
THE COUNCIL 4/03/21

Present: Councillor Edgar Wyn Owen (Chair);
Councillor Simon Glyn (Vice-chair).

Councillors:- Craig ab Iago, Menna Baines, Freya Bentham, Dylan Bullard, Stephen Churchman, Steve Collings, Annwen Daniels, R.Glyn Daniels, Anwen Davies, Elwyn Edwards, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Dylan Fernley, Peter Antony Garlick, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, R.Medwyn Hughes, Judith Humphreys, Nia Jeffreys, Peredur Jenkins, Aeron M.Jones, Aled Wyn Jones, Anne Lloyd Jones, Berwyn Parry Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Elwyn Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones, Gareth Tudor Morris Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Keith Jones, Kevin Morris Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Dafydd Owen, Dewi Owen, W.Roy Owen, Jason Parry, Rheinallt Puw, Peter Read, Dewi Wyn Roberts, Elfed P.Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Paul Rowlinson, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Hefin Underwood, Catrin Wager, Cemlyn Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gareth Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams and Owain Williams.

Officers:

Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer), Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department / Head of Democracy Service), Sion Huws (Senior Solicitor - Corporate), Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

Also in attendance:

Dafydd Gibbard (Head of Housing and Property Department) and Dewi Morgan (Assistant Head – Revenue and Risk) (for item 8), Eurig Huw Williams (Human Resources Advisory Services Manager) (for item 9), Dewi Jones (Council Business Support Service Manager) (for item 10) and Ffion Madog Evans (Senior Finance Manager) (for item 11).

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Nigel Pickavance and Gareth A. Roberts.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of the Council held on 3 December, 2020 as a true record.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Members had received a guidance note from the Monitoring Officer in advance regarding item 8 on the agenda – Council Tax: Discretionary Powers to Allow Discounts and / or Charge a Premium 2021/22.

The following members declared a personal interest in item 8 on the agenda - Council Tax: Discretionary Powers to Allow Discounts and / or Charge a Premium 2021/22:-

- Councillor Aled Wyn Jones because a close relative of his had a second home and holiday homes in Gwynedd.
- Councillor Elfed Roberts because a close connection of his paid the tax on a second home.
- Councillor Menna Baines because she was a joint owner of an empty property.
- Councillor Gethin Glyn Williams as close connections of his had empty properties and second homes.
- Councillor Angela Russell because she owned a second home.
- Councillor Linda Morgan because she had family who owned second homes and a connection with somebody who paid the premium.
- Councillor Anwen Daniels because a close relative of hers had a second home in her ward.
- Councillor Peredur Jenkins because he had registered in two homes, Hafod and Hendre.
- Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn as he had a close connection to a person who paid the premium for second homes and empty properties.
- Councillor Dewi Roberts as he had a close connection to a person who had a second home.

The members were of the opinion that they were prejudicial interests, and they withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

The Monitoring Officer declared a personal interest in item 9, 'Annual Review - Council's Pay Policy 2021/22' - on behalf of the chief officers who were present, as the report involved their salaries.

Along with the Corporate Director, the Head of Finance and the Head of Corporate Support, the Monitoring Officer left the meeting during the discussion on the item.

4. THE CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences were expressed to the family of Lucille Hughes, the former Head of Social Services, Gwynedd County Council, who had died recently.

The Chief Executive paid tribute to Gwenan Parry, the former Head of Customer Care and former Head of Adults, Health and Well-being at the Council, who had died recently, and he expressed his sincerest sympathy to the family in their bereavement.

Councillor Owain Williams paid tribute to the late John B. Jenkins.

It was also noted that the Council wished to sympathise with everyone within the county's communities who had recently lost loved ones.

The Council stood in silence as a mark of respect and remembrance.

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd was welcomed to the meeting following recent ill-health.

It was noted, to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March, that the Council intended to launch a page on the Council's intranet, which was a part of the Women in Leadership Project Group, where relevant information on the subject would be shared with Council staff. Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director, would create a video to emphasise the importance of the date, and the Communications Team would circulate a video to celebrate the achievements of famous women from the county.

It was noted that the Council would be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary at the beginning of April and during that period, it had been fortunate to have three talented Chief Executives, namely Geraint R. Jones, Harry Thomas and Dilwyn Williams, the current Chief Executive. However, as Mr Williams had declared his intention to retire, the Council would move forward to the next twenty-five years, under the leadership of a new Chief Executive.

The Leader expressed his gratitude to Dilwyn Williams, on behalf of all members, for his service over the years, and he was wished every happiness on his retirement.

