

THE COUNCIL THURSDAY, 2 MARCH 2017

Present: Councillor Eric Merfyn Jones (Chair);
Councillor Annwen Daniels (Vice-chair)

Councillors: Craig ab Iago, Stephen Churchman, Endaf Cooke, Anwen Davies, Lesley Day, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Thomas Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Dylan Fernley, Jean Forsyth, Gweno Glyn, Simon Glyn, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Gwen Griffith, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, Sian Wyn Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Peredur Jenkins, Aeron M. Jones, Aled Wyn Jones, Anne Lloyd Jones, Charles W. Jones, Dyfrig Jones, Elin Walker Jones, John Wynn Jones, Linda A. W. Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, June E. Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Dewi Owen, Edgar Wyn Owen, Michael Sol Owen, W. Roy Owen, W. Tudor Owen, Nigel Pickavance, Caerwyn Roberts, Gareth A. Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, W. Gareth Roberts, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Hefin Underwood, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Hefin Williams, John Wyn Williams, Owain Williams, R. H. Wyn Williams and Mandy Williams-Davies.

Officers present:

Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards and Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Directors), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department / Head of Democratic Services), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer), Rhun ap Gareth (Senior Solicitor / Deputy Monitoring Officer), Arwel E. Jones (Senior Corporate Support Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Member Support Officer).

Also: Anthony Williams (Strategic Planning and Performance Officer) - for item 9 on the agenda, Ffion Madog Evans (Senior Finance Manager) – for item 11 on the agenda, Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department) and Rhion Glyn (Senior Business Manager) - for item 18 on the agenda, Aled Gibbard (Senior Operational Manager – Care Resources) – for item 19 on the agenda, Sion Huws (Senior Solicitor) – for item 20 on the agenda and Gwyn Morris Jones (Head of Highways and Municipal Department) - for item 21 on the agenda.

Apologies: Councillors Trevor Edwards, Chris Hughes, Brian Jones, Peter Read, Mair Rowlands and Glyn Thomas.

1. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 8 December 2016 as a true record.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer noted that the chief officers present would be leaving the chamber for item 10 on the agenda 'Annual Review - Council's Pay Policy', as the report related to their salaries. All chief officers, with the exception of the Chief Executive, would leave at the beginning of the discussion and then the Head of Corporate Support Department would return for other employment matters and then the Chief Executive would withdraw in order to give members an opportunity to raise any specific matter regarding the Chief Executive's salary.

THE COUNCIL Thursday, 2 March 2017

The Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Head of Finance Department, Head of Corporate Support Department and the Head of Legal Service / Monitoring Officer declared a personal interest in this item as the report related to their salaries.

They were of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest and the Corporate Directors, Head of Finance Department and Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officers left the meeting during the entire discussion, and the Chief Executive and Head of Corporate Support Department also left during a section of the discussion, on the item.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences

Condolences were expressed to Councillor Mair Rowlands on the death of her grandmother.

It was also noted that the Council wished to express condolences to everyone in the county's communities who had lost loved ones recently.

The Council stood in silence as a mark of respect.

Best wishes

Best wishes were extended to the following

- Councillor Peter Read, following a recent operation, and also Councillors Trevor Edwards and Brian Jones who were currently suffering from ill-health.
- The daughter of Councillor Louise Hughes, who had received two organ transplants recently, and everyone was reminded of the importance of organ donation.
- Dinas Mawddwy Young Farmers on winning the half an hour of entertainment competition in Meirionnyddshire, and they were wished well in the final in Port Talbot on Saturday.
- All members who would be standing in the May elections.

Welcome

Councillor Peter Read was welcomed back following his recent ill-health.

Congratulations

Councillor Gethin Williams and his wife were congratulated on their recent wedding in Gretna Green.

Word of Thanks

As this was his last meeting in the chair, the Chair thanked his fellow members for every support over the past year.

4. DECLARATION BY COUNCIL LEADER

The Leader gave a declaration as a result of announcing his intention to stand down from his role as Leader and a councillor for the Penygroes ward in May. He noted that he had been Council Leader since 2008 and that his successor would inherit a stable and ambitious Council that had made a difference for the better to the communities and people of the county. He referred to a number of the Council's successes over this term, despite the challenging financial context, and he noted that every member of the Council had played their part in this success.

Members were thanked for their contribution and commitment, not only to their wards, but to Gwynedd as a whole. He also thanked the leaders of the political groups for the collaboration, and to the members of his own group for their backing, to the Deputy Leader for his support and to the Chair and Vice-chair for their pastoral work. He expressed his appreciation for the staff's commitment to the Council's work and thanked those members of staff who had assisted him over the years, Bethan, Einir and Llywela, and the Cabinet Team in general. He expressed particular gratitude to the Chief Executive for his work and willingness to embrace change and for leading by example.

