

Appendix

20

Document: 2009 02 09

0 The Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor R. G. Parry, OBE (Chair) (Deputy Leader)

Councillor E. G. Davies
Councillor R. Ll. Jones
Councillor R. Ll. Hughes
Councillor B. Owen
Councillor C. McGregor
Councillor Goronwy Parry, MBE
Councillor E. Schofield
Councillor I. Williams

IN ATTENDANCE: Managing Director
Corporate Director (Finance)
Corporate Director (Environment & Technical Services)
Corporate Director (education and Leisure)
Acting Corporate Director (Housing & Social Services)
Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Head of Service (Housing) (Item 9 only)
Head of Service (Finance)
Head of Service (Corporate Services)
Head of Performance and Business Support (AD)
Committee Services Manager
Communications Officer

APOLOGY: Councillor P. M. Fowle

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor J Penri Williams (Item 5)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor E. Schofield declared an interest with regard to any matter on the agenda which might relate to the employment of his grandson in the Highways Department.

2 URGENT MATTER CERTIFIED BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR - (OR HIS APPOINTED OFFICER)

Councillor R Ll Hughes, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Social Services took the opportunity of referring members to the article that had appeared in today's Daily Post that the company responsible for undertaking WHQS throughout the Council's housing stock would be employing local contractors. This figure was now 95% of the workforce and he welcomed this fact. The work was of high standard and he congratulated the Department and the Company in this respect.

3. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on the following dates be confirmed as true records:-

- 12th January, 2009 (Budget)

[Next ..](#)

Document: 2009 02 09

[Prev](#)

Arising thereon -

Item 4 Revenue Budget 2009/10. Matters for decision - Staffing figures.

The Deputy Leader referred to the fact that the Executive still had not received information from the Managing Director regarding staffing levels within the Authority. This information was important to the Executive in that it could have an effect on setting the Council Tax for next year.

The Corporate Director (Finance) in reply stated that officers had made efforts to ensure that as much information as possible was available to members in the time allocated, and that the analysis to date had been circulated to Executive members in advance of the meeting. It was obvious that the matter was not a simple one and that there were numerous complications that needed to be explained to the Executive. It was possible to undertake this work but it would take sometime before officers were in a position to present the full picture.

Members looked forward to receiving the information as soon as possible

- 19th January, 2009

4 COMPLETING THE REVENUE BUDGET

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Reported by the Corporate Director (Finance) - That since his January report, a review of budget calculations and, in some cases new information reaching us, had adjusted some budget calculations.

The main adjustments were:-

- Corrections to Inflation Calculation - Correcting errors in earlier calculations added £48k to the budget.
- Highways Maintenance - The effect of the highways maintenance contract was reported to the January committee orally. Budgets had now been adjusted to take account of the substantial saving achieved on reletting the contract. This was net of the financing costs of four new gritters as approved by the Executive in September 2008.
- Corporate savings – electricity - The Corporate Director reported in January that £250k of savings in electricity budget should be possible as a corporate saving, on the basis that relevant budgets were underspending to this extent. He also suggested that £143k of service reserves could be used to mitigate the effect of 1% savings on the schools. However, the effect of the corporate savings would be to take more from schools than was returned in this £143k, which would result in schools cuts being more, not less, than 1%. In order to deal with this, the electricity savings had been reduced to £143k for schools, £175k in total.
- Debt Restructuring - In response to an opportunity in the market, the Department had recently repaid long term loans totalling £13m. At the time of writing, the replacement loan had not been arranged yet. A full report on the transactions would be forthcoming under the Treasury Management policy when the deals were closed. But it was expected that these transactions would reduce 2009-10 capital financing costs to the Council Fund by £240k.

A number of these adjustments had been adjusted against the general contingency budget of £100k to allocate to unforeseen events during the year. The Corporate Director recommended that the general contingency be reestablished at this sum.

The net effect of these adjustments, against the Executive's initial proposals, was an improvement of £81k.

However, there remained some uncertainty about the following:-

- External Contracts - The expected additional cost of the school meals contract was still uncertain as aspects of the contract were clarified. There was little doubt that this contract would cost more than was estimated in July 2008. The Street Lighting contract was still out to tender. A contingency budget had been retained to cover these uncertainties, any amendment required would be reported to the Council meeting.
- Procurement - The budget expected a further saving of £100k in 2009-10. This was a net figure after paying for the cost of the Procurement Officer post and the contribution to the North Wales Procurement Partnership. It was not yet clear how these savings would be achieved, and therefore against which budget the reductions should be made. This would be retained as a "below the line" saving, to be allocated out during the year as and when savings were identified, netting off the allocation of outturn inflation. There was a risk that these savings would not be achieved in full and a call for PIG (now Improvement Agreement Grant) to fund the procurement costs for another year.

The Corporate Director (Finance) updated members that there had been a slight decrease in the Fire Authority's budget and that there had been a £500 reduction in the sum set aside as part of the levy for Tywyn Trewan. Both these sums amounted to some £9,000 saving.

Also, that he and the Portfolio Holder for Finance would be travelling down to the Welsh Assembly this Thursday to plead the case for an increase in this Council's settlement figure. He did not however expect any change of mind in this respect.

SOCIAL SERVICES BUDGET

The Executive's initial budget proposals included a round sum of £750k added to the Social Services budget. This was a round sum in the knowledge that work was being done in the meantime to draw up more detailed proposals and there would be an element of consultation about the £750k in any case.