5. CORRESPONDENCE, COMMUNICATIONS, OR ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None to note.

6. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

7. QUESTIONS

No questions were received.

8. COUNCIL TAX: DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO ALLOW DISCOUNTS AND / OR CHARGE A PREMIUM 2021/22

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Iwan Thomas, presented a report asking the Council for formal confirmation for 2021/22, of the previous decisions not to give discounts to second homes and to disallow discounts on empty properties, and to raise a premium of 100% on such relevant properties.

The Assistant Head of Finance (Revenue and Risk) elaborated on the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to increase the Premium on second homes and long-term empty properties to up to 100% for the 2021/22 financial year, as well as the legal requirements. He also drew attention to the importance of the Equality Impact Assessment, and members were reminded that they had to consider this assessment when making their decision. An explanation and guidance was provided on the findings, and particular attention was given to the allegation that the proposal could indirectly discriminate groups with protected characteristics, and the need for members to balance this when making their decision.

Members of Council staff from various departments were thanked for ensuring the success of the public consultation.

A member noted that although he agreed with the Cabinet's opinion that there was increasing pressure on the local housing stock and that holiday home owners had the means to pay a bit more, he was concerned that the proposal to increase the availability of affordable housing by increasing the Premium meant that the Cabinet had misunderstood the situation. There was a risk that increasing the Premium by 100% would trigger more second home owners to let their properties and transfer them to the non-domestic rates, which would mean that those houses would be lost forever, as there were no powers available to get them back onto Domestic Rates. He did not believe that Welsh Government had done enough about the situation, and he believed that it should be a requirement to obtain planning permission to transfer houses to Non-domestic Rates. He expressed his concern that the Council would ultimately lose a lot of income, and he was of the opinion that it was premature to raise the Premium by 100%, and that it would be better to wait and see what the situation would be following the Welsh Senedd Election in May. On that basis, he proposed an amendment to stick to the current procedure of charging a 50% premium

for 2021/22, amending the second and third bullet-points of the recommendation in the report as follows:-

"For 2021/22, that Gwynedd Council:

- Allows NO discount and CHARGES A PREMIUM OF 50% on class B second homes, in accordance with Section 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- Allows NO discount on homes that have been empty for 6 months or more and CHARGES A PREMIUM OF 50% on homes that have been empty for 12 months or more for 2018/19, in accordance with Section 12A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992."

The amendment was seconded.

During the discussion on the amendment, other members supported the amendment on the basis:-

- That tourism was one of the main employers of the county, and a further increase in the Premium would lead to job losses in the tourism field.
- That the county's businesses were on their knees because of the pandemic, and increasing the premium would lead to further hardship for business owners, including local craftspeople, shops, pubs, restaurants, cafés, sailing and golf clubs and tourism attractions.
- That we were punishing our own people, bearing in mind that some second homes were in the ownership of local people who had inherited them, or who had gone away to work, and wished to return to Gwynedd to retire.
- That it was the Welsh people who had sold the houses to people from outside the area, but that it was not expected for anyone to sell a house to a local person for less than the market price.
- That the Welsh people did not wish to buy houses far from the villages, and that many young people were eager to have new and modern houses.
- That the planning regulations prevented professional young people from building houses in their own villages, because of their size, and despite the fact that a farmer could convert an outbuilding to let, he could not give it to his son, who worked on the farm, as a permanent residence.
- That the situation needed to be revisited and not to rush to increase the Premium at a time when we were trying to come out of the pandemic and get businesses back on their feet.
- That this was not the time to increase the Premium, particularly as the owners of second homes had only been able to use their houses for 2-3 months last year.
- That there was a risk that increasing the Premium to 100% could be interpreted as if the Council was anti-tourism, and the implications of this would be far-reaching as tourism brought so much income to Gwynedd.
- The Premium should be left at the current level of 50% for this year, and that the situation should be revisited in a year's time, in the hope that the situation with the pandemic would have improved by then.
- That the number of transfers to Business Rates had more than doubled since the introduction of a 50% Premium in 2016, and it would be sure to double again were the Premium to be increased to 100%.
- Rather than increasing the Premium, it would be better to charge an additional 1-2% on the Council Tax, if this money was to be spent on facilitating local young people's access to housing.
- The 4,500 responders who objected to increasing the Premium would be aware of the possibility to transfer to Business Rates as the Council was discussing that.
- That the perception that wealthy strangers owned second homes was a sweeping statement and misleading.

