



## MINUTES OF MEETING

# CABINET MEETING

**WEDNESDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 2024**

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Thomas (**In the Chair**)

Councillors A Barry, D Hughes, J Jenkins and M Symonds

**Officers:**

E Cooper (Chief Executive), C Kennedy (Head of Legal and Governance Services - Monitoring Officer), A Owen (Deputy Chief Executive), C Dinham (Communications, Consultation and Engagement Manager), H Brown (Head of HR and Organisational Improvement), J Jones (Director of Neighbourhood Services), L Hull (Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer), L Curtis Jones (Director of Social Services), S Walker (Director of Education) and A Stephens (Cabinet Policy Officer)

E Galeozzie (Democratic Services Officer) and O Moore (Democratic Services Officer)

Decisions made will come into force 5 working days after publication, unless it is subject to a call-in by a Scrutiny Committee

ITEM NO.	AGENDA MATTER	DECISION
755	Apologies for absence	No apologies for absence were received as all Members were present.
756	Declarations of Interest	Councillor A Barry declared an interest in Item 3, Recommendation 2.3: Home to School Transport and would leave the meeting when this item was being discussed.

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## Statement on Earmarked Reserves

Prior to the start of the agenda, the Chief Finance Officer read out a statement on Earmarked Reserves.

757	Budget Requirement and Council Tax 2024/24 - State of the Council Debate	<p>Councillor A Barry introduced the report and restated the recommendations, excluding recommendation 2.3.</p> <p>Councillor A Barry, having declared an interest in this recommendation, left the meeting for the consideration of the item.</p> <p>Councillor Michelle Symonds led Council through recommendation 2.3</p> <p>The Chair gave his thanks to the Officers for the work done in the Budget Setting process.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The budget reduction of £1.988m from Individual Schools Budgets be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>2. The revised funding arrangements for LRBs be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>3. The business case to consult on our approach to Post-16 Home to School (Appendix 2) Transport be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>4. The proposal to reduce the young carers contract (Appendix 4) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>5. The proposal to reduce vacant staffing hours at Ty Bargoed (Appendix 4) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>6. The proposal to remove vacant posts from within Day Services (Appendix 4) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>7. The proposal to reduce trainee social worker posts from 3 to 2 (Appendix 4) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>8. The proposal to reduce available social services apprenticeships by 1 (Appendix 4) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>9. The proposal to change security arrangements at Cyfarthfa Park (Appendix 8) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>10. The business case introducing a SAB Design Engineer post (Appendix 5) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>11. The business case introducing a Street Lighting electrician (Appendix 6) post be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>12. The business case to increase Waste FPNs (Appendix 7) be recommended to Council for approval.</li><li>13. The business case to reduce Contact magazine by</li></ol>
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		<p>1 issue per year (Appendix 10) be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>14. The business case to remove Help for Pensioners Scheme (Appendix 11) be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>15. The summary of all officer-led decisions detailed within the report be noted.</p> <p>16. The utilisation of £2.0m of the budget reserve be noted.</p> <p>17. The Council Tax increase of 8% for 2024/25 ('Band D' of £1,974.61) for the County Borough council be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>18. The budget requirement of £160.615m for 2024/25 (net revenue budget) be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>19. The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2024/25 as detailed in paragraph 10.0 be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>20. Increasing Lifeline weekly charge by 40% (note this includes the cost of sim card needed for digital switchover), as set out in the 'Non-inflationary increases in fees and charges 2024/25' Council Report presented on the 21st February 2024, be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>21. Increasing all Cemeteries fees by an additional 3% above inflation, as set out in the 'Non-inflationary increases in fees and charges 2024/25' Council Report presented on the 21st February 2024, be recommended to Council for approval.</p> <p>22. The Chief Finance Officer's comments relating to the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves be noted.</p>
758	Any Other Business Deemed Urgent by the Chair	The Chair advised that there was no other business deemed urgent.
759	Exempt	<p>Prior to the vote on the exclusion of press and public taking the meeting into the exempt session, Councillor A Barry referred to a number of amendments in the reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda Item 3, page 5 and 6, section 3.3 – bullet points 1 and 2 – in relation to both reports, where it reads 2022/23 should read 2023/24.</li> <li>• Agenda Item 6, page 207, section 3.3 – bullet points 1 and 2 – in relation to both reports, where it reads 2022/23 should read 2023/24.</li> <li>• Agenda Item 6, page 206, section 2.3 – It is proposed that the first recommendation be changed to 2.3.1 and the second recommendation be changed to 2.3.2.</li> </ul> <p>The amendments were noted, and it was</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b> the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under Part 4 of Schedule 12A of Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>

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**CLOSED SESSION**

760	Budget Requirement and Council Tax 2024/25 - State of the Council Debate	Councillor A Barry provided a summary and background to the report and restated the recommendations.  <b>Resolved that:</b>  The recommendations as detailed in Paragraphs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12 and 2.13 in the report be approved.
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