

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: **THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: **SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE –**
9TH FEBRUARY, 2022

REPORT OF: **DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

PRESENT: **Leader of the Council/**
Executive Member – Corporate Services
Councillor N. Daniels

Deputy Leader/
Executive Member – Regeneration and
Economic Development
Councillor D. Davies

Executive Member – Education
Councillor J. Collins

Executive Member – Environment
Councillor J. Wilkins

Executive Member – Social Services
Councillor J. Mason

WITH: Managing Director
Corporate Director Education
Corporate Director Social Services
Chief Officer Resources
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships
Press Officer

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> An apology for absence was received from the Chief Officer Commercial and Customer.
No. 3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u> There were no declarations of interest and dispensations raised.
	<u>MINUTES</u>
No. 4	<u>EXECUTIVE</u> Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 th January, 2021. RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

DECISION ITEMS – CORPORATE SERVICES

No. 5 REVENUE BUDGET 2022/2023

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

The Chief Officer Resources advised that the report provided an update on the positive provisional local government settlement for 2022/23 and its impact upon the Council's budget. It also outlined the detailed revenue budget for 2022/23 and sought approval of the level of Council Tax increase for the 2022/2023 financial year.

The Chief Officer Resources added that the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy was agreed by Council in November 2021 and advised that this report updated Members with the latest financial position regarding the budget following the announcement of the provisional local government settlement for 2022/23.

The Chief Officer Resources further spoke the report and provided an overview of the areas covered in the report as follows:-

- National Aggregate External Finance (AEF) Position
- Blaenau Gwent AEF position
- Aggregated External Finance (AEF) funding compared to MTFS
- Cost Pressures and Growth
- Treatment of Grants transferring into the Settlement
- Individual Schools Budget
- Revised funding gap
- Bridging The Gap Programme
- Revenue Budget 2021/22
- General Revenue Reserves 2021/22

In conclusion, the Chief Officer Resources referred to discussions at the Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 8th February, 2022 and advised that Members accepted recommendations 3.1.1 to 3.1.6, however it was recommended by the Committee that a decision in relation to 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 be deferred until the Full Council meeting scheduled to be held on 17th February, 2022.

The Leader noted the report which detailed a positive final budget to be set by this administration. The Leader was pleased that this Authority was able to produce a balanced and legal budget. There had been no reason, again this year to take monies from reserves this had resulted in reserves levels held by this Council being built up to an appropriate level.

The Leader proposed that recommendations 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 be agreed and recommendations 3.1.7. and 3.1.8 be determined by Full Council on 17th February, 2022. This proposal was seconded.

The Executive Member for Education was delighted with the large amount of money to be passported to schools which would be extremely welcomed by head teachers and be of great benefit to the children and young people of Blaenau Gwent.

The Executive Member for Social Services also welcomed the support in the budget for Social Services.

The Leader added that both Executive Members for Social Services and Education had been great advocates in their respective areas and stated that the commitment given in 2017 to protect and support Education and Social Services had been demonstrated during this administrations term of office.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the following be agreed:-

3.1.1 the 2022/23 revenue budget be recommended to Council;

3.1.2 comment was provided on the outcomes within the overall provisional RSG Settlement and note the potential for further change in the Final RSG Settlement;

3.1.3 comment was provided on the outcomes within the BGCBC provisional RSG Settlement and its impact upon the Medium Term Financial Strategy;

3.1.4 the cost pressures and growth items (£4m in total) identified in Appendix 2 for inclusion in the budget be recommended to Council;

3.1.5 passporting the grants transferring into the Settlement of £265,000 to the relevant services be recommended to Council;

	<p>3.1.6 an uplift of £3.91m which equated to 8.4% increase to the ISB be recommended to Council;</p> <p>3.1.7 that any achievement of Bridging the Gap proposals which exceeded the in-year budget requirement be transferred into a contingency budget to support pay increases during 2022/23 over and above that provided in the Medium Term Financial Strategy of £0.95m and £1.5m to be transferred to the Financial Resilience Reserve be deferred for consideration at Council; and</p> <p>3.1.8 a Council Tax increase of 4% for 2022/23 as per the MTFS assumptions be deferred for consideration at Council.</p>
	<p><u>DECISION ITEM – SOCIAL SERVICES</u></p>
No. 6	<p><u>DEVELOPMENT OF A CAERPHILLY/BLAENAU GWENT COLLABORATION IN PROVIDING LEGAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN’S SOCIAL SERVICES</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Corporate Director Social Services and an overview was provided to the Executive.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information which contained details relating to the business/financial affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted (Option 1).</p>