- An inability to see how increasing the Premium would help local people who could not afford houses, as the average house price in Wales now stood at £200,000.
- The Council could lose the money that it intended to invest in the Housing Strategy as an increasing number of second home owners transferred to Business Rates.
- That people had now accepted the 50% increase, and that they should stick with that.
- If people found it difficult to maintain a second home that they had inherited, they should consider selling them.
- That Welsh Government's attitude towards second homes was unacceptable and that the Well-being Act was completely meaningless.
- That there was a need to assert pressure in order to do something about the high number of empty homes in Gwynedd.
- Increasing the Premium would create a risk that the owners of second homes would sell their houses, and turn their backs on Gwynedd once and for all.
- That Gwynedd businesses would need the visitors' money when it was safe for them to return.
- That people questioned the purpose of participating in the consultation if the Council disregarded the responses.

Other members objected to the amendment on the basis that:-

- Although it was acknowledged that increasing the Premium to 100% would mean that more owners would transfer to the Business Rates, prioritisation had to be given to people who were unable to get a house over people with more than one house.
- That charging the Premium would create an income for the Council to assist young people and people on a low-income to buy homes in their own communities, which would also act as a tool to address social inequality in Gwynedd.
- That the discretion for councils to charge a Premium should be a means to assist them to recover the use made of long-term empty properties, in order to provide safe and affordable homes, and assist councils to increase the supply of affordable housing and improve the sustainability of local communities.
- That the £22.9m of Council Tax Premium expected to be collected over the plan period would contribute to a number of projects to support people in Gwynedd as part of the innovative Housing Action Plan, and that there was potential here to attract more money in order to do more to house the county's residents and start addressing the housing crisis.
- This was not an attempt to punish second-home owners, but rather provide a vision and achieve fairness for all residents of Gwynedd. Therefore, obtaining more money through this method would do more to house the people of Gwynedd and assist the Council to reduce injustice in the county.
- That the Council had a duty, under the Well-being of Future Generations Act, to ensure social justice, prosperous and sustainable communities, and to ensure safe and affordable homes for residents across Gwynedd. It was hoped that Welsh Government would also consider their responsibilities under the Act in the context of the second-home crisis, and ensure homes for people in their communities.
- That the report of Dr Simon Brooks, who had been commissioned by the Minister for Mental Health, Well-being and the Welsh Language, made 12 recommendations to Welsh Government to address the second-home crisis. One of those recommendations was that councils who discover that second-homes are a serious social problem should use their taxation powers in full, and charge a 100% Council Tax Premium on second-homes.
- Although it was acknowledged that there was an element of risk in terms of the loophole, it would be more sensible to charge the Premium, and at the same time,

ask the Government to adopt parallel policies in an attempt to persuade owners not to transfer property from Domestic Rates to Business Rates.

- That charging the Premium was only one solution to increase the supply of affordable housing and improve the sustainability of local communities, and that there was also a need to look at making short-term accommodation exempt from being eligible for small business rate relief and change the Planning Act so that it was mandatory to obtain planning consent to convert a dwelling house into a holiday home, or holiday unit.
- In terms of public policy, it would be more difficult to change planning legislation if we did not use the existing taxation powers.
- That some objectors were saying that their second home had been in the family for generations, and that they were used to coming to Gwynedd on holiday. Although that was sad, the situation in the individual wards was much sadder, with 3-4 generations living in completely unsuitable houses, because a vast proportion of the housing stock was being used by people who had two homes.
- That pressure should be asserted on the Government to determine the maximum number of dwellings that could be second homes in any community.
- That there were no houses available for locals in villages any more, as people from outside the area purchased them as holiday homes.
- That the housing crisis would become worse as a result of the recent increase in working from home.
- That the owners of holiday homes tended to spend their money in large supermarkets before they even arrived in Gwynedd, instead of spending their money locally.
- That the most important element was the one that gave a fairer opportunity to first-time buyers to compete in the local housing market, namely those people who would contribute to the economy for 12 months a year. These would also be the people that would ensure continuation of the community structure that had been so valuable to support each other during the pandemic.
- That the majority of second-home owners wished to visit balanced and healthy communities, with a shop, pub, café, etc. and were therefore willing to contribute to ensure that people continued to live in their communities.
- That local people, who had inherited a second home, found it difficult to pay a mortgage etc. on their first house, while refurbishing the second home at the same time.
- That there were over 2000 people on the waiting list for social housing in Gwynedd and the average waiting time was over 400 days. 59% of the county's residents were priced out of the housing market, and over 10% of the housing stock was now second-homes.
- That Gwynedd was the county with the highest number of second-homes and the highest number of holiday homes; therefore, if we did nothing, who would address this problem?
- That some members had suggested waiting until next year before considering increasing the Premium, but time was against the young people who were unable to get a house.
- That too many Gwynedd people were being priced out of the local market of being able to buy homes in the areas where they were brought up. This huge injustice needed to be put right, and the situation was getting worse. Urgent action was needed, and it was believed that the recommendation to increase the Premium to 100% was important, and responded to the local housing stock crisis.
- That everyone agreed that empty houses were a huge problem in our communities and that it was not possible to create or maintain viable and vibrant communities with empty houses.

