

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

SUBJECT: CABINET - 21ST FEBRUARY, 2024

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. THOMAS (CHAIR)

Councillors H. Cunningham
J. C. Morgan
H. Trollope
S. Edmunds

WITH: Interim Chief Executive
Chief Officer Resources
Chief Officer Customer & Commercial
Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services
Interim Corporate Director Social Services
Head of Legal & Corporate Compliance
Head of Democratic Services, Governance & Partnerships
Head of Organisational Development
Service Manager – Accountancy
Senior Business Partner – Finance
Service Manager – Policy & Partnerships
Service Manager Education Transformation
Press & Public Relations Officer

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

| ITEM | SUBJECT | ACTION |
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| 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> | |

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| | No apologies for absence were received. | |
| No. 3 | <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u> No declarations of interest or dispensations were raised. | |
| No. 4 | <u>CABINET</u> Consideration was given to the decisions of the Cabinet Meeting held on 10 th January, 2024. RESOLVED that the decisions be received as a true record of proceedings. | |
| No. 5 | <u>CONFERENCES, COURSES AND EVENTS</u> Consideration was given to the following:- <u>2024 Royal Garden Party</u> <u>Royal Garden Parties – London</u> <u>8th May, 2024 and 21st May, 2024</u> RESOLVED that one nominee plus guest be approved to attend on either the 8 th or 21 st May, 2024. | |
| No. 6 | <u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 10TH APRIL 2024</u> Consideration was given to report of the Scrutiny & Democratic Officer. RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted | |
| No. 7 | <u>GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS</u> Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources. The following grants were received following the publication of the report. <u>ABERTILLERY</u> | |

Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor N. Parsons

1. Beaufort Hill Ponds and Woodlands £125

BRYNMAWR

Brynmawr Ward - Councillor J. Hill

1. Brynmawr & District Museum Society £88

Brynmawr Ward - Councillor W. Hodgins

1. Abertillery Piranhas £100
2. Nantyglo Under 10's Football £100
3. Brynmawr Musical Theatre Company £200
4. Nantyglo Mini Rugby £100
5. Brynmawr FC £100
6. Brynmawr RFC £150
7. North Ebbw Fach Interact £100
8. Brynmawr & District Museum Society £200

EBBW VALE

Beaufort Ward - Councillor C. Smith

1. Glyncoed Community Group £100
2. Beaufort Christmas Lights £100
3. Ebbw Vale Works Museum £100
4. 1158 Ebbw Vale Squadron RAF Air Cadets £110

Beaufort Ward - Councillor D. Woods

1. Beaufort Ladies Craft Class £100
2. Beaufort RFC £100
3. Royal British Legion Rassau & Beaufort Branch £100
4. Beaufort Christmas Lights £200
5. One Life Autism £100
6. Beaufort Hill Ponds & Woodlands £100
7. Beaufort Male Choir £100
8. 2nd Beaufort & Rassau Scout Group £100
9. Ffin Dance £100
10. Beaufort Hearts £100
11. Willowtown Primary School PTA £100
12. Glyncoed Community Group £200

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| | <p>13. Beaufort Hill Primary School £260</p> <p><u>Ebbw Vale North Ward - Councillor J. Morgan</u></p> <p>1. RTB Ebbw Vale FC £160</p> <p>2. One Life Autism £200</p> <p><u>MANYGLO & BLAINA</u></p> <p><u>Blaina Ward - Councillor J.P. Morgan</u></p> <p>1. Blaina Cricket Club £960</p> <p>RESOLVED accordingly.</p> <p>FURTHER RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted.</p> | |
| <p>No. 8</p> | <p><u>WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2021-2026</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Organisational Development.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted, Cabinet reviewed and noted the progress against the 2022/23 delivery plan and endorsed the 2023/25 delivery plan (Option 1).</p> | |
| <p>No. 9</p> | <p><u>CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, FORECAST FOR 2023/2024 FINANCIAL YEAR (AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023)</u></p> | |

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| | <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Members provided the appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report, continued to support appropriate financial control procedures agreed by Council and noted the budgetary control and monitoring procedures in place within the Capital Team, to safeguard Authority funding (Option 1).</p> | |
| <p>No. 10</p> | <p><u>REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/2024 FORECAST OUTTURN TO 31 MARCH 2024 (AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023)</u></p> <p><u>REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/2024 FORECAST OUTTURN TO 31ST MARCH 2024 (AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2023)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Members provided the appropriate challenge to the financial outcomes in the report, noted the application of reserves and challenged the Action Plans as detailed in Appendix 2 (Option 1).</p> | |
| <p>No. 11</p> | <p><u>DISCRETIONARY FEES & CHARGES 2024/2025</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Cabinet recommended Option 2 to Council, as follows:-</p> <p>(1) approved the register of Fees & Charges for 2024/2025 detailed at Appendix 1 and for discretionary fees & charges, as follows:-</p> | |

- (a) a fee uplift of 5% in line with the proposed business case as detailed in Appendix 4;
 - (b) the alternative fee proposed as detailed in paragraphs 5.1.4 to 5.1.14. of the report; and
 - (c) Planning Fees attached at Appendix 2.
- (2) approved delegated power and responsibility to the Interim Director of Social Services for setting the fees and charges for 2024/2025 relating to the provision of external social care as detailed in paragraph 5.1.6 of the report; and
- (3) approved the core price increases related to Aneurin Leisure Trust as detailed in Appendix 3.

No. 12 **REVENUE BUDGET 2024/2025**

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

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and agreed Option 1, as follows:-

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- 1) Subject to the decisions on the following recommendations, Members considered and recommended to Council the 2024/25 revenue budget as shown in the table in paragraph 5.1.15 of the report.
- 2) Members provided comment on the outcomes within the overall provisional RSG Settlement and noted the potential for further change in the Final RSG Settlement (paragraphs 2.6 – 2.17 of the report).
- 3) Members provided comment on the outcomes within the BGCBC provisional RSG Settlement and its impact upon the Medium Term Financial Strategy (paragraphs 2.18 – 2.26 of the report).
- 4) Members considered and recommend to Council the

updated cost pressures and growth items (£2.8m in total) detailed in Appendix 2 (paragraphs 5.1.10 – 5.1.16 of the report) for inclusion in the Council's budget.

- 5) Members considered and recommended to Council the Bridging the Gap proposals (a summary of which is detailed at Appendix 3 and Business Cases are outlined in Appendix 4) delivering a minimum of £6.27m of financial efficiencies and budget cuts towards the budget gap (paragraphs 5.1.32 to 5.1.37 of the report).
- 6) Members considered and recommended to Council the level of funding provided to schools (paragraph 5.1.19-5.1.27 of the report).
- 7) Members recommended that any grant/s transferring into the Final Settlement for 2024/2025 be passported to the relevant service/s.
- 8) Members considered and recommended to Council the use of reserves up to £2.1m to balance the budget for 2024/2025 (paragraphs 5.1.38 to 5.1.42 of the report). The level would be subject to the recommendations in paragraph 3.1.5 and 3.1.6 above.
- 9) Members considered and recommended to Council, a Council Tax increase of a minimum of 5% for 2024/25 (paragraph 5.1.10 of the report) as per the Business Case CS12 (detailed in Appendix 3 and 4).
- 10) Approved the updated MTFs for 2024/2025 to 2028/2029 as detailed in Appendix 5.

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| | <p><u>CCTV ZONES 2023/24</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Policy & Partnerships.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and Cabinet endorsed the updated Codes of Practice for 2023/24 (Option 1):-</p> <p>-</p> <p>Recommendation 2: Cabinet considered the current operating practices and arrangements with Caerphilly Council and IDS; and</p> <p>Recommendation 3: Agreed to consider the Annual Report 2023/24 as part of the committee’s forward work programme for 2024/25.</p> | |
| <p>No. 14</p> | <p><u>CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION SERVICES 6-MONTH PROGRESS PERFORMANCE REPORT APR 23-SEPT 23</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 2).</p> | |
| <p>No. 15</p> | <p><u>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING ROLLING PROGRAMME</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and approved, and the Sustainable Communities for Learning Rolling Programme proposals to be submitted to Welsh Government in March 24 (Option 1).</p> | |
| <p>No. 16</p> | <p><u>KEY STAGE 4 OUTCOMES 2023</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Corporate Director Education.</p> | |

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| | RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1). | |
| No. 17 | <p><u>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES 2023/2024 (QUARTERS 1 AND 2).</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Corporate Director Social Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 2).</p> | |
| No. 18 | <p><u>SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES 1ST APRIL TO 30TH SEPTEMBER AND EDUCATION SUMMER TERM-2023</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the joint report of the Interim Corporate Director Social Services and Interim Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and provided comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes (Option 2).</p> | |
| No. 19 | <p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND REGENERATION DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE - QUARTERS 1 AND 2 - 2023/24</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 2).</p> | |