[Next](#)

Document: 2009 02 09

[Prev](#)

Appendix A to this report presented the more detailed proposals, as presented to the Education Health and Welfare Policy Overview Committee on 22 January. That Committee was broadly supportive of these proposals (see Appendix C of the report)

These proposals called for a net addition of £750k. This was more than coincidence, as the initial round figure was based on the projected level of overspending in the current year. However, the growth in spending required to maintain current service levels and adapt to growth in demand was higher than this, at £1.4m. The sum was then reduced to take account of savings already achieved (£304k), proposed savings in grants to voluntary bodies in 2009-10 (£67k) and anticipated savings in the cost of the home care service

The proposed savings in the home care service, to some extent, repeated the proposed savings which were to be made in 2006-07. The work by RSM Bentley Jennison concluded that the timing of these was over-ambitious, and that their achievement would require considerable specialist resource input. Achieving these would be challenging but officers believed the opportunity to make the saving was there, by improving management and working practices in this service.

The proposals also represented a reappraisal of budgets for both the Care Board and purchasing budgets. Although not quite a zero-based budget this exercise had drawn up budgets to reflect the current level of activity, which had drifted away from the budgets drawn up historically. These had been drawn up jointly by the finance service and budget managers, and would provide a baseline for more effective budget monitoring in future. The Acting Director and budget managers were committed to managing within these budgets.

It remained necessary for the Executive to confirm the figure of £750k in its final budget proposals. This could not be considered in isolation of other budget issues.

CONSULTATION ON THE INITIAL BUDGET

The initial budget proposals were sent to stakeholders on 14 January with responses requested by 30 January.

Draft minutes of the Council's committees were enclosed at -

Appendix B	Development Infrastructure and Resources Overview Committee, 20 January
Appendix C	Education, Health and Welfare Overview Committee, 22 January
Appendix Ch	Principal Scrutiny Committee, 27 January
Appendix D	Meeting with Town and Community Councils, 28 January
Appendix Dd	Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee, 29 January
Appendix E	Responses from Stakeholders.

Responses from the Schools Forum, which met on 2 February had been forwarded to Executive members before the meeting

OTHER MATTERS FOR DECISION OR AFFECTING THE BUDGET

- Savings - Appendix F of the report presented the lists of proposed savings. Some proposals were described more specifically in this list compared to earlier versions. This required formal adoption as part of the final proposals. Where the savings required a change to the staffing establishment, Appendix Ff listed the necessary change, and should be adopted as part of the package. Appendix G was the budget table reflecting the recommendations of this report.
- Improvement Agreement Grant - The treatment for this in the budget followed previous years' treatment. That is the budget assumed the full grant of £744k would be received, of which £385k had already been allocated to services by previous decisions of the authority. The balance of £359k remained as a budget contingency in case the grant should not be received in full or to allocate to performance - improving projects. The process of signing up to Improvement Agreements, and the process of awarding allocations from the contingency - two separate processes - would be dealt with separately from the revenue budget.
- Staffing - A separate document responded to the Executive's request at the last meeting. In coming months, the authority would need to make the most of any opportunities for recurrent staff cost savings. As in his December report, the Corporate Director recommended that the Executive sought the power to access up to £0.5m from general reserves to finance severance costs, should these be required. The provision in the annual budget for the cost of the salary and grading review had been reestablished at £875k, or 2% of the relevant budget.
- Fees and Charges - The Executive in October delegated to the Corporate Director the decision on setting fees and charges, consistent with a 5% guideline. As outlined in January and below, there may be reasons to reconsider this guideline. The Corporate Director would take account of the Executive's decisions at this meeting when exercising the delegation.

-
-
-
-
-
-

[Next](#)

Document: 2009 02 09

..Prev

COUNCIL TAX : STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The Executive's initial budget proposals included:-

- The 1% savings package.
- Further corporate savings from electricity generation, procurement, waste and retendering savings.
- Freezing charges for carparking (standard fee), primary schools meals, leisure and heritage attractions.
- Increasing other discretionary income by 5%.
- Using £0.3m from Education reserves to limit the cuts to schools budgets to 1% (i.e. mitigating the effect of corporate savings).
- Using £1.62m from reserves to reduce the Council Tax increase.

Budget calculations at that time would have delivered a Council Tax increase of 4%. The Executive stated its aim to limit the increase to 3%.

Taking account of the adjustments reported above and assuming the Executive confirmed the figure of £750k for social services, the initial budget proposals would now deliver a Council Tax increase of 3.64%.

With the effect of the credit crunch on household budgets there were compelling reasons to keep the Council Tax as low as possible in 2009-10. The case to increase the Council Tax was made by the need to sustain the authority's resource base in the medium term, to meet its service delivery responsibilities and deliver members' priorities.

In his report to the Executive on 8 December 2008, dealing with adequacy of reserves, the Corporate Director concluded that this £1.9m could be released from reserves without compromising their adequacy by 31 March 2010. The Executive's initial proposals reflected this. The Corporate Director had additionally suggested that the Executive should seek to release up to £0.5m from reserves to finance severance costs should this be required to deliver further savings in the medium term. If that £0.5m were to be spent in 2009-10, that would leave the Council with general balances on 31 March 2010 below the level the Corporate Director considered adequate – but which could be justified in terms of the savings delivered.

