

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNTY HALL AND ON ZOOM ON TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2023

PRESENT

County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)

County Councillors J Berriman, J Brignell-Thorp, J Charlton, R Church, S Cox, S C Davies, P Roberts, D Selby and D A Thomas

In attendance: County Councillors Aled Davies and Angela Davies

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors J Gibson-Watt (Chair) and A Kennerley (Cabinet Assistant)

2. MINUTES

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 24th October 2023 as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported.

4. COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2024-2025
--

Cabinet considered a report on the Council Tax base for 2024-25. County Councillor Aled Davies, Chair of the Finance Panel reported that the Panel had expressed concerns over the Welsh Government's proposals for changes to the council tax system. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Transformation noted that the proposals were currently out for consultation and that the Council would be monitoring them closely.

RESOLVED

- 1. That the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the whole of its area for the year 2024-25 of 64,536.48 be approved.**
- 2. That the calculation of the Council Tax Base for each Town and Community Council contained within 4.2 above, be approved to meet the legal requirement of the Council to set a Council Tax Base for 2024-25.**

5. FINANCIAL FORECAST FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024 (AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023)

Cabinet considered the revenue report for the second quarter. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Transformation acknowledged the concerns of the Finance Panel over the financial position of schools reported by the Chair of the Panel, County Councillor Aled Davies but noted that this was an issue faced by schools across the country.

Cabinet also noted that pay claims had put pressure on the budget and that the council would have to reshape its service offer and staffing profile to manage within its means.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet note the current budget position and the projected full year forecast to the end of March 2024.
2. That the grants set out in section 5.1 of the report are noted.
3. The virements set out in section 5.2 are approved, to comply with the virement rules for budget movements as set out in the financial regulations.
4. The virement set out in section 5.3 is recommended to Council for approval to comply with the virement rules in the financial regulations for requests over £500,000.

6.	CAPITAL FORECAST 2023-24, AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023
----	--

Cabinet considered the capital report for quarter 2. The revised programme at the 30th September 2023 was budgeted at £96.32 million following the successful award of additional grants and the reprofiling of budgets between financial years. Actual spend amounted to £22.85 million, representing 24% of the total budget. Officers would follow up on a request made by the Chair of the Finance Panel for information.

RESOLVED that the report is noted.

7.	THE COUNCIL'S USE OF SURVEILLANCE UNDER THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 2022-2023
----	--

Cabinet considered a report on the council's use of covert surveillance under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) for 2022-2023 and noted that the council had not undertaken any directed covert surveillance, nor had it authorised the use of a covert human intelligence source.

The report also set out a revised RIPA policy and a newly developed non RIPA policy.

The Council's Senior Manager for Customer Services and Information Governance, Helen Dolman, was thanked for her work.

RESOLVED

1. To note that the Council has not utilised RIPA in the financial year 2022/23 and the activity undertaken in response to the Commissioner's report.
2. To approve the revised RIPA Policy as set out in Appendix A to the report to take immediate effect.
3. To approve the newly developed non-RIPA Policy and procedures as set out in Appendix B to the report to take immediate effect.

8.	CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING BOARD ACTIVITY REPORT
-----------	---

The Interim Director of Social Services and Housing presented the activity report from the Corporate Safeguarding Board as chair of the Board. The Cabinet Member for a Safer Powys encouraged councillors, officers and the public to take part in the White Ribbon marches taking place on 25th November.

9.	DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING
-----------	---

Cabinet noted the delegated decisions taken by portfolio holders since the last meeting.

10.	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
------------	-------------------------------

Cabinet noted the forward work programme. Cabinet members and Heads of Service were asked to ensure that it was kept updated.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for a Fairer Powys was pleased to report that the Council had provisionally secured over £17.7 million of Levelling Up Funding from UK Government to promote recreational tourism in the county through transport investment.

11.	EXEMPT ITEMS
------------	---------------------

RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

12.	ERC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
------------	---

County Councillor Angela Davies, Chair of the Economy Residents and Communities Scrutiny Committee presented the Committee's recommendations on the sale of a property. The Committee had found no grounds for referring the decision back to the Cabinet but had made five recommendations, three of which the Cabinet fully accepted, one which it partially accepted and one which it rejected.

The Chair thanked the ERC Committee for its work.

13.	POWYS OWNED CARE HOMES
------------	-------------------------------

Cabinet considered a confidential report on Powys owned care homes.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations in the report.

County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)