The Chair thanked the leader for his declaration, and on behalf of all members, he thanked him for his leadership to the Council over the years, and he wished him well in the future.

The Deputy Leader expressed his appreciation of the Leader's firm and wise leadership and noted that he had represented this Council on a national and international level in a dignified manner. He had also managed to extend across the parties by tireless lobbying and commitment to the people of Gwynedd.

The Chief Executive thanked the Leader, on behalf of the staff, for his sound and clear leadership and his ability to challenge in a constructive and supportive way.

5. QUESTIONS

Question from Councillor R. H. Wyn Williams

"What profits / grants has Gwynedd Council received over the past 10 years through the European Union together with other grants received through partnerships / business in Gwynedd during the 10 year period?"

Councillor Mandy Williams-Davies, Cabinet Member for Economy and Community responded

(The Cabinet Member's written response to the original question was distributed to the members in advance).

"Since 2007, Gwynedd Council has received £48.5m in funding from European Union Funds which has enabled a total investment of £89.6m in the county. Other bodies in Gwynedd, such as Bangor University, as you can see, receive substantial funding. The question refers to the money, however, I believe, when approaching my daily work over the past two years, what I wish to draw attention to is what this money has enabled, namely supporting jobs and supporting ideas, and this, I believe, is the important thing to measure in respect of the money."

Supplementary question from Councillor R. H. Wyn Williams

"How does the Council envisage the loss of so much assistance in the future and where and what are the future patterns?"

Councillor Mandy Williams-Davies, Cabinet Member for Economy and Community responded

"This is quite a question and I can only answer by drawing on my experiences from the discussions I have held in light of my post as Cabinet Member. I envisage changes from many directions, that there will be collaboration between the six counties across the North, which is a good thing, but to be party to that money, I believe that the direction of the Westminster Government will be to spend on specific infrastructure and industries. We must be included in those discussions. It is important to be part of the infrastructure

to electrify the Railway in the North, etc. However, there is a draw for this collaboration to extend across the urban areas, the Northern Powerhouse, and the south is working with Bristol. And there is also a draw that concerns me somewhat. The projects you see on the list are specific projects for a specific purpose and they are easy to measure and have a good influence, I believe. We have already listed projects that have been successful in Gwynedd. There is a risk that we will lose these small projects at the detriment of being a part of the major infrastructure discussions, and this is my concern. Further on in the agenda, we will be discussing local government reorganisation and I believe that this is where our contribution as a Council will lie, i.e. that we ensure that any reorganisation and regional collaboration ensures that our voice is heard regarding those small things that make an actual difference to people's lives and opportunities, as well as infrastructure. Therefore, a lot of work is facing us. Possibly, money will return to Wales as match funding, however, we must ensure that we reap the economic benefits, that it is not a benefit to the urban regions, but a benefit to the lives of real people. This is why we need a strong economy, in order to maintain communities, and we must ensure that the cake is shared fairly across Wales, and not just to the areas on the urban fringes. Therefore, there is considerable work to be done, but that is where I believe the challenge lies."

6. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN 2017/18

The Leader submitted a report recommending that the Council adopted the Gwynedd Council Plan 2017/18, which was a one year extension to the Gwynedd Council Strategic Plan 2013-17 and also to bridge the period between the Strategic Plan and the new plan that would be prepared and adopted by the Council elected in May.

During the discussion the following matters were raised:

- In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that money had been earmarked in the budget as commitment to fund the plans to improve what required additional resources in order to continue to achieve its commitments.
- It was noted that the percentage of Council expenditure with local businesses had dropped from 40.42% in 2014/15 to 38% in 2015/16 and a request was made for commitment that the Council spent more locally rather than outside the county. In response, it was explained that a relatively strict measure was used to measure the expenditure but that work was in the pipeline to attempt to change that and that work was also continuing to increase local expenditure.

RESOLVED to adopt the Gwynedd Council Plan 2017/18.

7. ANNUAL REVIEW - COUNCIL'S PAY POLICY 2017/18

The Cabinet Member for Resources submitted a report recommending that the Council approved the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18. It was noted that the Chief Officers Appointment Committee had considered the Pay Policy at its meeting on 16 February 2017 and recommended that the Council adopted it.