The difficulty came in 2010-11 and subsequent years. On WAG indicative figures we would receive only a 1.7% funding increase in 2010-11. The Council would start off with a standstill budget partly funded from reserves and have to make cuts to claw back from that position, even before coping with the low 1.7% increase. The Corporate Director's projections for the medium term financial plan were optimistic about inflation falling, but even then with 4.5% Council Tax increases in 2010 and 2011, still showed use of £0.5m from reserves in 2010-11, breaking even only in 2011-12. Projecting more than one year was fraught with uncertainty, but this strategy would leave the authority with inadequate reserves in 2011.

There was also the question of risk and uncertainty. The Corporate Director had already outlined the need to cut back the out-turn inflation provision, and retain it centrally as a contingency, to meet the losses caused by falling interest rates. The course of both interest rates and prices may alter the drawing on reserves in either direction during 2009-10.

For these reasons the Corporate Director could not support the Executive planning to draw on reserves more than the £1.92m (in total) already decided. In fact, he would look to use any windfall savings achieved now or during 2009-10 to reduce the amount drawn from reserves rather than to finance additional spending.

He outlined in his October report, the view that a lower Council Tax increase in 2009-10 would, most likely have to be followed by a higher increase in subsequent years, to maintain services. The lower the increase in 2009-10, the higher would be the requirement in 2010-11. In October, commentators were suggesting the recession would be short and sharp and there was therefore some rationale in a low figure followed by an increase as the economy recovered. Commentators generally were now projecting the economic downturn lasting longer, which undermined that view – although the medium term financial plan projection did assume 4.5% in 2010 and 2011.

There was a clear tradeoff between the Council Tax and fees and charges. The proposal to freeze car parking, primary school meals and leisure charges was worth £115k, compared to increasing these by 5%. If, alternatively, these were to be increased by 5%, the money raised was worth another 0.5% of the Council Tax. Given the effect of the credit crunch on the choices people make, the Corporate Director would advise that there was more certainty of collecting the income through the Council Tax.

In the light of the foregoing his recommendation was that the Council Tax figure should rise by 3.64% to finance the expenditure plans in the budget.

BUDGET STRATEGY AND DELEGATION

The Council's budget, formally, was adopted by the full Council but managed during the year by the Executive. The Council's annual budget resolution defined the relationship of roles. In respect of the revenue budget, the usual practice was for the Council to set the budget, service by service, but give the Executive delegated authority to allocate budget contingencies. Any move of budgets between one service and another would count as a strategic shift and therefore require a decision of the Council.

He had outlined (in his January report) the need to restrict the amount of out-turn inflation awarded, and to retain this centrally. This would require some reworking of the annual budget resolution to delegate budgets to services at November 2008 prices plus known inflation, retaining the forecast outturn inflation in the central contingency. This reworking would be done for the Council meeting to be consistent with the interest rate projection in the Treasury Management report. This would then be allocated by the Executive during the year, probably quarterly, as inflation became known.

Another change in budget delegation was implied by the medium term financial strategy. The adoption of these projections would allow a framework for the Executive to manage the budget over more than one year.

The projections include £1.2m each year for growth in response to service pressures, demographic growth and political priorities. The authority had in the past lacked a way to judge commitments from future years' budgets (as, for example, when the school meals contract was awarded in 2008). This guideline in the budget framework would allow such commitments to be evaluated within a context.

The other side was that the projection also assumed 1.5% savings each year – and if these savings cannot be achieved the growth cannot be financed. Adopting these in the strategy would give the Executive a continuing target for savings – in fact it meant the achievement of savings would become less of an annual exercise, more of a continuous effort.

Next..

Document: 2009 02 09

[..Prev](#)

Such a framework would assist the authority in giving three-year budget guidance to schools. The message of continuing demographic reductions and 1.5% savings would not be a comforting one for them.

The adoption of such a strategy by the Council did require a commitment by them to the medium term. It implied acceptance of the Council Tax projections, not as firm figures for each year, but as the expected implication of the rest of the plan. The Executive would also need to realize that the adoption of a strategy by the Council may constrain the Executive's freedom to manoeuvre in future years.

The Corporate Director therefore recommended that the Executive should propose to the Council that the medium term projections become part of the budget framework, delegating to the Executive the ability to make forward commitments consistent with the framework, but also requiring the Executive to deliver the savings implied.

Councillor E. Schofield was glad to hear that the Corporate Director had taken on board the Executive's aim to limit the increase to 3% and he wished both the Director and the Portfolio Holder every success at their meeting with Assembly officials this Thursday.

There was only a 0.6% difference between what the Corporate Director suggested and what the Executive were aspiring to. This amounted to a difference of approximately £110k. He did not consider that this sum should be met from reserves but from other contingencies.

Councillor Ieuan Williams thought that a valid point had been raised in Llanidan Community Council's letter regarding modernisation. He did not think that much modernisation had taken place in this Authority and that this would be an opportunity to create savings.

Councillor R. LI Hughes welcomed the net addition of £750k towards the Social Services budget and he acknowledged that the Department was looking towards future savings by improving management and working practices within the service.

Councillor B. Owen thanked the officers for their report. He agreed that the difference was only 0.6% in order to achieve the Executive's aim.

