

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 2019

PRESENT

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)

County Councillors A W Davies, MC Alexander, P Davies, J Evans, S M Hayes, R Powell and M Weale

In attendance: County Councillors M Dorrance, J Morris, P Roberts and G Williams and Mr J Brautigam

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| 1. | APOLOGIES |
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There were no apologies for absence.

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| 2. | MINUTES |
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The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 5th and 12th March as correct records.

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| 3. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST |
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There were no declarations of interest reported.

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| 4. | PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2018-19 |
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Cabinet considered the performance date for the third quarter of 2018/19. All but one for the top 20 performance indicators were on target with the two improved from the last quarter being the average number of working days taken to clear fly-tipping incidents and the percentage of calls answered within timescale going from 58% in the 1st quarter to 97.47% in the 3rd quarter.

71% of high level activities were on track with the key achievements including completion of the Welsh Quality Housing Standard programme, the appointment of the new Chief Executive and finalisation of the council's new operating model. However, 7% of high level activities due to be delivered in the CIP were not on track with major issues and 11% of measures were red. The report set out a number of actions to be taken to bring performance back on track.

| RESOLVED | Reason for decision: |
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| That the actions set out in 2.3, 3.3, 4.3 & 5.3 of the report for Cabinet and Executive Management Team are approved and resources allocated to complete them. | To ensure the council can provide appropriate and timely reporting against the Top 20 PIs, CIP, PAMs & SEP |

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| 5. | FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND FORECAST AS AT 28TH FEBRUARY 2019 |
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Cabinet considered the financial overview and forecast report as at 28th February and noted that there had been a slight improvement on the previous month's figures. In response to questions about the £1.16m overspend in the schools' delegated budget, the Portfolio Holder for Learning and Welsh Language advised that only 2 primary schools and 3 secondary schools had unlicensed budgets and that officers were working closely with them to bring their budgets in line. She paid tribute to school leaders for the creative and co-operative approach they were taking to bring costs down.

The Chair of the Finance Panel spoke to the Panel's concerns about the robustness of savings plans, the risks associated with the Children's Services budget and the need for mandatory financial training for Heads of Service and Portfolio Holders. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Countryside and Transportation advised that savings put forward by services had been subject to scrutiny by the Savings Panel and the Head of Finance advised that the Cabinet would be provided with an outturn report on savings at the end of the financial year. Regarding savings in Children's Services, the Portfolio Holder acknowledged the risk associated with this and noted the budget strategy had put an additional sum in reserves to cover this issue. He accepted the recommendation that Heads of Service and Portfolio Holders receive mandatory financial training.

The report also set out two virements.

| RESOLVED | Reason for Decision |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the contents of the report are noted. 2. To approve the virements detailed in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 of the report. 3. That given the pressure on the revenue budget the Cabinet supports the S151 Officer's requirement to control discretionary expenditure until the end of the financial year. | <p>To monitor the council's financial performance and ensure that spending remains with approved limits and that the 3% minimum general fund is maintained.</p> |

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| 6. | CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE FOR THE PERIOD TO 28TH FEBRUARY 2019 |
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Cabinet received the Capital Programme update report for the period ended 28th February 2019. The Head of Finance advised that Wales Audit Office were considering the appropriate treatment of HRA right to buy capital receipts.

| RESOLVED | Reason for decision |
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| 1. That the contents of the report | To outline the capital budget |

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| are noted. | position as at 28th February 2019. |
| 2. That the virements proposed in section 2 of the report are approved and those virements over £500,000 are recommended to Full Council. | To ensure appropriate virements, are carried out to align budgets with spending plans. |

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| 7. | SCHOOLS SERVICE MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME 2019-2020 |
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Cabinet considered the Schools Service's Major Improvement Programme for 2019/20. In presenting the report the Portfolio Holder for Learning and Welsh Language thanked Welsh Government for the increase in funding for school improvement. She advised that allocated budget for 2019/20 was £2m, and it was expected that the budget would reduce to £1m in the following years. She referred to the issue of spending large amounts on small schools highlighted in the Scrutiny report and explained that it was sometimes necessary to spend money on the upkeep of small schools to keep them open as the schools service did not have sufficient staff to proceed with modernisation proposals. She commended the work of the secondary schools who had co-operated to deliver distance learning GCSE courses through ICT.

The Chair of the Learning and Skills Scrutiny Committee expanded on the Committee's recommendations and called for a review of number of schools the council could afford to support. In response to Scrutiny comments about the impact of DDA works on the wider budget, the Portfolio Holder noted that most schools had now been adapted to meet the needs of most learners.

| RESOLVED | Reason for Decision: |
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| 1. That the Major Improvements Programme for financial year 2019-2020 as set out in Appendix A be approved. | To progress the School Transformation Programme and meet Welsh Government fit for purpose objectives |
| 2. That the Portfolio holder for education in consultation with the Head of Learning has delegated authority to make changes to the Major Improvements Programme that are within budget and in accordance with Capital Budget virement rules for approval. | |
| 3. That project underspends of £94,455 in financial year 2018-2019 highlighted in green fill within Appendix A, are approved and rolled forwards from financial year 2018-2019 | |

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| and into 2019-2020. | |
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8. IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD MINUTES

Cabinet received the minutes of the Improvement and Assurance Board meeting held on 30th January, but questioned whether the attendance list was accurate.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

10. DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Cabinet received for information the list of delegated decisions taken by portfolio holders since the last meeting.

11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet received the forward work programme.

County Councillor M R Harris (Chair)