During the discussion the following matters were raised:

- Enquiries were made as to whether or not the policy of not exempting former officers, who had received redundancy, based on excessive staffing, or pension payments, from being re-employed. The Chief Executive reported that there was an intention to do so in the new Council.
- A question was raised regarding funding an increase of 7% in the salaries of chief officers. The Chief Executive replied by noting that any salary increase that had occurred years ago did not have anything to do with the current Pay Policy but that the member was welcome to approach him at the end of the meeting to discuss the matter further.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Chief Officer Appointment Committee for the Council to adopt a draft of the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18 in Appendix 1 of the report.

8. 2017-18 BUDGET AND 2017/18 - 2019/20 FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Cabinet Member for Resources submitted:

- A report recommending a budget for the Council's approval for 2017/18.
- An appendix detailing issues to consider when setting the budget, along with the medium-term strategy.
- The draft decision on the Council Tax based on the Cabinet's recommendation to the Council (based on an increase of 2.8%), along with tables showing the Council Tax level and the increase per community.

The Cabinet Member noted that the process of establishing the Council's Financial Strategy had been an inclusive process of collaboration and he thanked the Chief Executive, the Research Unit, the Head of Finance Department and the staff of the Finance Department for their collaboration over the past five years.

During the discussion, it was noted:

- That the Council had approved spending money under items 6 and 7 above, but was making a decision on raising money here. In response, the Head of Finance Department noted that those decisions involved moving on with matters already included in the budget.
- That efficiency savings led to a reduction in staff numbers and this meant that councillors were unable to contact anyone to pass on complaints. In response, the Cabinet Member noted that efficiency savings were not cuts and that services could be maintained more effectively without cutting staff. The Head of Finance Department added, as a result of the efficiency savings and the cuts that had already been approved, that it would be reasonable to generate approximately £1m of further efficiency savings in order to keep the tax on the recommended level and that these efficiency savings would not affect ratepayers.
- That the decision to get rid of the disability officer had had an impact.
- That the ratepayers of Anglesey and Ceredigion were paying less than Gwynedd ratepayers, and although the fact that Gwynedd had received the best settlement in Wales this year was welcomed, this was a very poor county and people who already experienced difficulties in making two ends meet would find it difficult to cope with the increase.
- That restricting the increase in Council tax to 1.5% would bring Gwynedd closer to Anglesey and other neighbours. It was also noted that the level of inflation was below 2% by now.
- That there was also pressure on community and town councils and the Police Authority to increase their precepts and that an increase of 2.8% was very reasonable.
- That the cuts of £4.3m in the field of education was hitting the primary sector which meant that children were moving up into the secondary sector without achieving the expected standard and that this, in turn, led to additional work with fewer resources.
- That people saw themselves paying more for fewer services.
- That the tax on a Band D property in Gwynedd was more expensive than a Band D house in Cardiff and Gwynedd had the sixth highest rates in 2016.
- That an increase of only 2% in the tax would lead to a reduction of £13 per annum to Band D residents and to an income of £1.47m rather than £2.06m. The

THE COUNCIL Thursday, 2 March 2017

Council would have balances of £5m at the end of March and £0.5m could be used from those balances to balance the budget. In response, the Chief Executive explained that the increase of 2.8% was required to meet the deficit and that funding from balances for this year would mean that £0.5m additional savings would need to be identified next year on top of the £1m already identified.

It was proposed and seconded to increase the council tax by 2% and use £0.5m from balances to bridge the gap and for the necessary additional savings to be identified next year.

The Head of Finance Department noted that the amendment would mean funding a permanent deficit from one-off use of balances and would, therefore, be contrary to robust financial planning principles, and the views of the Welsh Audit Office on this, as presented in part 8.6 of the report.

During the discussion on the amendment, it was noted:

- That community councils were charging additional rates to make good for the failure of this Council to provide the services they required and that an increase of 2.8% doubled the punishment on our communities.
- That it would be better to keep to an increase of 2% only until it would be known how much cuts the communities would be facing and how much tax community councils would have to charge to make good for those cuts.
- The Cabinet's decision to approve £275,000 towards recovering the area education offices was welcomed; however, it had been disappointing to hear that the Education Department was expected to identify savings by 2020 in order to make good for that.
- That the decision to freeze any cut to secondary schools was to be welcomed; however, it had to be ensured that the schools received a repayment from the contribution of £1,000 made by each of them from their budgets approximately 8-9 years ago, to keep Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, Caernarfon, afloat.
- Concern about those people on low salaries, but who were ineligible for benefits, and it was questioned as to whether or not the failure of those people to pay their council tax would ultimately be more costly to the Council.
- The floor of the Council chamber was not the place to propose a different budget and that it was concerning that some were proposing less than the recommended increase.
- From approving the recommendations, people could be told that there would be no further cuts and that there would be an injection of money to assist secondary schools. The 2.8% increase would also place the Council in a position to safeguard services and ensure an investment in those services also.
- That the strategy should be adhered to and that difficult decisions should not be delayed so that someone else would have to make them next year.
- That proposing to withdraw money from balances was like a stuck record heard every year and that it was not possible to withdraw £0.5m from balances every year.
- That it was unfair to compare Gwynedd's situation with that of Anglesey and Cardiff as more people were needed to do the same work in Gwynedd due to the demography of the county.
- That using balances to fund a revenue budget caused a problem for the future.
- That reducing the increase in the rate would lead to cuts in fields such as education and social services, which impacts the old and the young.
- That increasing the tax did not affect the poorest in society as they did not pay the rates anyway; however, cutting services did have a substantial impact on those people.
- Not every community council would be increasing the tax level.

THE COUNCIL Thursday, 2 March 2017

- That it would be better to increase the tax 2.8% now rather than make a much higher increase later on.
- That the gap between the rich and the poor was increasing and that the council tax did not help matters.
- That the amendment would allow the Council to consider the situation with new eyes during next year.
- That there was a need to work hard rather than keep the tax down.

Before taking a vote on the amendment, the Chief Executive explained the implications of this, noting:

- That additional efficiency savings of £2.96m were on track to be realised in 2018/19, in accordance with the requirements of the strategy in the medium term; however, there was still a need to identify another £3.7m for 2018/19.
- Should the new Council need to identify that money, they would need to return to the cuts list, and as an example of the price of not increasing the council tax sufficiently this year, he referred to the next four items on the list that would create £0.5m of cuts, namely closing Neuadd Dwyfor, reducing the public transport budget by 10%, closing eight recycling centres and closing two leisure centres (or four items lower down on the list could be selected, but these cuts would be worse in the views of the people of Gwynedd).
- Should the government cut the Council's grant more than expected by 2018/19, according to the worst forecast £7.3m in savings would need to be identified, i.e. an additional £3.6m of savings next year. Withdrawing a further £0.5m from the level of balances noted in the report would make it difficult to buy time to meet the worst case scenario when setting the budget for 2018/19, thus creating a substantially higher risk next year.

A vote was taken on the amendment to increase the council tax by 2% and it fell.

A vote was taken on the original proposal to increase the council tax by 2.8% and it was carried.

RESOLVED

1. To set a budget of £231,299,720 for 2017/18, to be funded by £168,963,540 of Government Grant and £62,336,180 of Council Tax income, with an increase of 2.8%.
2. To establish a capital programme of £12.015m in 2017/18 and £6.410m in 2018/19 to be funded from sources noted in clause 9.3 of the report.
3. To note that the Cabinet Member for Resources, in a decision notice dated 22 November 2016, approved the calculation of the following amounts for 2017/18 in accordance with Regulations made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("the Act"):

(a) 50,232.22 being the amount calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 as amended, as its Council Tax base for the year.

(b) Part of the Council's Area - Communities Tax Base -

Aberdaron	521.73	Llanddeiniolen	1,797.37
Aberdyfi	915.28	Llandderfel	484.05
Abergwyngregyn	116.25	Llanegryn	155.92
Abermaw (Barmouth)	1,089.22	Llanelltyd	277.33
Arthog	603.52	Llanengan	1,955.12
Y Bala	759.58	Llanfair	306.45
Bangor	3,752.56	Llanfihangel y Pennant	207.70

Beddgelert	314.22	Llanfrothen	215.74
Betws Garmon	132.87	Llangelynnin	392.62
Bethesda	1,656.05	Llangywer	135.09
Bontnewydd	433.54	Llanllechid	334.49
Botwnnog	430.29	Llanllyfni	1,385.04
Brithdir	a		
Llanfachreth	403.86	Llannor	897.86
Bryncrug	333.65	Llanrug	1,128.07
Buan	221.19	Llanuwchllyn	306.73
Caernarfon	3,467.91	Llanwnda	766.22
Clynnog Fawr	440.58	Llanycil	195.26
Corris	291.48	Llanystumdwy	856.31
Cricieth	916.60	Maentwrog	272.30
Dolbenmaen	585.70	Mawddwy	333.19
Dolgellau	1,190.95	Nefyn	1,380.07
Dyffryn Ardudwy	773.53	Pennal	216.03
Y Felinheli	1,122.95	Penrhyndeudraeth	760.14
Ffestiniog	1,687.96	Pentir	1,067.54
Y Ganllwyd	78.91	Pistyll	243.50
Harlech	747.37	Porthmadog	1,947.97
Llanaelhaearn	429.82	Pwllheli	1,713.23
Llanbedr	313.90	Talsarnau	306.91
Llanbedrog	677.91	Trawsfynydd	499.78
Llanberis	769.47	Tudweiliog	444.98
Llandwrog	996.86	Tywyn	1,552.99
Llandygai	964.62	Waunfawr	555.89

being the amounts calculated 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.

4. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2017/2018 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Act:

(a) £347,986,230 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act (gross expenditure).

(b) £114,986,280 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 (income).

(c) £232,999,950 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year (net budget).

(ch) £168,668,537 Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable during the year into its fund in respect of National Non-domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant, less the estimated cost to the Council of discretionary non-domestic rate relief granted.

(d) £1,280.68 Being the amount in 3(c) above less the amount at 3(ch) above, all divided by the amount at 2(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. (Gwynedd Council tax and average community council tax).

(dd) £1,995,230 Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (community council precepts).

(e) £1,240.96 Being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(dd) above by the amount at 3(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 (Band D for Gwynedd Council tax only).

(f) For parts of the Council's Area - Community

Aberdaron	1,265.88	Llanddeiniolen	1,252.09
Aberdyfi	1,275.39	Llandderfel	1,263.68
Abergwyngregyn	1,262.47	Llanegryn	1,273.03
Abermaw (Barmouth)	1,288.70	Llanelltyd	1,268.00
Arthog	1,256.29	Llanengan	1,266.53
Y Bala	1,269.92	Llanfair	1,270.33
Bangor	1,336.01	Llanfihangel y Pennant	1,292.74
Beddgelert	1,268.65	Llanfrothen	1,267.84
Betws Garmon	1,260.53	Llangelynnin	1,260.83
Bethesda	1,276.28	Llangywer	1,270.57
Bontnewydd	1,276.71	Llanllechid	1,263.38
Botwnnog	1,252.58	Llanllyfni	1,270.10
Brithdir a Llanfachreth	1,255.82	Llannor	1,257.84
Bryncrug	1,276.93	Llanrug	1,268.44
Buan	1,257.91	Llanuwchllyn	1,273.56
Caernarfon	1,298.20	Llanwnda	1,271.24
Clynnog Fawr	1,268.20	Llanycil	1,261.45
Corris	1,265.91	Llanystumdwy	1,258.48
Cricieth	1,278.05	Maentwrog	1,262.75
Dolbenmaen	1,258.03	Mawddwy	1,264.97
Dolgellau	1,286.30	Nefyn	1,284.86
Dyffryn Ardudwy	1,279.41	Pennal	1,268.73
Y Felinheli	1,272.13	Penrhyndeudraeth	1,285.69
Ffestiniog	1,329.82	Pentir	1,282.18
Y Ganllwyd	1,275.18	Pistyll	1,275.87
Harlech	1,265.71	Porthmadog	1,269.53
Llanaelhaearn	1,299.12	Pwllheli	1,282.99
Llanbedr	1,286.18	Talsarnau	1,289.83
Llanbedrog	1,266.04	Trawsfynydd	1,272.97
Llanberis	1,266.95	Tudweiliog	1,254.44
Llandwrog	1,282.09	Tywyn	1,296.34

Llandygai	1,262.32	Waunfawr	1,262.55
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being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(e) above the amounts of the special item or items to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount of 2(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.

(ff) In respect of part of the Council's area, the figures noted in Appendix 1, being the amounts given by multiplying the sums specified in 3(f) 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 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.

5. That it be noted that for the year 2017/2018 the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales has stated the following amounts in a precept 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:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Band I
166.14	193.83	221.52	249.21	304.59	359.97	415.35	498.42	581.49

6. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(ff) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, hereby sets the amounts noted in Appendix 2 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2017/2018 for each of the categories of dwellings shown therein.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STRATEGY AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2017/18

Submitted - the report of the Cabinet Member for Resources requesting that the Council adopt the proposed strategies.

It was noted that the strategies had been submitted to the Audit Committee on 9 February, where the proposals had been accepted in principle, further to questions from members, and whereby the Committee had recommended that the Council adopted the strategies.

The Vice-chair of the Audit Committee thanked Arlingclose, the Council's treasury consultants, for their clear explanation of the various risks.

RESOLVED to adopt the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2017/18 (Appendix A), the Prudential Indicators (Appendix B) and the Treasury Management Schedules (Appendix C).