In response to questions from individual members, it was explained:-

- That the risk of property transferring from Council Tax to Business Rates had been registered on the Finance Department's Risk Register with a score of 10, the highest probability. As a result, the actions in response appeared in the Council Plan, and it was intended to continue to assert pressure on the Government to address this.
- That the majority of the houses that transferred remained as businesses, and the cases that returned to Domestic Rates were few and far between. The Taxation Service monitored the situation of these properties, and if it was not believed that they were businesses, they could be reported to the Valuation Office. Under the current procedure, the Valuer had to be persuaded that the property was not available to let for 140 days a year, or not let for 70 days a year.
- That the Council had been pressing on the Government to change the legislation so that domestic property remained on Council Tax, regardless of its use. If the Government were to change this legislation, this would be operational from the date when the legislation came into force, and any that had previously transferred to Business Rates, from that day onwards, would return to Council Tax.
- That the Empty Houses Scheme, funded via the Premium, provided assistance to bring houses back into use. The plan had been running for 2-3 years and it had been popular and successful, with an investment of over £2m in the past financial year having brought 115 empty houses back into use. An additional £4m had been allocated in the Housing Action Plan over the next 5 years in order to bring 250 additional empty houses back into use.
- That increasing the Premium to 100% would certainly bring additional money into the coffers. It was estimated that the sum would be around £3m, but that no definitive answer could be given as the shift from Domestic Rates to Business Rates would reduce the figure. The Council was compensated via an additional grant in the following year for the "basic" Council Tax lost through the transfer, but it made losses in the current year, as well as due to any back-dating by the Valuer.

A registered vote was called for on the amendment.

In accordance with Procedural Rules, the following vote was recorded on the amendment:-

In favour (17) Councillors:- Stephen Churchman, John Brynmor Hughes, Louise Hughes, R. Medwyn Hughes, Anne Lloyd Jones, Elwyn Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones, Keith Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, Dewi Owen, W.Roy Owen, Jason Parry, Mike Stevens and Hefin Underwood.

Against (40) – Councillors:- Craig ab Iago, Steve Collings, R.Glyn Daniels, Anwen Davies, Elwyn Edwards, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Dylan Fernley, Peter Antony Garlick, Simon Glyn, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Annwen Hughes, Judith Humphreys, Nia Jeffreys, Aeron M.Jones, Berwyn Parry Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Gareth Tudor Morris Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Kevin Morris Jones, Cai Larsen, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Dafydd Owen, Edgar Owen, Rheinallt Puw, Peter Read, John Pughe Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Paul Rowlinson, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Catrin Wager, Cemlyn Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gareth Williams and Gruffydd Williams.

Abstentions (0)

The Chair noted that the amendment had fallen.

A vote was taken on the original proposal, and it was carried.

RESOLVED for 2021/22, that Gwynedd Council:

- Allows NO discount on class A second homes, in accordance with Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- Allows NO discount and RAISES A PREMIUM OF 100% on class B second homes, in accordance with Section 12B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- Allows NO discount on homes that have been empty for 6 months or more and RAISES A PREMIUM OF 100% on homes that have been empty for 12 months or more, in accordance with Section 12A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

9. ANNUAL REVIEW - COUNCIL'S PAY POLICY 2021/22

The Chair of the Chief Officers Appointment Committee submitted a report recommending that the Council approved the recommendation of the Chief Officer Appointment Committee to adopt the Pay Policy for 2021/22, including the decision to increase the salary of the post of Monitoring Officer immediately to a maximum of approximately £70,000, as the current salary of the post is not competitive with comparable posts undertaking equivalent responsibilities in other regional local authorities, and that this poses an unacceptable risk to the effective operation of the Council.

A member noted that she believed that now was not the time to increase salaries, as many people in the county were losing their jobs, without any hope of getting another job.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Chief Officers Appointment Committee to adopt the Pay Policy for 2021/22, including the decision to increase the salary of the Monitoring Officer post immediately to a maximum of approx. £70,000.

10. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN 2018-23 - REVIEW FOR 2021/22

The Leader presented a report inviting the Council to adopt the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23: 2021/22 Review to be implemented during 2021/22.

The Leader thanked each member of Council staff for contributing to the response to the pandemic, by being so willing to adapt to different ways of working, to change roles and to commit to respond and provide services for the residents of Gwynedd. He noted that the county councils had responded heroically and effectively to the disease, and that governments now realised how essential, and how prepared to act, local authorities were.

RESOLVED to adopt the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023: 2021/22 Review to be implemented during 2021/22.

11. 2021/22 BUDGET

The Cabinet Member for Finance submitted:-

- A report recommending a budget for the Council's approval for 2021/22;
- The draft decision on the Council Tax based on the Cabinet's recommendation to the Council (based on an increase of 3.7%), along with tables showing the Council Tax level and the increase per community

As the Council had resolved to charge a 100% Premium on second-homes and homes that have been empty for 12 months or more (under item 8 above), the Head of Finance asked the Council to approve the 100% Premium version of the recommendation, as noted in the report.

Members were reminded of some of the main risks in Appendix 10 of the report, and the Head of Finance confirmed, after considering all risks and mitigation steps, that he was of the opinion that the Council's Budget for 2021/22 was sound, sufficient and achievable.

During the discussion, members supported the proposal on the basis:-

- That increasing the Council Tax by 3.7% would enable the Council to avoid the risk of failing to respond to the requirements of the new Additional Learning Needs Act on the grounds that no resources were received from Welsh Government to meet the increase in the need for a statutory provision.
- If the Council did not increase Council Tax by 3.7%, there would be a need to cut the services for the people who were in greatest need of support. A mammoth task had been carried out over the past year to support businesses because of Covid and Brexit, and there was no wish to see the Business Support Service being cut.
- Although they did not wish to increase the tax, the result of not doing so would be worse, and they certainly did not wish to see further cuts to services.
- That support was available from the Council for those who found it difficult to pay Council Tax.
- That it would not be prudent to increase the tax by any less, in the hope that Welsh Government would provide additional money over the coming months.
- That an increase of less than 3.7% in Council Tax would mean that the Children and Supporting Families Service would be at risk of putting children at risk.
- That 3.7% was the smallest increase that could be set to keep services going, let alone develop them.

Other members objected to the proposal on the basis:-

- That those people on low salaries, but just above the level where they could claim benefits, suffered the most, and that a plan was needed to help those people.
- That it would be very difficult to increase Council Tax this year, considering that businesses had been unable to open, people had lost their jobs and workers on furlough had lost 20% of their income.
- If councils wished to have more money from the Government over the coming months, a smaller increase in Council Tax should be considered.
- That the 3.7% increase was terribly high, and between the pandemic, the flooding and everything, it would have been expected to be closer to 2.7% this year.
- That the Council could have saved tens of thousands of pounds if it had prevented staff from taking Council vehicles home, and that there was a need to look at wasteful practices and stop them.

In response to questions from individual members, it was explained:-

- That it was premature to say what the impact of the Chancellor's Budget would be on Gwynedd. The officers were currently analysing the figures, but it was more difficult to assess the impact as the money came to local authorities through Welsh Government. However, one could be relatively confident that the Council would receive money to assist with the implications of the Covid crisis.
- That some councils in Wales had decided to set a smaller increase to their Council Tax as a result of receiving one-off grants. To an extent, it was believed that those councils were taking an element of risk, and would be making cuts or efficiency savings next year in order to be able to continue keeping the tax at more or less the same level. Gwynedd had been increasing the Tax consistently below the Welsh average each year, and subject to the outcome of the staff salary agreement, etc., it was possible by this time next year, that the Council would be in a better position to see less of an increase in Council Tax than those other councils.

- That the Council was in discussions with the banks about the possibility of negative interest rates. It was likely that the Council was receiving protection from the current contracts, but when the time came to renegotiate contracts, it was likely that there would be an increased cost.

