



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Question From:	County Councillor Iain McIntosh
Subject:	Budget setting
Question To:	County Councillor Aled Davies Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transport

Question:

I note the Finance Cabinet member's recent criticism of opposition councillors for not presenting an alternative budget but I'd like to point out that he already has an alternative budget at his disposal.

During my time as a Cabinet member, preliminary budget proposals were discussed in the lead up to Welsh Government's announcement of the settlement Powys County Council would receive. During this time, a balanced budget was discussed based upon what funding this authority assumed would be offered by Welsh Government, with a proposed council tax increase of 5%.

In December, Welsh Government announced their funding settlement for Powys County Council, which included an extra £18.6 million over and above what this authority thought we were going to get. That extra £18.6 million equates to what would be the same as a 21.6% rise in council tax for the financial year.

Considering the fact that a legal balanced budget proposal based upon an increase of 5% to council tax was on the table, and the fact that this authority has been sent the equivalent of 21.6% council tax increase, can the finance Cabinet member please explain why a new proposal is now being presented to council based on a council tax increase of 3.9%? This would result in a net increase equivalent of 25.5% to council tax for the financial year. What extra financial challenges has the authority found since last December?

Surely, with the current cost of living crisis, and the fact this authority has finally been sent the level of funding Powys residents deserve by Welsh Government, there should be no council tax increase this year, at all?