10. WALES INVESTMENT POOL - INTER-AUTHORITY AGREEMENT

The Chair of the Pensions Committee submitted a report that:

- Noted the background of the investment pool arrangements across the eight Local Authority Pension Funds in Wales and the need to formally commit to an agreement between the funds to establish administrative and governance arrangements to manage the pool arrangements.
- To recommend the Inter-Authority Agreement to the Council.

In response to an enquiry, the Head of Finance Department expanded on the role and responsibilities of the Pensions Committee following the establishment of the new Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that the Council:

1. **Notes the content of the draft Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) attached at Appendix A to and delegates authority to the Head of Finance Department, in consultation with the Chair of the Pensions Committee and Head of Legal Services, to approve and execute the final version of the IAA.**
2. **Approves the establishment of a Joint Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Joint Governance Committee) on conclusion of the IAA referred to in recommendation 1 above and based on the terms of reference attached.**
3. **Delegates the exercise of certain functions to the Joint Governance Committee as set out in the terms of reference and notes those functions that are reserved to Council.**
4. **Approves the appointment of the Chair of the Pension Fund Committee or his/her Deputy nominated by the Pensions Committee to the Joint Governance Committee as Gwynedd Council representative.**
5. **Where specifically required to give effect to the terms of the Inter Authority Agreement delegates to the nominated representative of the Gwynedd Council authority to act within the terms of reference of the Joint Governance Committee to enable the exercise of any delegated function.**
6. **Approves that Carmarthenshire County Council (Dyfed Pension Fund) acts as Host Council with the responsibilities set out in the Inter Authority Agreement.**
7. **Delegates authority to the Head of Finance Department in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to agree any further minor amendments to the IAA.**

11. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

Submitted - the report of the Chair of the Audit Committee submitting the recommendations of the Audit Committee on the new scrutiny model for May 2017.

The Deputy Leader set out the context before the Vice-chair of the Audit Committee submitted the recommendations in the absence of the committee's Chair.

It was suggested that a report should be submitted back to the full Council on the successes / failures of the new scrutiny system, regardless of which model would be adopted.

The following observations were submitted in favour of Option 1 (one scrutiny committee model):

- The membership of the committee would take an overview and ensure that the scrutiny matters were things that really needed to be scrutinised.
- The committee's meetings would coincide with the Cabinet's meetings so that Cabinet decisions could be tracked and then discuss with Cabinet Members.
- The committee would be able to ensure that the investigations had been carried out thoroughly.
- The balance in terms of the fields would be determined by the scrutiny committee therefore it could place emphasis on whatever matters it wished.

- Removed silos and the attention that needed to be given to each Council department.
- Councillors would better understand how the Council worked as a whole.

The following observations were submitted in favour of Option 2 (three scrutiny committee model):

- It would share the burden rather than place all the pressure on one scrutiny committee that would also be accountable for all scrutiny investigations.
- It would separate the fields of Education and Social Services that were collectively responsible for 80% of the Council's expenditure.
- It would be easier to ensure quality scrutiny by having a better grasp of subjects.
- The one Scrutiny Committee model would be nothing more than a shadow cabinet without the responsibility.
- It would be impossible for one committee of 15 members to provide an overview of all matters across the Council.

An amendment was proposed and seconded that the Council adopted a three scrutiny committee model. As the result of the vote on the amendment was tied, the Chair used his casting vote in favour of the amendment. Consequently, the amendment had carried.

RESOLVED

- 1. To move to the three scrutiny committee model shown in Appendix 2 of the report with its advantages and disadvantages as the best model for the new Council.**
- 2. To adopt recommendations (a) to (f) in paragraphs 9.1 to 9.5 in the report, namely:**
 - (a) Establish a system of regular discussion sessions.**
 - (b) that the work programme for the year includes a higher proportion of matters that will be submitted for prior scrutiny.**
 - (c) That a procedure should be obtained where Cabinet Members invite scrutiny members to them to undertake specific work on policy development.**
 - (ch) That the Leadership Team regular monitor the Council's Corporate Risk Register with the scrutineers.**
 - (d) That more emphasis is placed on justifying why a matter is being scrutinised.**
 - (dd) To present a new concept of "Gwyntyllu".**
 - (e) That the performance scrutiny pilot becomes a part of the Council's regular arrangements.**
 - (f) That the Council identifies early the fields of interest and skills of individual members.**
- 3. That the Monitoring Officer submits a report to the next meeting of the Council recommending consequential amendments to the Constitution to implement the Council's decision.**

12. COMMITTEES CALENDAR 2017/18

This item was withdrawn as the calendar had been based on a one scrutiny committee model, namely the original recommendation of the Audit Committee to the Council, and it was agreed that an amended calendar would be submitted to the Annual Council on 18 May based on the three scrutiny committee model.

