

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD BY TEAMS ON
THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2022**

PRESENT

County Councillor R G Thomas (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, B Baynham, J Berriman, G Breeze, J Charlton, L V Corfield, K W Curry, A W Davies, B Davies, D E Davies, P Davies, S C Davies, M J Dorrance, E Durrant, D O Evans, L Fitzpatrick, L George, J Gibson-Watt, M R Harris, S M Hayes, H Hulme, A Jenner, E A Jones, E Jones, G Jones, J R Jones, E M Jones, M J Jones, D Jones-Poston, F H Jump, K Laurie-Parry, H Lewis, K Lewis, P E Lewis, MC Mackenzie, I McIntosh, S McNicholas, DW Meredith, C Mills, G Morgan, JG Morris, R Powell, WD Powell, P C Pritchard, G Pugh, J Pugh, G W Ratcliffe, L Rijnenberg, L Roberts, P Roberts, K M Roberts-Jones, E Roderick, D Rowlands, K S Silk, D Selby, L Skilton, D A Thomas, T J Van-Rees, E Vaughan, M Weale, J Wilkinson, A Williams, G I S Williams, D H Williams, J Williams, J M Williams and S L Williams

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors M Barnes, D R Price and R Williams

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported.

3. MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022-2027 AND 2022-23 BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2022-2027

County Councillor Aled Davies moved suspension of Rules 4.37.1, 4.43, 4.49.2.1 and 4.49.2.2 of the Constitution. It was seconded by County Councillor Elwyn Vaughan and by 45 votes to 19 it was

RESOLVED to suspend Rules 4.37.1, 4.43, 4.49.2.1 and 4.49.2.2 of the Constitution.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance County Councillor Aled Davies proposed an amendment to the budget recommendations:

1. Council Approves the Revenue Budget for 2022-23 with the inclusion of a 3.4% increase in Council Tax in 2022-23 at a net cost of £396,000 with the Section 151 officer instructed to publish a revised Finance Resource Model (if required) as soon as possible.
2. The cost of recommendation 1 is financed by a reduction in the Minimum Revenue Budget/External Interest Budget of £396,000.

The amendment was seconded by County Councillor Elwyn Vaughan.

Council adjourned from 11.10 am to 1.15 pm for the political groups to consider the amendment.

Council voted on the amendment and passed it by 35 votes to 32 and it became the substantive motion.

County Councillor David Thomas moved an amendment to the substantive motion, seconded by County Councillor Matthew Dorrance proposing a 0% increase in Council Tax by utilising the budget management reserve.

Council voted on the amendment and passed it by 34 votes to 31. This became the substantive motion.

Council adjourned from 3.12 pm to 4.00 pm.

Council voted on the substantive motion to Recommendation 2 for a 0% rise in Council Tax. By 31 votes to 33 this was lost.

It was proposed by County Councillor Aled Davies and seconded by County Councillor Michael Williams to suspend the meeting. It was unanimously

RESOLVED to suspend the meeting until 3 March.

County Councillor R G Thomas (Chair)

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ADJOURNED COUNTY COUNCIL OF 24 FEBRUARY 2022 AND RECOVERED ON 3 MARCH 2022 HELD BY TEAMS

PRESENT

County Councillor R G Thomas (Chair)

County Councillors MC Alexander, B Baynham, J Berriman, G Breeze, J Charlton, L V Corfield, K W Curry, A W Davies, B Davies, D E Davies, P Davies, S C Davies, M J Dorrance, E Durrant, D O Evans, L Fitzpatrick, L George, J Gibson-Watt, M R Harris, S M Hayes, H Hulme, A Jenner, E A Jones, E Jones, G Jones, J R Jones, E M Jones, M J Jones, D Jones-Poston, F H Jump, K Laurie-Parry, H Lewis, K Lewis, P E Lewis, MC Mackenzie, I McIntosh, S McNicholas, DW Meredith, C Mills, G Morgan, JG Morris, R Powell, WD Powell, P C Pritchard, G Pugh, J Pugh, G W Ratcliffe, L Rijnenberg, L Roberts, P Roberts, K M Roberts-Jones, E Roderick, D Rowlands, K S Silk, D Selby, L Skilton, D A Thomas, T J Van-Rees, E Vaughan, M Weale, J Wilkinson, A Williams, G I S Williams, D H Williams, J Williams, J M Williams and S L Williams

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors M Barnes, D R Price and R Williams.

The meeting was reminded that as Council was still in the meeting that was started on 3rd March 2022, that Rules 4.37.1, 4.43, 4.49.2.1 and 4.49.2.2 of the Constitution remained suspended.