RESOLVED

- To approve the recommendations of the Cabinet, namely:-
 - Establish a budget of £275,669,610 for 2021/22 to be funded through a Government Grant of £194,793,140 and £80,876,470 of Council Tax income with an increase of 3.7%.
 - Establish a capital programme of £47,085,960 in 2021/22, to be funded from the sources noted in Appendix 4 of the report.
 - That it be noted that the Cabinet Member for Finance, in a decision notice dated 18 November 2020, had approved the calculation of the following amounts for 2021/22 in accordance with Regulations made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("The Act"):-
- (a) 51,885.56 being the amount calculated as Gwynedd's Tax Base 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 - Community Tax Base -

Aberdaron	542.74	Llanddeiniolen	1,832.32
Aberdyfi	980.22	Llandderfel	496.58
Abergwyngregyn	117.00	Llanegryn	157.54
Abermaw (Barmouth)	1,148.25	Llanelltyd	288.90
Arthog	617.37	Llanengan	2,105.34
Y Bala	771.50	Llanfair	311.58
Bangor	3,844.96	Llanfihangel y Pennant	223.75
Beddgelert	296.64	Llanfrothen	224.08
Betws Garmon	130.44	Llangelynnin	407.39
Bethesda	1,696.45	Llangywer	137.01
Bontnewydd	433.07	Llanllechid	336.00
Botwnnog	448.54	Llanllyfni	1,407.84
Brithdir	a		
Llanfachreth	426.50	Llannor	905.46
Bryncrug	325.38	Llanrug	1,127.82
Buan	224.84	Llanuwchllyn	304.53
Caernarfon	3,596.36	Llanwnda	789.27
Clynnog Fawr	446.26	Llanycil	198.76
Corris	296.99	Llanystumdwyr	864.34
Criccieth	931.77	Maentwrog	283.93
Dolbenmaen	603.77	Mawddwy	346.60
Dolgellau	1,233.10	Nefyn	1,458.93
Dyffryn Ardudwy	831.65	Pennal	215.54
Y Felinheli	1,136.66	Penrhyneddraeth	779.36
Ffestiniog	1,713.50	Pentir	1,260.20
Y Ganllwyd	86.79	Pistyll	259.32
Harlech	769.40	Porthmadog	2,016.47
Llanaelhaearn	449.24	Pwllheli	1,729.10

Llanbedr	336.30	Talsarnau	325.03
Llanbedrog	720.36	Trawsfynydd	499.20
Llanberis	768.82	Tudweiliog	457.21
Llandwrog	1,027.80	Tywyn	1,624.58
Llandygai	1,000.88	Waunfawr	558.03

namely the amounts calculated as the Council Tax Base amounts for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

3. That the following amounts now be calculated by the Council for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Act:-

- (a) £409,390,260 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) £131,672,530 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) £277,717,730 Being the sum that corresponds with the difference between the above aggregate 3 (a) and the above aggregate 3 (b) calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budgetary requirements for the year (net budget).
- (ch) £194,297,483 Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its fund in respect of redistributed Non-domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant, less the estimated cost to the Council of discretionary Non-domestic rate relief granted.
- (d) £1,532.26 Being the amount in 3(c) above, less the sum in 3(ch) above, all divided by the sum noted in 2(a) above, that was calculated by the Council in accordance with 33(1) of the Act, which is the basic amount of Council Tax for the year (Gwynedd Council tax and the average community council tax).
- (dd) £2,543,780 Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act (community council precepts).
- (e) £1,483.23 Being the sum in 3 (d) above, less the result of dividing the amount in 3(dd) above divided by the amount in 2(a) above, that was 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 -

Aberdaron	1,510.87	Llanddeiniolen	1,500.59
Aberdyfi	1,521.33	Llandderfel	1,501.35
Abergwyngregyn	1,508.87	Llanegryn	1,518.14
Abermaw (Barmouth)	1,535.48	Llanelltyd	1,509.19
Arthog	1,504.29	Llanengan	1,509.35

Y Bala	1,518.23	Llanfair Llanfihangel y	1,534.58
Bangor	1,584.18	Pennant	1,534.74
Beddgelert	1,518.63	Llanfrothen	1,524.73
Betws Garmon	1,503.16	Llangelynnin	1,507.29
Bethesda	1,557.61	Llangywer	1,514.25
Bontnewydd	1,525.95	Llanllechid	1,529.21
Botwnnog	1,497.72	Llanllyfni	1,518.75
Brithdir	a		
Llanfachreth		Llannor	1,503.29
Bryncrug	1,522.75	Llanrug	1,536.43
Buan	1,499.91	Llanuwchllyn	1,529.20
Caernarfon	1,538.42	Llanwnda	1,519.77
Clynnog Fawr	1,523.57	Llanycil	1,503.35
Corris	1,514.65	Llanystumdwyr	1,504.06
Criccieth	1,528.31	Maentwrog	1,504.54
Dolbenmaen	1,513.04	Mawddwy	1,510.64
Dolgellau	1,540.00	Nefyn	1,536.18
Dyffryn Ardudwy	1,543.35	Pennal	1,512.74
Y Felinheli	1,518.42	Penrhyneddraeth	1,536.48
Ffestiniog	1,617.46	Pentir	1,526.87
Y Ganllwyd	1,517.80	Pistyll	1,529.50
Harlech	1,574.21	Porthmadog	1,514.27
Llanaelhaearn	1,538.88	Pwllheli	1,530.08
Llanbedr	1,527.83	Talsarnau	1,550.92
Llanbedrog	1,514.46	Trawsfynydd	1,523.29
Llanberis	1,524.85	Tudweiliog	1,500.73
Llandwrog	1,547.44	Tywlyn	1,538.83
Llandygai	1,509.57	Waunfawr	1,504.73