13. APPOINTING A LAY MEMBER TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report that he had prepared jointly with the Head of Finance Department requesting the Council to approve the procedure recommended in the report for the appointment of a lay member to the Audit Committee.

The recommendation was proposed by the Vice-chair of the Audit Committee.

A member questioned the purpose of the function, however the Monitoring Officer explained that it was mandatory to have at least one lay member on the committee in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

RESOLVED to approve the system recommended in the report for the appointment of a lay member to the Audit Committee.

14. WHITE PAPER – LOCAL GOVERNMENT - RESILIENCE AND RENEWAL

The Leader submitted a report inviting the Council to consider and amend draft observations prepared as a basis to the Council's response to the main proposals and questions of Welsh Government's White Paper on local government reform.

During the discussion, it was noted:

- That morale was low in the community councils as a result of having to accept more responsibilities by this Council. The Leader replied that the White Paper referred to the need to respond to the change in the situation of town and community councils and to carry out further work in order to see what structure of community councils would be needed in the future in order to be suitable to cope with the new contexts.
- That the White Paper gave everyone everything, however, when going under the surface, strong signs of centralising services for the North Wales region could be seen. The questions that had been posed related to peripheral issues that were easy to answer; however, a question should be asked about the purpose of a local authority and the principles of democracy and accountability should things be taken away from the councils and given to some regional body? Also, there was a confusion of partnerships across the North which was almost impossible to comprehend. Who was responsible for making decisions and where and when would they be scrutinised and by whom? There was a risk that Gwynedd Council would not have much to do in ten years' time. Everything would have been taken somewhere else and what impact would that have on our Welsh language policy?
- That there was a need to make strong general comments expressing concern regarding the journey that was commencing here to centralise services into a North Wales region level. This was also contrary to the Local Services Boards which had been established by another piece of legislation and what would be their subsequent role? There was a risk of duplicating work and the situation was very confusing.
- If Assembly Members would be prevented from standing as councillors, it was assumed that it would not be possible for councillors to stand as Assembly Members either. In the past, individuals had been seen to serve as councillors whilst being Assembly Members and appointment to both posts did not prevent an individual from carrying out their work in full.
- The Paper did not address the six month rule and this needed to be tightened.
- The document raised doubts regarding regional operation. There was reference to GwE here, for example, and to the value of it at the end of the day. There was also reference to the role of councillors and it was questioned whether or not moving to a regional model would make it more difficult to engage with the public. It mentioned that councils themselves should decide upon their own committees system, and this was to be praised. In response, the Leader noted that he had argued in favour of reorganisation along robust lines; however, he

THE COUNCIL Thursday, 2 March 2017

did not share the same enthusiasm for reorganisation that appeared loose and vague with a lack of accountability. He also noted that it was strange that matters such as a committees system and voting system were optional within legislation.

- That vague legislation, that did not tie-in together, made it more difficult to operate as a councillor and for the public to understand who was responsible. Regional committees were far away from the public. The whole thing did not tie-in together. The various recommendations had been collated in an untidy and loose manner.
- The role of local government in the twenty-first century should be the starting point; however, nobody seemed to be looking at that.
- That all powers had been stolen from local government, thus leaving councils with many responsibilities, but not many powers. Should these powers be transferred back, councils would not have to consider sharing services because there would be a sufficient purpose to their existence. Also, there was a tendency to believe that the answer was to be found at the top, rather than at the bottom.
- That councillors served on regional bodies as members of the board, rather than as members of Gwynedd Council, and made decisions on behalf of the board. This was not democracy.
- That the White Paper did not address the situation where individuals fooled electors by changing parties after being elected to the Council. The Leader replied that the White Paper, on the whole, related to the structures of local government, rather than the system of electing councillors or their terms of service; however, a comment of this type could be included if desired.

RESOLVED to accept the draft observations as the basis to the Council's response to the White Paper - Local Government - Resilience and Renewal.

15. NORTH WALES POPULATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being submitted a report recommending that the Council approved the North Wales Population Needs Assessment Report produced in accordance with the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Alongside this, in order to respond to the legislative requirements in full, and in accordance with the Cabinet's recommendation (14 February 2017), there would be a need to ensure that a Gwynedd-specific version of the Population Needs Assessment Report would be produced soon.

