Van	1,641.44
Remainder	15,452.62
Total	60,183.96

being the amounts calculated by the cabinet, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of

its area to which one or more special items relate.

2. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2019/2020 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992:-

- (a) £338,523,157** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (d) of the Act;
- (b) £1,050,000** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) (a) to (c) of the Act;
- (c) £337,473,157** being the amount by which the aggregate at (2)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (2)(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year;
- (d) £268,614,269** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its council fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, an authority's council tax reduction scheme or additional grant;
- (e) £1,144.14** being the amount at (2)(c) above less the amount at (2)(d) above, all be divided by the amount at (1)(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year;
- (f) £778,189** being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in section 34(1) of the Act;
- (g) £1,131.21** being the amount at (2)(e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (2)(f) above by the amount at (1)(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates;

(h) Part of the Council's Area	Local	County	Total County
	Precept	Borough	Borough & Community
	£	Levy	Council Band D
	£	£	Charge
	£	£	£
Aber Valley	18.89	1,131.21	1,150.10
Argoed	15.00	1,131.21	1,146.21
Bargoed	20.04	1,131.21	1,151.25
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	24.12	1,131.21	1,155.33
Blackwood	20.00	1,131.21	1,151.21
Caerphilly	15.50	1,131.21	1,146.71
Darren Valley	17.75	1,131.21	1,148.96
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	24.31	1,131.21	1,155.52
Gelligaer	15.52	1,131.21	1,146.73
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	21.89	1,131.21	1,153.10
Maesycwmmer	22.95	1,131.21	1,154.16
Nelson	17.76	1,131.21	1,148.97
New Tredegar	12.65	1,131.21	1,143.86
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	13.81	1,131.21	1,145.02
Rhymney	13.77	1,131.21	1,144.98
Risca East	12.00	1,131.21	1,143.21
Risca West	23.00	1,131.21	1,154.21
Van	15.23	1,131.21	1,146.44
Remainder	0.00	1,131.21	1,131.21

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (2)(g) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at (1)(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts, of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate;

(i)

