
THE COUNCIL, 05.03.15

Present: Councillor Dewi Owen (Chairman);
Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Vice-chairman).

Councillors: Craig ab Iago, Stephen Churchman, Annwen Daniels, Anwen Davies, Lesley Day, Edward Dogan, Gwynfor Edwards, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Trevor Edwards, Thomas Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Jean Forsyth, Gweno Glyn, Simon Glyn, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Siân Gwellian, Annwen Hughes, Chris Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Peredur Jenkins, Anne Lloyd Jones, Brian Jones, Charles W.Jones, Dyfrig Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones, John Wynn Jones, Linda Wyn Jones, Sion Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, June Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Linda Morgan, Christopher O'Neal, Michael Sol Owen, W.Roy Owen, W.Tudor Owen, Nigel Pickavance, Peter Read, E.Caerwyn Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Liz Saville Roberts, W.Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Hefin Williams, John Wyn Williams, Owain Williams, R.H.Wyn Williams, Mandy Williams-Davies, Robert J.Wright and Eurig Wyn.

Also present: Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Arwyn Thomas (Head of Education Department), Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer), Rhun ap Gareth (Senior Solicitor/Deputy Monitoring Officer), Arwel E.Jones (Senior Manager – Corporate Commissioning Service), William E.Jones (Senior Finance Manager), Geraint Owen (Senior Manager Human Resources), Gareth Jones (Senior Manager - Planning and Environment), Nia Davies (Planning Manager – Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Unit) and Eirian Roberts (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Gwen Griffith, Louise Hughes, Aeron Jones and Llywarch Bowen Jones.

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Councillor John Wynn Jones.

1. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 4 December 2014 as a true record.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Members were advised by the Monitoring Officer to declare an interest in item 8 on the agenda (Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16) and to withdraw from the chamber if a very close member of their family benefitted from one of the specific proposals in the report.

No declarations of personal interest were received from any member present.

The Monitoring Officer also drew attention to the fact that this item affected all the chief officers present. Therefore, it was proposed to deal with the matter in two parts, namely:-

- (1) All the CHIEF officers apart from the Chief Executive would declare an interest and withdraw from the chamber throughout the discussion;
- (2) The Chief Executive, if required, to withdraw from the chamber to provide an opportunity for members to raise any points regarding the Chief Executive's salary.

The Chief Executive, the Corporate Director, the Head of Finance Department, the Head of Education Department, the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department and the Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer declared an interest in this item as the report involved their salaries.

They were of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest and the Corporate Director, the Head of Finance Department, the Head of Education Department, the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department and Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer withdrew from the meeting during the entire discussion and the Chief Executive withdrew during part of the discussion on the item.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Condolences:

Councillor Ioan Thomas paid tribute to the late Councillor Huw Edwards, former chairman of the Council, who had represented Cadnant Ward for many years and sympathy was conveyed to his family in their bereavement.

Condolences were expressed to the following:-

The families of:-

Mr Isgoed Williams, Trawsfynydd, former member of Gwynedd County Council;

John Rowlands, novelist and literary adjudicator;

Dr Meredydd Edwards, a prominent figure in Welsh public life as a performer, a specialist in folk singing and language campaigner;

Dr John Davies, the historian and broadcaster.

It was also noted that the Council wished to remember others in the county's communities who had recently lost loved ones.

The Council stood as a mark of respect.

(2) Congratulations

Councillor Mair Rowlands was congratulated on being shortlisted as the LGA's Young Councillor of the Year.

(3) Note

It was noted that there were a few tickets remaining for the Chairman's Charity Concert which would be held on Sunday evening, 8 March in the Community Centre, Porthmadog with the proceeds for the Hope House charity.

It was noted that the Welsh Government would be holding two briefing and engagement sessions on the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People* in Venue Cymru, Llandudno on Monday 16 March, with one session commencing at 10.00a.m and the other at 2.00pm.

4. QUESTIONS

(The written answer of the Cabinet Member had been distributed to the members at their group meetings on the morning of the Council.)

A question by Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd

“Given that the public consultation period on the deposit draft Joint Local Development Plan is underway, would the relevant portfolio holder disclose how any responses received during the consultation will be incorporated in the Plan and what will be the fate of the Plan when the consultation period ends and the responses have been incorporated appropriately?”

Answer from Councillor Dafydd Meurig, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory

“The question is timely and you have all seen the response. It is very important that we all respond to the consultation period. It is very important that everyone knows about the Local Development Plan and it explains what the land-use plan is for the next fifteen years.”

A supplementary question by Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd

“As the current Cabinet Member will be adopting the plan, does he really believe that the Deposit Plan of the Joint Local Development Plan satisfies the purpose and is fit for purpose in today’s Gwynedd to promote the Welsh language and our vulnerable communities?”

Answer from Councillor Dafydd Meurig, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory

“The Local Development Plan’s process commenced in 2010. It is a very thorough process. There has been much consultation. There has been a previous consultation period in 2013 and there is a current consultation period and I wish to emphasise how important it is that we all respond to the consultation. There has been an opportunity for Gwynedd residents to do this, along with community councils and individuals across the county. Therefore I wish to emphasise how important it is for us to respond to the consultation. It is up to the people of Gwynedd to give their opinions during this consultation period and I will be giving my opinion like many others and I hope that all of us will do the same.”

5. PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2015/16

Submitted – the report of the Cabinet Member for Resources recommending the Council to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 in accordance with Section 38(i) of the Localism Act 2011, which incorporated the Cabinet’s decision to increase the pay of Council staff receiving the lowest pay by deleting the lowest pay point from the Council’s pay structure as a further step towards a ‘Living Wage’.