Councillor J. Williams requested the Managing Director to update members as to the work being done in the Housing Department by the Internal Auditor as regards value for money and to a possible saving of £300k.

The Managing Director in reply stated that work had commenced in the Department but that the figure was an example of what had been achieved in England. He was not in a position to provide a final figure or timetable at the moment.

The Corporate Director (Finance) stated that in order to reach a 3% Council Tax level, members had to decide where the difference came from. He referred members to Table G of his report and in particular to the sums set aside under the Contingencies Budget and to the possibility of making use of sums contained therein. He referred to the fact that a sum of £100k was set aside as a general contingency sum for the Executive but using this sum would not leave the Executive with any spare money to cover unforeseen eventualities.

Members considered that this general contingency sum should be used in order to meet the shortfall required.

The Portfolio Holder in summing up, thanked the Executive and officers of the Council for their hard work in this respect. He proposed that the Executive accept the recommendations contained within the report, subject to those further changes proposed at this meeting.

RESOLVED to recommend to the County Council:-

- To adopt the adjustments outlined in Section 1 of the report;
- To confirm the net addition of £750k to the Social Services budget;
- To note that this Committee has taken into account the response to consultation with the Council's Scrutiny and Overview Committees, key stakeholders and the Schools Forum in formulating its proposals, as referred to in Paragraph 3 of the report to this Committee.
- That it accepts the proposed savings by service for 2009/10 as detailed in Appendix F of the report to this Committee.
- To freeze the charges for car parking, primary school meals, leisure and tourism attractions while retaining the 5% guideline for other discretionary charges;

[Next..](#)

Document: 2009 02 09

[Prev](#)

- That a sum of £100k be set aside from the General Contingency fund towards reducing the Council Tax for 2009/10.
- To accept a proposed Council Tax increase of 3% (£789.84) for a Band D property.
- To propose that the medium term projections become part of the budget framework;
- To delegate to the Finance Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director of Finance the completion of formal proposals to the County Council, consistent with the Executive's decisions.

5 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) - UPDATE

The Deputy Leader at this juncture expressed concern on behalf of the Executive that officers had not made it clear at the meeting on 19th January, 2009, that under the rules of the Constitution, that the Leader should have chaired the meeting for those items he was present for

Reported by the Corporate Director (Environment and Technical Services) - That the County Council was preparing a Local Development Plan in line with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated guidance from the Welsh Assembly Government.

Work on the plan was guided by a delivery agreement, agreed with WAG setting out methods of working and a timetable to deliver the plan.

There has been significant slippage on the timetable originally agreed in September 2006 and if the Council was to have a plan examined and adopted by 2010/2011 then early progress must be made in preparing the LDP for the next stage – deposit of the plan.

On 9th January 2009 the County Council completed an 8 week period of public consultation on a pre deposit local development plan. Members will recall that the period was extended to overcome any problems with the Christmas post. The consultation period included 14 drop in meetings across local communities and one to one meetings with stakeholders as requested.

An estimated 75-100 representations would have been received during this period covering both broad strategy and more detailed/site specific matters. However, on initial reading of the representations it seemed that the great majority accepted that the Council had set out a broadly 'sound' strategy in the LDP.

This was an important matter as the key issue that would be considered by the Inspector at examination was the soundness of the plan.

During the pre deposit period, steps were taken to address some of the weaknesses identified in the self assessment of the plan. This included joint meetings between the portfolio holders of Anglesey and Gwynedd Councils with an initial paper produced on issues of mutual interest which was appended to this report. Work was continuing to progress this joint work to ensure soundness of plans by examination.

The next key stage was the public deposit of the LDP. In the revised Delivery Agreement submitted to the WAG in October 2008 the County Council stated that it intended to reach deposit of the plan by July 2009. This set a challenging timetable meaning the LDP Panel must now progress work speedily to maintain momentum on the plan.

To ensure this was achieved, a high level of engagement must be maintained by Members and through links to other Council Services. To assist with this a monthly report would be submitted to the Council Leader and Managing Director reporting progress on the plan. A progress report should also be submitted to the Executive before the end of March 2009.

The Corporate Director (Environment & Technical Services) referred members to Para 4 of the report and that it was the intention to reach the deposit stage of the plan by July, 2009. Prior to this it was intended to report to the Executive and to the County Council in May 2009.

Councillor J Penn Williams drew members attention to what he thought were inconsistencies between reports that had been submitted to the Executive and to that submitted to the LDP Panel and to the Council meeting recently held to determine the Ty Mawr, Llanfair planning application. He stated that the advice being given by the Department was inconsistent. It showed a weakness in the system but where exactly he was not sure.

RESOLVED

- To request the LDP Panel to give consideration to the representations made on the pre deposit plan,
- That the LDP Panel prepares the deposit version of the plan for consideration by the Executive prior to approval by the full Council.

[Next](#)

Document: 2009 02 09

[Prev](#)

- That a clear timetable be established for decision making prior to the 'deposit' of the LDP,
- That monthly progress reports be submitted to the Leader and the Managing Director about progress on the plan,
- That a further progress report is given to the Executive in March 2009.
- To thank the Portfolio Holder and the Officers for their work in this respect.
- To note possible inconsistencies referred to by Councillor J. Penri Williams, and that they be drawn to the attention of the next LDP Panel by the Corporate Director (Environment & Technical Services).