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
County Borough Council	754.14	879.83	1,005.52	1,131.21	1,382.59	1,633.97	1,885.35	2,262.42	2,639.49
<u>Community Councils</u>									
Aber Valley	12.59	14.69	16.79	18.89	23.09	27.29	31.48	37.78	44.08
Argoed	10.00	11.67	13.33	15.00	18.33	21.67	25.00	30.00	35.00
Bargoed	13.36	15.59	17.81	20.04	24.49	28.95	33.40	40.08	46.76
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	16.08	18.76	21.44	24.12	29.48	34.84	40.20	48.24	56.28
Blackwood	13.33	15.56	17.78	20.00	24.44	28.89	33.33	40.00	46.67
Caerphilly	10.33	12.06	13.78	15.50	18.94	22.39	25.83	31.00	36.17
Darren Valley	11.83	13.81	15.78	17.75	21.69	25.64	29.58	35.50	41.42
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	16.21	18.91	21.61	24.31	29.71	35.11	40.52	48.62	56.72
Gelligaer	10.35	12.07	13.80	15.52	18.97	22.42	25.87	31.04	36.21
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	14.59	17.03	19.46	21.89	26.75	31.62	36.48	43.78	51.08
Maesycwmmmer	15.30	17.85	20.40	22.95	28.05	33.15	38.25	45.90	53.55
Nelson	11.84	13.81	15.79	17.76	21.71	25.65	29.60	35.52	41.44
New Tredegar	8.43	9.84	11.24	12.65	15.46	18.27	21.08	25.30	29.52
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	9.21	10.74	12.28	13.81	16.88	19.95	23.02	27.62	32.22
Rhymney	9.18	10.71	12.24	13.77	16.83	19.89	22.95	27.54	32.13
Risca East	8.00	9.33	10.67	12.00	14.67	17.33	20.00	24.00	28.00
Risca West	15.33	17.89	20.44	23.00	28.11	33.22	38.33	46.00	53.67
Van	10.15	11.85	13.54	15.23	18.61	22.00	25.38	30.46	35.54
Remainder	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Totals For Community Council Areas</u>									
Aber Valley	766.73	894.52	1,022.31	1,150.10	1,405.68	1,661.26	1,916.83	2,300.20	2,683.57
Argoed	764.14	891.50	1,018.85	1,146.21	1,400.92	1,655.64	1,910.35	2,292.42	2,674.49
Bargoed	767.50	895.42	1,023.33	1,151.25	1,407.08	1,662.92	1,918.75	2,302.50	2,686.25
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	770.22	898.59	1,026.96	1,155.33	1,412.07	1,668.81	1,925.55	2,310.66	2,695.77
Blackwood	767.47	895.39	1,023.30	1,151.21	1,407.03	1,662.86	1,918.68	2,302.42	2,686.16
Caerphilly	764.47	891.89	1,019.30	1,146.71	1,401.53	1,656.36	1,911.18	2,293.42	2,675.66
Darren Valley	765.97	893.64	1,021.30	1,148.96	1,404.28	1,659.61	1,914.93	2,297.92	2,680.91
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	770.35	898.74	1,027.13	1,155.52	1,412.30	1,669.08	1,925.87	2,311.04	2,696.21
Gelligaer	764.49	891.90	1,019.32	1,146.73	1,401.56	1,656.39	1,911.22	2,293.46	2,675.70
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	768.73	896.86	1,024.98	1,153.10	1,409.34	1,665.59	1,921.83	2,306.20	2,690.57
Maesycwmmmer	769.44	897.68	1,025.92	1,154.16	1,410.64	1,667.12	1,923.60	2,308.32	2,693.04
Nelson	765.98	893.64	1,021.31	1,148.97	1,404.30	1,659.62	1,914.95	2,297.94	2,680.93
New Tredegar	762.57	889.67	1,016.76	1,143.86	1,398.05	1,652.24	1,906.43	2,287.72	2,669.01
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	763.35	890.57	1,017.80	1,145.02	1,399.47	1,653.92	1,908.37	2,290.04	2,671.71
Rhymney	763.32	890.54	1,017.76	1,144.98	1,399.42	1,653.86	1,908.30	2,289.96	2,671.62
Risca East	762.14	889.16	1,016.19	1,143.21	1,397.26	1,651.30	1,905.35	2,286.42	2,667.49
Risca West	769.47	897.72	1,025.96	1,154.21	1,410.70	1,667.19	1,923.68	2,308.42	2,693.16
Van	764.29	891.68	1,019.06	1,146.44	1,401.20	1,655.97	1,910.73	2,292.88	2,675.03
Remainder	754.14	879.83	1,005.52	1,131.21	1,382.59	1,633.97	1,885.35	2,262.42	2,639.49

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (2)(g) and (2)(h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

3. That it be noted that for the year 2019/2020 the major precepting authority has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Precepting Authority</u>									
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	170.35	198.75	227.14	255.53	312.31	369.10	425.88	511.06	596.24

4. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (2)(i) and (3) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts of Council Tax for the year 2019/2020 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Aber Valley	937.08	1,093.27	1,249.45	1,405.63	1,717.99	2,030.36	2,342.71	2,811.26	3,279.81
Argoed	934.49	1,090.25	1,245.99	1,401.74	1,713.23	2,024.74	2,336.23	2,803.48	3,270.73
Bargoed	937.85	1,094.17	1,250.47	1,406.78	1,719.39	2,032.02	2,344.63	2,813.56	3,282.49
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	940.57	1,097.34	1,254.10	1,410.86	1,724.38	2,037.91	2,351.43	2,821.72	3,292.01
Blackwood	937.82	1,094.14	1,250.44	1,406.74	1,719.34	2,031.96	2,344.56	2,813.48	3,282.40
Caerphilly	934.82	1,090.64	1,246.44	1,402.24	1,713.84	2,025.46	2,337.06	2,804.48	3,271.90
Darren Valley	936.32	1,092.39	1,248.44	1,404.49	1,716.59	2,028.71	2,340.81	2,808.98	3,277.15
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	940.70	1,097.49	1,254.27	1,411.05	1,724.61	2,038.18	2,351.75	2,822.10	3,292.45
Gelligaer	934.84	1,090.65	1,246.46	1,402.26	1,713.87	2,025.49	2,337.10	2,804.52	3,271.94
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	939.08	1,095.61	1,252.12	1,408.63	1,721.65	2,034.69	2,347.71	2,817.26	3,286.81
Maescwimmer	939.79	1,096.43	1,253.06	1,409.69	1,722.95	2,036.22	2,349.48	2,819.38	3,289.28
Nelson	936.33	1,092.39	1,248.45	1,404.50	1,716.61	2,028.72	2,340.83	2,809.00	3,277.17
New Tredegar	932.92	1,088.42	1,243.90	1,399.39	1,710.36	2,021.34	2,332.31	2,798.78	3,265.25
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	933.70	1,089.32	1,244.94	1,400.55	1,711.78	2,023.02	2,334.25	2,801.10	3,267.95
Rhymney	933.67	1,089.29	1,244.90	1,400.51	1,711.73	2,022.96	2,334.18	2,801.02	3,267.86
Risca East	932.49	1,087.91	1,243.33	1,398.74	1,709.57	2,020.40	2,331.23	2,797.48	3,263.73
Risca West	939.82	1,096.47	1,253.10	1,409.74	1,723.01	2,036.29	2,349.56	2,819.48	3,289.40
Van	934.64	1,090.43	1,246.20	1,401.97	1,713.51	2,025.07	2,336.61	2,803.94	3,271.27
Remainder	924.49	1,078.58	1,232.66	1,386.74	1,694.90	2,003.07	2,311.23	2,773.48	3,235.73

5. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL STRATEGY, CAPITAL FINANCE PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM PROVISION POLICY FOR 2019/20**

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the Council's Annual Strategy for Treasury Management, Capital Finance Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2019/20. It was noted that the report had been presented to the Policy and Resource Scrutiny Committee on the 15th January 2019.

In accordance with legislative requirements, Welsh Government Guidance and Codes of Practice, the Council is required to approve a Treasury Management Strategy on an annual basis, which sets out its borrowing and investment strategies for the forthcoming year. The Council is also obliged to approve and publish a number of indicators relevant to Capital Finance and Treasury Management, and to prepare an Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement. Members were asked to note a number of changes to the Councils' borrowing and investment approach moving forward, including a move away from investment in DMOs due to the low interest rate.

Members thanked the Officers for all the hard work involved in the preparation of the report and clarification was sought in relation to opportunities for increased returns from investments. The Officer advised that the Council were in the top quartile on investment returns and confirmed that there were opportunities available to increase returns going forward however increased returns also meant increased risks and the level of risk involved against reward would need to be debated by Members. To this end the Officer encouraged Members to attend the scheduled seminar with Arlingclose Limited the Councils Treasury Management Adviser.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained within the Officer's report be approved and by way of the electronic voting system and in noting there were 3 abstentions this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the Annual Strategy for Treasury Management 2019/20 be approved;
- (ii) the strategy be reviewed quarterly within the Treasury Management monitoring reports presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, and any changes recommended be referred to Cabinet, in the first instance, and to Council for a decision. The Authority will also prepare a half-yearly report on Treasury Management activities;
- (iii) the setting of Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management for the financial years 2019/20 to 2021/22 as outlined in Appendix 5 of the report be approved;
- (iv) the setting of Prudential Indicators for Capital Financing for the financial years 2019/20 to 2021/22 as outlined in Appendices 6 and 7 of the report be approved;
- (v) the Minimum Revenue Provision policy be set for 2019/20 as per Appendix 8 of the report;
- (vi) The continuation of the 2018/19 investment strategy and the lending to financial institutions and Corporates in accordance with the minimum credit rating criteria disclosed within the report be approved;
- (vii) the Authority borrows £27.4m (albeit defer £14.29m into 2020/21) for the General Fund to support the 2019/20 capital programme and £44.2m for the HRA WHQS programme;