The accuracy of the population projections that anticipated an increase in Gwynedd but a reduction in Anglesey was questioned, because if Wylfa B would be realised, the island's population would increase substantially. In response, the Cabinet Member explained that the report was an annual assessment of annual needs, and as time progressed and information became clearer, the content would be amended to reflect the situation at the time.

RESOLVED to approve the North Wales Population Needs Assessment produced in accordance with the requirement of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

16. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GWYNEDD CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 2016/17

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Leisure, the Cabinet Member for Education submitted the annual report of the Corporate Parenting Panel which highlighted the role and responsibilities of the Council to act as corporate parents to looked after children, shared information about the panel's implementation over the 2016/17 year and outlines the panel's intentions for the future.

The panel was asked to consider establishing a working group to consider the impact of welfare reform on the numbers of children coming into care. The Cabinet Member agreed that the figures had increased somewhat; however, he emphasised that the increase would have been much greater without the efforts of the Edge of Care Team to prevent children from coming into care.

17. REPORT OF THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION WALES

The Deputy Leader submitted a report seeking approval from the Council for officers to draw up draft proposals for the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission Wales in the period prior to the election in order to meet a challenging timetable.

During the discussion the following matters were raised:

- It was asked whether or not a consultation would be held with town and community councils prior to the election. The Chief Executive noted that the end of May was the closing date for observations for everyone, excluding this Council. Should the community councils wish to present comments to the Commission, it was important for them to do so and it would be beneficial if they would send a copy of their responses to this Council also. If community councils wished to see the draft proposals of this Council first, they would have to wait until the beginning of May. As a result, he would advise them to meet in May, however, he suggested that the member should come to see him if he wished to receive a further explanation.
- It was asked whether or not the review would also include ratepayers as there were more ratepayers than electors in a number of areas. The Chief Executive replied noting that he was almost certain that ratepayers as such would not count.
- In response to an enquiry regarding the cost of this review and also the White Paper on local government reform, the Chief Executive noted that he could make enquiries, but that it would be the government, rather than the Council, who would be responsible for any costs.
- It was suggested that the Commission did not understand the geography of this county. The Chief Executive replied noting that this was why it was important for this Council to propose observations.

RESOLVED that the Council acts pro-actively in order to make proposals to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission Wales within a proposed timetable to be agreed with them, and follow the steps noted below in order to act as follows:-

- **Pre-election period: Officers to create draft proposals and consult (where required and where possible within the timetable), with relevant members and community councils.**
- **Share draft proposals with all new Council members following the election.**
- **The Audit Committee (as those charged with governance) to consider the proposals and observations from members and to decide upon the draft recommendations to be submitted to the Council.**
- **The Full Council in June 2017 to make a decision on the proposals to be submitted to the Commission.**

18. NOTICES OF MOTION

Submitted - the following notice of motion by Councillor Lesley Day, in accordance with Section 4.20 of the Constitution and it was seconded:

"Many parts of Gwynedd are suffering from problems caused by those who persist in disposing of household rubbish on the wrong day or in the wrong way.

Recyclable waste is sent to landfill, overflowing bins are left out on pavements. Rats and seagulls scatter the waste further. Our hard working officers and refuse collectors work incredibly hard to deal with the mess but cannot cope with the scale of the problem. The result is hazardous to health and the environment. Ultimately there will be massive costs for the Council as we fail to reach our recycling targets. Yet the offenders get away with it. No one is fined or punished.

I call upon the Council to request the Cabinet Member for Environment to consider introducing effective sanctions as a matter of priority and that the matter should be reviewed by Scrutiny Committee by December 2017."

In response to the proposal, the Cabinet Member for Environment noted:

- That there was a need to be very cautious by issuing a fine or penalty as some people were elderly and confused, or did not understand the system.
- That the Council was entitled to fine people for placing the wrong materials in the wrong bins or for putting out bins on the wrong days, but there was a need to consider the implications of that to the Council.
- That it was suggested that the new-look Communities Scrutiny Committee established an investigation into the matter as one of its first functions.

During the discussion, it was noted:

- There was a need to address this environmental problem that caused a health risk as well as a financial risk to the Council.
- That everyone could do as they pleased and that there was no incentive to make people improve.
- That the refuse collection arrangements worked well in some areas but the system needed to be reviewed in areas with a high density of homes as people did not have enough room to store bins and recycling boxes.
- That community bins were also problematic.
- That companies used excessive packaging materials for foodstuffs.

RESOLVED to adopt the proposal.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 5.10 pm

CHAIRMAN