3.	MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022-2027 AND 2022-23 BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME FOR 2022-2027
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The Portfolio Holder for Finance County Councillor Aled Davies proposed an amendment seconded by County Councillor Phyl Davies:

“Since Cabinet approved and proposed the Revenue Budget and Capital Strategy to Council the Council has received unexpected additional funding from Welsh Government. Much of the funding provided has to be used for specific purposes but some allocations are unhypothecated and will improve the financial position of the Council for the current 2021/22 financial year.

These funds are one off and cannot be used to meet ongoing recurring costs, however by using these funds to meet Capital Costs it will reduce the Councils need to borrow and make a saving against the revenue budget.

We have also received an additional Capital allocation of £3.6 million that we were not anticipating.

The use of these funds to meet Capital expenditure enables the Council to reduce its budget requirement for 2022/23, the budget is funded by the Welsh Government settlement and Council Tax so with a lower budget requirement we are able to reduce the level of Council Tax we needed to raise through the 3.9% increase.

Our aim is to deliver value for money for our residents and all times keep Council Tax as low as possible. Especially in these times where we see the cost of living increasing significantly. But we also have to ensure that the frontline services we

provide are available to meet the ongoing needs of our residents. This is always a difficult balance to achieve.

It is therefore proposed that the additional funds provided by Welsh Government, Capital (£3.6m) and Revenue (£2.3m) , together with the projected underspend on MRP for 2021/22 (£1.5m) as highlighted in the Quarter 3 Budget monitoring report as presented to cabinet on the 22nd February 2022, be used to fund existing Capital schemes reducing the need to borrow for that purpose. and reducing the revenue required to fund that borrowing by £404K

The reduced borrowing releases Minimum Revenue Provision and External Interest budgets by £407K, and this saving can be used to reduce the Council Tax increase from 3.9% to 3.39% and still maintain a balanced budget.

Proposed amendment – to replace Recommendation 2 as follows:

2.1 Council Approves the Revenue Budget for 2022-23 with the inclusion of a 3.39% increase in Council Tax in 2022-23 at a net cost of £404K with the Section 151 officer instructed to publish a revised Finance Resource Model (if required) as soon as possible.

2.2 The cost of recommendation 2.1 is financed by a reduction in the Minimum Revenue Budget/External Interest Budget of £404K.”

Council voted on the amendment and it was passed by 36 votes to 31 with 1 abstention and became the substantive motion.

County Councillor David Thomas moved an amendment seconded by County Councillor Matthew Dorrance:

“We propose amending the proposals for Council Tax down to 0.1%.

We propose doing this by releasing the budget management reserve to fund the difference between 0.1% and 3.9%.

We will replenish the budget management reserve with the forecast underspend in 2021/22.

We also call for a cross party taskforce to be established with immediate effect to address the budget gap and cost pressures and provide an update to the MTFs as soon as possible.”

The amendment was put to the vote and lost by 31 votes to 36.

Council then voted on the substantive motion and by 36 votes to 30 it was

RESOLVED

2.1 To approve the Revenue Budget for 2022-23 with the inclusion of a 3.39% increase in Council Tax in 2022-23 at a net cost of £404K with the Section 151 officer instructed to publish a revised Finance Resource Model (if required) as soon as possible.

2.2 The cost of recommendation 2.1 is financed by a reduction in the Minimum Revenue Budget/External Interest Budget of £404K.

Recommendation 1

By 35 votes to 30

RESOLVED that the MTFS for 2022-2027 as set out in Appendix A is agreed in principle.

Fees and Charges Register in Appendices D and E.

Recommendation 4

By 36 votes to 27 with 1 abstention

RESOLVED Capital Strategy and Capital Programme for 2022-23 shown in Appendix F.

Recommendations 5 – 8

By 51 votes to 9 with 3 abstentions

RESOLVED to approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement as set out in Appendix F.

RESOLVED to approve the Treasury Management Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy in Appendix F.

RESOLVED to approve the authorised borrowing limit for 2022-23 as required under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 at £539 million as set out in section 3.71 of this report.

RESOLVED to approve Prudential Indicators for 2022-23 as set out in section 3.67 to 3.71 of the report and Appendix F.

4.	2022 ANNUAL REVIEW OF VISION 2025 OUR CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PAN, INCLUDING OUR STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES 2020-2024
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Council considered the annual update of Vision 2025: Our Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP). A number of amendments to the plan for the 2022-2023 financial year were proposed following a light review of the current CIP objectives and performance measures during quarter 3 of 2021-2022. In response to a member's question about climate change, officers confirmed that climate change would be embedded in all of the Council's objectives.

Council unanimously

RESOLVED to approve the proposed amendments to Vision 2025: Our CIP (as outlined in Appendix A) for publication in the CIP Update 2022, with implementation from April 2022.

County Councillor R G Thomas (Chair)