6 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: AMLWCH PORT CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Reported by the Corporate Director (Environment and Technical Services) - That in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Local Authorities were required to designate as a Conservation Area "any area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it was desirable to preserve or enhance".

Local authorities were also required to review their conservation areas from time to time and to consider whether further designations were required.

In order to fulfill the obligations under the Act the Built Environment and Landscape Section of the Planning Service were currently carrying out a rolling programme of reviews for each of the Conservation Areas on Anglesey.

To give Supplementary Planning Guidance its proper status, it should be adopted by a resolution of the Full Council.

The character appraisal has looked at the existing boundary and whether any changes were required from the original designation. It also concentrated on special historic interest, character, appearance and preservation as highlighted in the 1990 Act. The appraisal recommended some changes to the boundary.

Following preparation of the draft document, a public notice was placed in the local press. A six week public consultation period followed between the 6th October 2008 and 14th November 2008.

One response was received to the public consultation from a local historian. There were no objections to the boundary changes or character appraisal.

RESOLVED to approve the Amlwch Port Conservation Area Character Appraisal and to support the submission of the document to the next Full Council for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

7 NORTH WALES REGIONAL AGGREGATE WORKING PARTY - REGIONAL TECHNICAL STATEMENT ON AGGREGATE SUPPLY

Reported by the Corporate Director (Environment and Technical Services) - That the North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party had produced a regional statement on the supply of aggregates, which had been subject to a public consultation exercise, and wished to adopt this to provide a regional context for the production and supply of aggregates. It sought to maintain a sustainably managed supply of aggregates through maximizing the use of recycled material in addition to maintaining a land bank of primary aggregates. The statement covered the period to 2021, would be reviewed every five years and provide a strategic basis for the formulation of local development plan policies and allocations.

The Head of Service considered that the RTS would ensure consistency and provide a sound regional strategy for sustainable mineral planning in North Wales. It would do this by providing the regional context for the drafting of local development plan policies related to sustainable aggregate production and supply. In doing so, it would take into consideration several key factors that would influence the future allocation of sites through the LDP process and, ultimately, ensure a continued supply of materials in line with National Assembly forecasts.

RESOLVED to endorse the Regional Technical Statement.

- 8 **RESOLVED** under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion on the following items as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the attached Public Interest tests.

[Next...](#)

Document: 2009 02 09

Prev

9 DISPOSAL OF LAND HELD IN THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

(1) SECTION I - DISPOSAL OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT LAND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Reported by the Acting Director (Housing & Social Services) - That the provision of Affordable Housing on Anglesey was steadily progressing with further sites being identified for development, in partnership with Cymdeithas Tai Eryri. These sites were at:-

- Vulcan Street, Holyhead - 4 units
- Penucheldre, Holyhead - Extra Care Scheme

Planning permission for these schemes had been granted and capital funding had been secured by WAG for 2009/10.

Revenue funding and commissioning of the Penucheldre Extra Care Scheme remained a priority within the Supporting People Operational Plan 2008/09, and would be included in the same plan for 2009/10.

It was intended that the Vulcan Street units would be socially rented accommodation made available to local people through the Common Housing Register.

The Extra Care Scheme at Penucheldre would provide much needed increased and improved capacity to the existing provision for elderly persons in the area. The scheme intended to deliver a mixed provision of care at varying levels, dependent on service users' needs, with a proportion of the units being made available to purchase and the remainder being available to rent.

The Head of Service updated members that following further consultation with the Education Department as to the future of adjacent land at Vulcan Street, Holyhead, the Department had decided to withdraw their intention to sell the parcel of land to the Housing Association.

(2) SECTION II - DISPOSAL OF A HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT DWELLING (The Tollhouse, Llanfairpwllgwyngyll)

Reported - That the dwelling-house known as The Tollhouse, Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, was currently in the ownership of Housing Services, within the HRA.

Due to its unfit condition, this property had been empty for some months and it was not possible to bring the property up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standards as required by WAG. Furthermore, the property was a listed building and any renovation works would be limited due to this fact.

This property was surplus to requirements within the Council and whilst it remained empty and unused, it was contrary to the aims and objectives of the Council's Empty Homes Strategy.

The Head of Service reported that there was no interest by other Departments of the Council. However, interest had been shown by the Women's Institute. Negotiations had taken place with a view to a 'peppercorn' lease. However, legal clarification would need to be sought as regards possible disposal under value.

RESOLVED

- Not to dispose of at the present time the parcel of land at Vulcan Street, Holyhead.
- To approve the disposal of the parcel of land at Penucheldre, Holyhead, (as indicated on the attached plan), to Cymdeithas Tai Eryri at the District Valuer's valuation, and on terms and conditions to be agreed upon with the officers.
- That authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Social Services, in consultation with the Head of Service (Housing) and the Director of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer to reach a decision with regard to offering the Toll House, Llanfairpwll on a 'peppercorn' lease to the Women's Institute, subject to clarification as to possible disposal under value.

10 DECRIMINALISED PARKING MANAGER

Reported by the Portfolio Holder, Councillor C. McGregor (Highways & Transportation) - That this Council had successfully implemented Decriminalised Parking for both on and off street parking on the 1st April, 2007.

Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) were processed by Denbighshire County Council as a joint working initiative between four of the North Wales counties. This joint working was a very good example of the Welsh Assembly Government's Making the Connections initiative, providing a considerable saving.