- (viii) the Authority continues to adopt the investment grade scale as a minimum credit rating criteria as a means to assess the credit worthiness of suitable counterparties when placing investments;
- (ix) the Authority adopts the monetary and investment duration limits as set in out in Appendix 3 of the report.

6. CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 2019/20

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Capital Strategy Report for 2019/20 financial year in accordance with the Prudential Code that was introduced by the Local Government Act 2003. It was noted that the report had been presented to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee as an information item.

Members were advised that the Capital Strategy report is a new requirement for 2019/20 and outlined the principles and framework at the very high level that shape the Authority's capital investment proposals. The principle aim is to deliver an affordable programme of capital programme consistent with the financial strategy and that contributes to the achievement of the Council's priorities and objectives as set out in the Authority's Corporate Plan, consider associated risks, recognise financial constraints over the longer term and present value for money.

The Section 151 Officer confirmed that as the report was simply presenting the framework there were no financial implications attached to the report.

A Member queried the best way for Members to comment on information items not called forward by discussion the process was noted and it was agreed that Democratic Services would clarify this when circulating information items.

Following consideration of its content it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officers report be approved an by way of the electronic voting system and in noting there was 1 abstention this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the annual Capital Strategy Report be approved.

7. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval to appoint a Deputy Electoral Officer.

It was noted that the Council's appointed Electoral Registration Officer is the Interim Chief Executive and one of the key responsibilities of that role is to hold hearings in respect of any reviews of registration or objections received for an application to be included on the Register of Electors. These hearings have a legislated timescale and as such there may be occasions when the Interim Chief Executive may not be available leaving the Council in breach of the legislation. Therefore it was recommended that a permanent appointment be made to the post of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer in order to remove that risk.

Members were advised that although the Electoral Services Manager would also have the authority to allow and disallow applications for registration, he would be unable to act as he would have taken the original decision.

Following consideration of its content it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained within the Officer's report be approved and by way of the electronic voting system this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Head of Legal Services be appointed as the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer.

8 STANDARDS COMMITTEE – APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval for the appointment of an Independent Member to the Standards Committee and to consider the recommendation for the appointment of two reserves.

Members were advised that an Appointment Panel had been established to consider all the applications received. The Panel's composition comprised of an Elected Member, a Community Councillor, the Chair of the Standards Committee and the High Sheriff of Gwent, who acted as the Lay Panel Member.

Four candidates met the criteria and were invited for interview on the 21st January 2019 following the interviews, the Panel considered that one of the candidates should be considered for immediate appointment and two of the candidates should be invited to be reserves for any further future vacancies. It was noted that two further vacancies for independent members would arise in October this year, as the current Members have served the maximum 2 terms on the Standards Committee.

Members sought clarification on the recruitment and selection process with regard to candidate suitability and requested that consideration be given to providing a 'pen portrait' of recommended appointments so that Council can satisfy themselves of their suitability.

The Head of Legal Services confirmed the process the Panel had followed in order to make the recommendation before Council and if Members wished to see more background on future candidate this could be looked at going forward.

Having fully considered its content it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report be approved and by way of the electronic voting system and in noting there were 3 abstentions this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

- (i) Mr Christopher Finn be appointed for a period of 6 years as Independent Member of the Standards Committee;
- (ii) the establishment of a reserve list of Independent Members be approved and Mr Jonathan Card and Mrs Linda Davies be appointed to the Standards Committee for 6 years when the two further vacancies for Independent Members of the Standards Committee become available in October 2019.

The meeting closed at 18:45pm

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2019 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR