

THE CABINET 23/06/15

Present-

Councillors: Dyfed Wyn Edwards (Items 1-9), Dyfrig L. Siencyn, Peredur Jenkins, John Wynn Jones, Dafydd Meurig, W. Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Gareth Thomas and Mandy Williams-Davies

Also present: Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director), Dafydd L. Edwards (Head of Finance) and Iwan G. Evans (Head of Legal Service)

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet members and officers were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies -

Cllr Ioan Thomas, Cllr Dyfed Edwards (items 9 and 10), Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Guidance was given by the Head of Legal Services regarding declaring an interest in relation to item 7.

Councillor Peredur Jenkins declared a personal interest in item 7 on the agenda (Ysgol Machreth, Ysgol y Gader Catchment Area), because his daughter was the Headteacher of Ysgol Gynradd Rhydymain/Brithdir.

The member was of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest, and he withdrew from the Chamber during the discussion on the item.

Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn declared a personal interest in item 7 on the agenda (Ysgol Machreth, Ysgol y Gader Catchment Area), due to family connections with Cllr Peredur Jenkins.

The member was of the opinion that it was not a prejudicial interest and he participated fully in the discussion on the item.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 2ND OF JUNE 2015

There were no matters arising from scrutiny committees.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 2ND OF JUNE 2015

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 2 June 2015.

6. APPROVAL OF 2015/17 STRATEGIC PLAN

The report was submitted by Cllr. Dyfrig Siencyn.
It was seconded by Cllr. Gareth Thomas.

DECISION

To recommend that the Full Council adopts the 2015-17 Strategic Plan as submitted to the meeting, but with minor amendments, including the following to the 'Poverty, Deprivation, Economy, Housing' section -

- In the introduction for this section, to add a reference to the Council's role as a partner on the North Wales Ambition Board, and the need to take advantage of opportunities that arise on a regional level.
- T2 – include a reference to the importance of local supply chains.
- Add a heading - Improving Access to Employment for the People of the County and Responding to Barriers

7. YSGOL MACHRETH, YSGOL Y GADER CATCHMENT AREA

The report was submitted by Cllr. Gareth Thomas.
It was seconded by Cllr. Dyfed Edwards.

DECISION

1. To withdraw the statutory notice regarding Ysgol Machreth.
2. To approve the commencement of an alternative process based on the proposal to close the school early in 2016 – Option 3 in the report submitted to the meeting.
3. By following the statutory processes, to offer places to Ysgol Machreth pupils at Ysgol Ieuan Gwynedd, Rhydymain during the transition period prior to the establishment of the All-through Catchment Area School on 1 September 2017.

8. CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN

4. CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN

The report was submitted by Cllr. John Wynn Jones.

DECISION

1. To adopt a Second Carbon Management Plan for the period 2015/16 – 2020/2021, and to set a target of reducing carbon by 40% against the

baseline by the end of the Plan's lifespan.

2. To fund the Plan's total expenditure (£3.259m) through a combination of financial sources –

Cost	Source
£1.410m	The Council's Invest to Save Fund – (already approved to fund the Street Lighting Upgrade Scheme)
£0.375m	Application for an interest-free loan from the Welsh Government Salix fund
£0.185m	Capital under use (Carbon Management Field)
£1.289m	Re-direct under use of the Carbon Fund (First Carbon Plan)
£3.259m	

9. REVIEW OF RESERVES

REVIEW OF RESERVES

The report was submitted by Cllr. Peredur Jenkins.
It was seconded by Cllr. Mair Rowlands.

DECISION

1. To approve the Council's Policy on Reserves as follows -

1.1 The Council holds a number of reserves as part of its strategy to prudently manage resources. These reserves are used for specific purposes for the benefit of the communities of Gwynedd. The use of reserves supports the achievement of service delivery and improvements in the county, as outlined in the corporate strategic plan.

1.2 Specific reserves (or earmarked reserves) are retained either under delegated authority given to chief officers, or by the Cabinet.

1.3 In order to define "reserves", it is necessary to note the treatment of "provisions". Provisions are incurred in the accounts in order to settle an estimate of obligations arising from past events.

1.4 Reserves are amounts set aside for specific purposes, or funds built up to meet predicted liabilities.

1.5 For each reserve established, the purpose / usage (reason for creating / how it can be used) is defined, and the basis of transaction (which chief officer has delegated authority to spend) is identified.

1.6 Meaningful judgements about reserves can only be made locally, and decisions will be taken by elected members having due regard to information and advice provided by the Chief Finance Officer.

1.7 Reserves held by individual departments or corporate reserves are used to smooth pressure over years (e.g. the emergency severe weather reserve for the Highways service).

1.8 During continuing austerity, there will be an increased need for service areas to change and adapt to become more efficient. Efficiency schemes involve changes with one-off costs, and the Council's reserves policy recognises this, with Departments holding balances for use in accordance with overall principles agreed by the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet.

1.9 Departmental reserves will be established from resources underspent in-year, and the relevant Cabinet Member will oversee use of reserves on proposed projects. Where in-year service pressures cannot be met within departments' annual budgets, then departmental reserves may be used to address the net pressure.

1.10 Corporate reserves will be established / used by the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet, based on need and planned / anticipated requirements.

1.11 Unavoidable unforeseen or emergency expenditure may be financed from general balances, but only with Cabinet approval.

1.12 The Chief Finance Officer has a personal statutory duty (under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003) to ensure proper stewardship of reserves, hence he will undertake a continuous review of their adequacy and use. The annual budget report to Council will include the Chief Finance Officer's opinion on reserves in the context of the medium term financial strategy. Also, significant amendments to reserves will be reported to the Cabinet for approval.

1.13 External auditors review arrangements to ensure that the Council's financial standing is sound, and this will include reporting on the level of reserves, in the context of their knowledge of the authority's financial performance. However, it is not the responsibility of auditors to prescribe the optimum or minimum level of reserves / balances.

1.14 The Council takes a risk-based approach to maintaining an adequate level of balances and reserves to meet future spending needs. When considering the annual budget and medium term financial strategy, the Council will set out its intention regarding the level of general balances and reserves, in the context of all relevant risks, provision for inflation, demography, etc. in the budget.

2. Due to the significant financial challenge facing the Council during 2015/16 - 2017/18, the Cabinet is asked to approve the sums to be yielded from various reserves following the review (list submitted to meeting) and to transfer £2.9m to the Redundancy Reserve and £1.5m to the Transformation / Invest to Save Fund.

10. CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S CABINET –
QUARTER 2 2015/16

The report was submitted by Cllr. Dyfrig Siencyn.
It was seconded by Cllr. Gareth Thomas.

DECISION

To approve the Forward Work Programme submitted to the meeting.

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 1.45pm.

CHAIRMAN