The Parking Manager and Attendants' Salaries were funded from the fees received from PCN's. Parking Attendants had been employed on a full time permanent basis, apart from the seasonal attendants, who only worked during the summer months.

The Parking Manager was appointed on a 2 year Temporary contract, in accordance with the Executive's decision of 31st October 2005. This contract had then been extended on two occasions. He had been responsible for setting up the initiative and for the management of the scheme.

The Head of Service considered it inconceivable that Anglesey would not proceed with Decriminalised Parking, and that the post of Parking Manager should be made a permanent post.

Within the Highways and Transportation Section another member of staff has been appointed on a temporary basis to undertake the Decriminalised Parking Manager's previous duties. Similarly her previous post was filled on a temporary basis by another officer. If the Parking Manager's post was made permanent then the uncertainty surrounding the other permanent posts, which were filled on a temporary basis could also be resolved.

RESOLVED to agree to the Parking Manager's post becoming a permanent post at the same grade as the existing temporary post i.e. salary scale 32 to 36 (subject to the results of Job Evaluation).

Next...

Document: 2009 02 09

[Prev](#)

11 RESTRUCTURING OF THE LEGAL AND COMMITTEE SERVICES TO ACHIEVE EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

Reported by the Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer - That the Legal and Committee Services had three permanent, but vacant, posts on the establishment, namely -

- Administrative Assistant (Land Charges)
- Committee Officer
- Planning Committee Assistant

Using savings from these vacancies, and with a view to better answering the needs of service users, two existing temporary posts had been revised on a trial basis. These were -

- Legal Assistant (Property Services) had become Legal Assistant/Land Charges Manager, absorbing the managerial responsibilities of the vacant post of Administrative Assistant (Land Charges). The remaining administrative duties had been absorbed by the Legal Section's Administrative Support Staff
- The Administrative Assistant (Committees) had taken over many of the responsibilities of the vacant post of Planning Committee Assistant with other duties absorbed by the Committee Clerks.

It was proposed -

- To retain, but downgrade, the vacant post of Planning Committee Assistant from a Scale 3 / 4 to a Scale 3.
- To remove the temporary post of Administrative Assistant (Committees).
- To revise and upgrade the post of Administrative Assistant (Land Charges) to that of Legal Assistant/Land Charges Manager from a Scale 3 / 4 to SO2.
- To remove the temporary post of Legal Assistant (Property Services).
- To remove from the establishment the permanent but vacant post of Committee Officer

If this proposal was adopted it would result in an annual saving of £21,080. This would provide the efficiency saving of £10,770 for 2009/2010. Additionally it would provide future funding for the efficiency saving of £5,440 for 2008/2009, the first year of which was sourced from reserves.

Councillor I. Williams stated that members had been in this situation before when the Executive discussed the restructuring of Library Services. He felt that no restructuring should take place until the job evaluation process had been completed. This observation had been made earlier today. He proposed that the status quo remain, until job evaluation had been finalised and he hoped that this would take place as soon as possible. He felt that the Executive had been unanimous this morning in that respect.

The Managing Director recalled the discussion that had taken place as regards Library Services and that this point had been raised at that time regarding job evaluation. His reply at the time was that once the internal process had been completed it then went out to the Unions for response. This could take some time and the Authority was not in a position to influence that. The danger now would be that services would take a backwards step or die on their feet. It was important to offer the best service to the public in the meantime. This package had been carefully thought out by the Director in the same way as the report on Library restructuring.

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer stated that Councillor I. Williams had mentioned earlier the importance of modernising and his concerns that this Council had failed to do this. What she was submitting to Committee today was an attempt to modernise these services to better meet the demands of its clients. Both temporary revised posts had been run as pilot schemes and they had worked very well and very effectively. The posts would be evaluated. However, they would not be subject to job evaluation but to the factor comparison process which members were aware of and which was published in December of last year. It would also achieve efficiency savings that the Executive had asked for. The intention was to bring these to you after job evaluation because the temporary Legal Assistant's post was actually funded until January 2010. This opportunity arose and, because of the need to make efficiency savings, she considered this to be the right timing.

Councillor I. Williams asked whether the members of staff in question were undertaking the duties associated with the posts?

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer confirmed that they were.

Councillor Williams asked whether they were receiving at the moment less money than they would be following re-structuring, i.e. that the savings would be more by keeping to the status quo?

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated that they could not be offered as efficiency savings.

Councillor I. Williams stated that if these full time posts were not filled then the money would not be spent.

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer confirmed this to be the case and further added that the money would not be able to be made available to the Executive as an efficiency saving either. So the Executive would be creating the very situation that members had criticised earlier at this meeting, namely that we had posts on the establishment accruing sums of money that we were not putting up as efficiency savings. So, with respect the Executive had to choose one option or another.

The Deputy Leader queried the title of Planning Committee Assistant.

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated that this was a typing error and that it should be referred to as a Committee Assistant.

Next..

Document: 2009 02 09

Prev

Councillor E. Schofield expressed concern that a lot of restructuring was being made on the hoof. He considered that restructuring should take place across the Authority and the way to do that was on a service by service basis across the Council. Job Evaluation was supposed to be finalised last month and it was now February. The way to complete this process was to state that there would be no more restructuring until the job evaluation had been completed. He seconded the proposal by Councillor I. Williams.