being the amounts given by adding the amounts of the item or special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above, to the sum given in 3(e) 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.

4. That it be noted that for the year 2021/22 the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner has stated the following amounts in a precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, 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
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203.70	237.65	271.60	305.55	373.45	441.35	509.25	611.10	712.95
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5. 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 Act, hereby sets the amounts noted in Appendix 2 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in the Appendix.

12. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22 (INCLUDING INVESTMENT AND BORROWING STRATEGIES)

The Cabinet Member for Finance submitted a report, providing a high-level overview on the manner capital expenditure, capital funding and the treasury's management activity contributed to the provision of local public services. The report also gave an overview of the way associated risks could be managed, and the implications for future financial sustainability.

The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee confirmed that the committee had given due attention to the matter following a presentation by Arlingclose, the Council's Treasury Management Advisors, and he thanked Arlingclose for their encouraging report.

RESOLVED to accept the report and to approve the Capital Strategy for 2021/22.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support submitted a report detailing the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, and recommending that the the Audit and Governance Committee be asked to approve and monitor a work programme in response to those provisions.

In response to questions from members, it was explained:-

- That the act did not affect the pre-election period, but for the Welsh Senedd Election in May, the period started on 22 March and continued until election day on 6 May. Although this could affect Council business, because of the requirement to seek to avoid giving publicity to politically sensitive matters during a pre-election period, the impact was not substantial, usually.
- That the act formalised a new way for the role of group leaders to be accountable for the conduct of their members. This would not mean that the Code would be breached, but it did place a level of responsibility for conduct on the group leader. Currently, there was not much statutory guidance in terms of how that would work in practice, but it was likely that having a statutory procedure would note a clear role for the leader should an issue arise in terms of member conduct. It could also, possibly, be a means to resolve the matter and provide a more robust context to this expectation.
- When the arrangements for job sharing between Chairs and Vice-chairs came into force, it would be possible for more than one person to undertake these roles. Again, there was a need to see the guidance in terms of how this procedure would work in practice, but it was a part of the new requirements in terms of democratic arrangements.

RESOLVED

1. To accept the information.
2. To ask the Audit and Governance Committee to approve and monitor a work programme in response to the provisions of the Act.

14. RE-APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report noting that the membership term of David Wareing, independent member on the Standards Committee, would end on 4 March 2021, and recommended that the Council re-appointed him for one further period of four years.

A member noted that Mr Wareing was a very active member of the committee.

RESOLVED to re-appoint David Wareing as an independent member of the Standards Committee to serve for a further four-year term.

15. COMMITTEES CALENDAR 2021/22

The Head of Democratic Services presented a calendar for the dates of Council meetings for 2021/22.

RESOLVED to adopt the Committees Calendar for 2021/22.

16. NOTICE OF MOTION

The following notice of motion was submitted by Councillor Elin Walker Jones, in accordance with Section 4.20 of the Constitution and it was seconded.

"That this Council:

- a) believes that the current benefits system is failing our citizens and causes hardship to many Gwynedd communities;
- b) notes the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI) - where every citizen receives a sum that is not based on means tests by the state to pay basic living costs, paid to all citizens individually, whatever their employment status, their wealth, or marital status;
- c) believes that there is a need to test UBI, as UBI has the potential to get to grips with key challenges such as post-pandemic recovery, inequality, poverty, insecure employment, and loss of community by:
 - i) giving employers a more flexible workforce and workers more freedom to change their jobs;
 - ii) appreciating unpaid work, such as caring for family members and voluntary work;
 - iii) removing the negative impact of benefit sanctions and conditionality; ;
 - iv) giving more equal resources to people in the family, the workforce and society.
- ch) noting the UBI Lab Network work when developing proposals to pilot and test UBI;
- d) believes that the UBI pilot should not be measured only according to the impact on those who benefit from paid work, but also the impact on communities and what the people within them do, how they feel, and how they identify with others and the surrounding environment;
- dd) believes that Gwynedd is in an ideal situation to trial UBI;
- e) requests the Cabinet to look into the commitment that would be required and to consider whether to volunteer to collaborate with bodies such as UBI Lab Cymru;
- f) decides to send a copy of this Proposal to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Chancellor, leader of Plaid in the Government, their peers in every opposition party in the Senedd, First Minister of Wales and all Gwynedd MPs."