The Managing Director stated that the single status agreement went as far back as 1996. It was now 2009. There was no point pointing the finger at any person or any system but to ensure that the work was now completed. The end was now in sight. However, the Authority might have to wait between 6 - 12 months or even longer for an Union response.

However, in the meantime, if staff left the employment of the Authority and there was a need to modernise or restructure and if this did not take place, then the end result would be that Services would decline.

The Corporate Director (Finance) drew members attention to how this matter tied up with the budget proposals in that one was not able to move ahead without the other. During discussions on the budget, various observations had been made by Members regarding vacant posts and the need to review the establishment. This today was an opportunity to restructure rather than perhaps face higher costs later on with redundancy payments. If Members were going to stand against this proposal, then Members should have stood against Appendix FF to his report where there was restructuring within the budget, namely making one full-time post a part-time post.

He had not bothered referring to this at the time because he felt that it was such an immaterial change. However, if members stood against this today, then they stood against it all. This was a sophisticated case by the Department and was a report that acknowledged that there were vacant posts and that there was a requirement to change other posts in order to continue offering the service and to make efficiency savings. If the Executive did not accept this then they could not accept the saving already made earlier in the budget.

Councillor E. Schofield stated that the Executive had previously requested, in a similar case to this, information which would assist in the preparation of the budget. He thought that the Authority was more likely to lose posts by downgrading posts than in raising salaries. He thought that it was the principle that was important here. He was aware that one of these posts had received training by this Authority over the years and as a result he did not see any problem in that this had taken place. He was aware that if any employee who had received training and had then left the Authority within a certain period of time, then the Authority could be reimbursed for such training costs.

He considered that this might be an opportunity to look at restructuring the Legal Department and he would welcome it in its entirety as the best option. He was also aware that many members of staff were pressing the Authority for closure as regards the job evaluation exercise and that is why he seconded the proposal made by Councillor I. Williams.

Councillor C. McGregor referred to the post of Legal Assistant/Land Charges Manager. He asked as to how many staff this person would supervise. The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated. There was supervision of one member of staff and because land charges was quite variable in terms of demand as regards the housing market, there were 5 other members of staff who were also trained up to do a supporting role within land charges. Therefore, on a day to day basis, it was usually one individual and another group of individuals at busy times or when there was sickness absence or leave etc.

Councillor McGregor asked as to how many appraisals this person would undertake?

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated one appraisal had been undertaken this year.

Councillor McGregor stated that he would feel more comfortable if the post was a Supervisor and not a Manager. He expected a Manager to undertake more than one appraisal.

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated that this person would be doing 50 - 60% legal work still, with the balance being the Supervisory/Managerial element. There were 2 other individuals within the Department at the same legal executive level and they were happy for the proposal to proceed. The Director had also consulted with Human Resources and the Unions and the analysis that she had given them was to go through the job evaluation factor scores to make the distinctions between the Legal Assistant posts and the Managerial element in the land charges section. There would be a higher additional level of knowledge required because there would be two specialisms rather than one. There was an issue regarding mental skills because they were having to deal with a different set of priorities, it was a front facing service dealing with the public. She has also taken into account initiative and independence, and also because the post would be supervising other staff but only appraising one member of staff. There was also an issue regarding responsibility of financial resources because it was a substantial amount of money, certainly in better times, that came into land charges. There was also the ultimate responsibility for a valuable physical resource which was the land charges register which was of fundamental importance to the Council and the public. On that analysis she thought it would be an SO2 post, subject to factor comparison. It was not a way of circumventing job evaluation but an opportunity, when it presented itself. It would still have to go through the job evaluation process.

Councillor R.LI. Hughes stated that the proposal was to remove the temporary post of Administrative Assistant and temporary post of Legal Assistant. Would the two members of staff therefore lose their jobs?

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated that it would depend. She had consulted with the Unison and their view was that the post in Legal and Land Charges was such a unique post that they did not anticipate that anyone else would be able to fill the criteria without a significant period of training other than the two Legal Assistants in the Department. The proposal had already been put to them to find out if they were interested in the post and they were not. On that basis, if UNISON were happy to slot an individual into that post then there would be no need to compete for it.

In the other case, because it was much more of a generic type of post, where perhaps there would be a lot of interest in it throughout the Authority, then in all probability that would have to be advertised and there would be competition for it. The person who was in that temporary post at the moment did

have certain employment rights and the Authority if she was not successful of attaining this post, she would have to be considered for slotting in somewhere else within the organisation because of our obligations, or else she would be made redundant.

Councillor Schofield wished to make it clear that the Authority was not in a redundancy position here. He remembered how all this started in that there was a transfer from the Administrative Department, because at the time there was a big work load appearing regarding the sales of council houses.

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated that it was not the sale of council houses. There was another Legal Assistant that did that work. It was actually in relation to increasing demands by our Property Services Client for disposal of assets under the Asset Management Plan.

Councillor E. Schofield recalled that it was to do with conveyancing since it was all to do with the disposal of council houses, etc. It was agreed because of the circumstances for a temporary transfer. By now hardly any council houses were being sold. In fact the guidance being received was that the Authority should not be going down that road. Therefore, that position as it was first envisaged, with the transfer of personnel to sell council houses.

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer wished to make it clear that the Legal Assistant's post had never undertaken council house disposal. There was another permanent member of staff undertaking those duties.

Councillor Schofield accepted the point but all he was doing, correctly in his opinion, was recalling what was said at that particular time. In the meantime, the individual had gone through substantial training and to her credit she has fulfilled all the obligations on the training and so on. As regards his earlier remark regarding having a look at the Department Structure, he asked as to how many Solicitors there were in post?

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated there were 6 Solicitors and her as Head of Service.

Councillor Schofield thought it was higher than this figure. He enquired as to how many consultants were employed?

The Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer in reply stated that it had not proved possible to fill the post of Property Solicitor by means of external adverts, so the Executive appointed an independent consultant.

Councillor Schofield stated that there were therefore 7-8 Solicitors being employed. When he was looking at what the ratio was in terms of Solicitors to an Authority of our size, it was substantially less than the number this Authority employed. In his opinion, the creation of some of those posts, with that number of Solicitors and with the Consultants that we had in at the moment required looking at. This was part of the reason that he had seconded Councillor I. Williams' proposal that the Authority needed to be making savings in these uncomfortable times in the least uncomfortable way. That was why he had raised this matter. Being that the Department had brought this forward, he welcomed it in the sense that rationalisation was being considered, but he considered that it should be considered in totality.

Next.

Document: 2009 02 09

[Prev](#)

Councillor G.O. Parry MBE found himself to be in a difficult and awkward position as Portfolio Holder for Finance. The Executive had earlier discussed setting the Council Tax and in doing so reducing expenditure in order to reach the Executive's 3% Council tax proposal. He did not feel in this case that the Executive were moving in the right direction by refusing to accept the proposed saving with these posts. Councillor I. Williams had earlier referred to the need for modernising and Councillor Parry felt that this report was a step forward in that direction. The Managing Director had earlier referred to the fact that this was required and Councillor Parry felt that the Executive should again discuss this matter as soon as possible. The problem of job evaluation was in his opinion holding back developments within the Council.

Councillor I. Williams agreed with what was being said by Councillor Parry. However, going back to the Executive on 12 January, it had been resolved that the Managing Director and himself should consider staffing throughout the Authority. He was aware that there were currently 58 vacant posts. He proposed that the Executive should look in parallel with job evaluation and bring a report back regarding all those posts, including those before the Executive today, to see how many of those 58 posts could be deleted from the structure. He believed it was an opportune time to look at the Council's Structure.

The Managing Director in reply stated that this would be a major undertaking and that it could take a long time to complete. There were 3,500 members of staff and over 700 services throughout the Council. Undertaking this task would result in a decline in services at the end of the day and in not being able to meet the demands of the public. The Authority would stagnate and services would decline. He requested Councillor Schofield to provide him with information as regards any benchmarks as to the number of Solicitors employed per Authority and he would look at those figures in conjunction with the Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer. There was also a danger that in not filling posts, risks could arise throughout the Authority.

Councillor I. Williams stated that the Executive should look at, in its entirety, the report before it today, the 58 vacant posts, the 106 temporary posts, the 10 agency posts, see what the options were and bring back a report deleting the posts no longer required. Also to make a decision on the temporary posts and agency posts. He enquired as to how long the agency staff been employed and how much more they were being paid in comparison to our own staff. He proposed that the Executive should look at this first to see what effect this would have on the structure. The proposal was seconded by Councillor C. McGregor.

The Managing Director enquired whether it was still the Executive's intention to defer consideration of the report by the Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer before Committee today?

The Deputy Leader stated that it would be considered as part of the overall process.

Councillor I. Williams stated that both those posts would remain as at present.

Councillor E. Schofield welcomed the report put forward by the Director of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer. What had been seen today, was that it was possible for every Department to undertake such a task. He questioned as to why the previous decision of the Executive regarding vacant posts had not been actioned? The Executive should be able to have an analysis similar to that presented today, in a report from each Department at the touch of a button. He had not put this particular report to one side, nor had he rejected it but he did reject the fact that similar information was not available across the Authority, which would assist the Executive in trying to move things forward as regards its structure.

Councillor R.L.I. Hughes remained concerned that the Officer in question had brought before the Executive today a report which he considered ticked all the boxes. The Executive had been pressing for such reports and he was very unhappy that it was not being considered in a positive manner in saving a sum of £21k.

Councillor I. Williams stated that at the present time these posts cost less than what was being proposed.

Councillor G.O. Parry MBE stated that Councillor I. Williams had earlier referred to agency staff. It did not mean that the persons filling those posts were from outside Wales. Often they were local people who had put their names forward to work as part of an agency and very often salaries were similar.

The Deputy Leader stated that there was therefore one proposal put forward by Councillor I. Williams, seconded by Councillor C. McGregor, that this report be run in conjunction with job evaluation, vacant and temporary posts and agency posts.

Councillors R.L.I. Hughes and G.O. Parry MBE wished it to be recorded that they had abstained from voting on the matter.

RESOLVED to defer consideration of the report and to maintain the current arrangements until:-

- The completion of the Job Evaluation process.
- The Executive has considered a report confirming or deleting all vacant or temporary posts in the Authority including consultants and agency staff.

The meeting concluded at 3.40 p.m

COUNCILLOR R. G. PARRY, OBE
CHAIRPERSON