During the discussion, members supported the proposal on the basis:-

- That UBI was a very real solution to help people out of poverty and assist the economy, whilst reducing the obvious inequality within our society, which has deepened during the pandemic crisis.
- That UBI was also a tool that could get rid of the stigma and strain on people who claimed benefits, as everyone received the same amount, and that everyone should

be paid enough to care for themselves, and their families, particularly in a period of crisis like this.

- Although it was acknowledged that there were challenges and questions regarding basic income, that there were a number of different models to introduce this, and a number of them were being trialled in different places.
- That the case for trialling UBI had strengthened during the pandemic, and although there were many plans to help people financially, many self-employed people and new businesses had fallen through the net.
- That Gwynedd would be the type of area that would be well-suited to trialling UBI, as there were many self-employed and seasonal workers here.
- That many economists supported the concept of UBI, and that it did not, necessarily lead to inflation if it was funded through tax increases, with the wealthiest paying more.
- That it was important to set the basic salary level at the appropriate level as a level that was too high would be difficult to fund, and too low a level would have very little impact.
- That UBI simplified the benefits system.
- That some people did not claim the benefits owed to them at present, e.g. pensioners did not claim pension credit.
- That it had to be acknowledged that UBI could remove the need for benefits completely, and as the system needed to be flexible enough to include that, this underlined the need to pilot different models world-wide.
- That UBI gave an opportunity, particularly to young people, to venture and develop their talent in different fields, such as music and the arts.
- That UBI enabled people to care for members of the family without having to go out to work.

A member objected to this motion on the grounds that giving a basic income to all would lead to a substantial increase in inflation, and would shatter the economy, and he pleaded on everyone to take this seriously and read the facts.

RESOLVED to adopt the proposal, namely that this Council:

- a) believes that the current benefits system is failing our citizens and causes hardship to many Gwynedd communities;
- b) notes the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI) - where every citizen receives a sum that is not based on means tests by the state to pay basic living costs, paid to all citizens individually, whatever their employment status, their wealth, or marital status;
- c) believes that there is a need to test UBI, as UBI has the potential to get to grips with key challenges such as post-pandemic recovery, inequality, poverty, insecure employment, and loss of community by:
 - i) giving employers a more flexible workforce and workers more freedom to change their jobs;
 - ii) appreciating unpaid work, such as caring for family members and voluntary work;
 - iii) removing the negative impact of benefit sanctions and conditionality; ;
 - iv) giving more equal resources to people in the family, the workforce and society.
- ch) noting the UBI Lab Network work when developing proposals to pilot and test UBI;
- d) believes that the UBI pilot should not be measured only according to the impact on those who benefit from paid work, but also the impact on communities and what the people within them do, how they feel, and how they identify with others and the surrounding environment;
- dd) believes that Gwynedd is in an ideal situation to trial UBI;

- e) requests the Cabinet to look into the commitment that would be required and to consider whether to volunteer to collaborate with bodies such as UBI Lab Cymru;
- f) decides to send a copy of this Proposal to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Chancellor, leader of Plaid in the Government, their peers in every opposition party in the Senedd, First Minister of Wales and all Gwynedd MPs.

17. RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS NOTICES OF MOTION

(A) RESPONSE TO THE NOTICE OF MOTION OF COUNCILLOR GRUFFYDD WILLIAMS

Submitted, for information - a letter from Welsh Government, in response to Councillor Gruffydd Williams's notice of motion to the meeting on 1 October, 2020, in relation to using the planning system to control the number of second-homes in Wales.

(B) RESPONSE TO THE NOTICE OF MOTION OF COUNCILLOR PAUL ROWLINSON

Submitted, for information - letters from Welsh Government and the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Department in response to Councillor Paul Rowlinson's notice of motion at the meeting on 3 December, 2020, regarding the control of fire works.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 5.50 pm

CHAIR