The Council was also requested to:-

- (i) Consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers Appointments Committee that it was inappropriate to review the actual pay of Chief Officers in the context of the existing benchmark levels in view of the financial climate facing the Council and its impact on staff and that the next consideration would be given to re-grading actual

pay to benchmark levels when reviewing the Pay Policy for 2016/17 and annually thereafter.

- (ii) To approve the amendment to the Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15 as a result of the fact that the national pay increase for Chief Officers had been back-dated to 1 January 2015.

Members were given an opportunity to submit their observations or to ask questions on every aspect of the report except for the Chief Executive's salary. During the discussion:-

- (i) The report was welcomed and the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member were congratulated on their guidance when restructuring the senior management of the Council within the challenging context that faced the Council.
- (ii) The suggestion was welcomed that the lowest salary point be deleted from the Council's pay structure as a step forwards to introducing a 'Living Wage' as a minimum pay and to close the gap between the pay of those on the top and those on the lowest level.
- (iii) It was enquired how many Council staff were on zero hours contracts and the the Chief Executive agreed to try to find the figure and send it to the member who had raised the question.
- (iv) Guidance was requested regarding whom to contact following the restructuring and the Chief Executive gave his assurance that the information would appear in *Rhaeadr*.

The Chief Executive withdrew from the Chamber so that the Council could raise any matter regarding the Chief Executive's salary. As a consequence, all the chief officers had withdrawn from the chamber during the vote on the matter.

The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that there was no recommendation to amend the Chief Executive's salary and this was in agreement with the Chief Executive's wishes.

RESOLVED

- (a) To increase the pay of Council staff receiving the lowest pay by deleting the lowest pay point from the Council's pay structure.**
- (b) To adopt the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 (Appendix A of the report).**
- (c) The next consideration is to be given to re-grading actual pay to benchmark levels when reviewing the Pay Policy for 2016/17 and annually thereafter.**
- (ch) To approve the amendment to the Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15 as a result of the fact that the national pay increase for Chief Officers is back-dated to 1 January 2015.**

6. 2015/16 BUDGET

Submitted – the report of the Cabinet Member for Resources, recommending a budget for the Council to adopt for 2015/16 together with an appendix detailing all the relevant matters that needed to be considered when establishing the budget along with those matters that influenced establishing a strategy for the future.

Concern was expressed that cutting £4.3m from the schools budget would affect children by leading to changes to the curriculum and to the structure and quality of the county's education, and an amendment to reduce the cut from £4.3m to £3.4m was proposed and seconded and using £900,000 from the balances to fund this.

A registered vote was called for on the amendment.

In response to the amendment:-

- (i) The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that it was not proposed to cut £4.3m from the schools budget in 2015/16 and that the savings target was to be achieved over the next three years. In 2015/16, the schools saving would be £952,000 and the Schools Funding Forum had agreed to this.
- (ii) The Chief Executive warned against using more of the balances because in future, those balances would be needed to buy more time to bridge the period when the Council faced very difficult decisions. He noted also that not reducing the education budget as much as what was in the current strategy would mean further cutting the budgets of other services, and this could not be done without knowing what the implications would be for those services. He added that the education strategy could be revisited this time next year when the choices and the implications of those choices were known.
- (iii) The Head of Education Department explained that a cut of £952,000 would lead to some increase in the pupil/teacher ratio in the primary and secondary sectors. He explained that there was no evidence of a direct link between education standards and funding. The main elements were the quality of the leadership and teaching in the schools.

An amendment was proposed and seconded to reduce the cut in the schools budget in 2015/16 from £952,000 to £600,000 and to use £300,000 from the balances to fund this.

As one amendment had already been proposed and seconded on this matter, the permission of the meeting and the seconder was received to withdraw that amendment and the new amendment replaced the original amendment.

In response to the amendment, the Chief Executive emphasised that using balances was not a permanent solution and the amendment would mean transferring the permanent implications to other services without knowing what those implications would be. He drew attention that the Wales Audit Office noted (paragraph 8.7 of the report) that it would not usually be appropriate to fund regular expenditure from reserves and that some Councils were overly dependent on general reserves to deal with a budgetary deficit, rather than trying to adopt more sustainable methods.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- (i) Prudence was necessary so as not to establish an *ad hoc* budget.
- (ii) Not making the schools saving would hit other services, such as children and vulnerable adults, much harder.
- (iii) The budget and the allocation for schools satisfied the requirements of the Minister and the Welsh Government by ensuring that there was an addition in the schools budget.
- (iv) Gwynedd had protected the schools budget along the years and in adopting the proposed budget, this Council would continue to be amongst the most generous in terms of funding education in Wales.
- v) Using more from the balances would place the Council in a very difficult situation in the future.

The Cabinet Member for Education noted that there had been agreement in the Schools Savings Targets Working Group, which included head teachers of primary and secondary schools, governors and officers, on the target of £952,000 in 2015/16 along with an agreement to continue looking at how to achieve £4.3m over three years with the least effect on pupils' education.

A registered vote was called for on the amendment.

In accordance with Procedural Rules the following vote was recorded on the amendment:-

For: (3) Councillors Gwynfor Edwards, Brian Jones and Sion Jones.

Abstain: (0)

Against: (65) Councillors Craig ab Iago, Stephen Churchman, Annwen Daniels, Anwen Davies, Lesley Day, Edward Dogan, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Trevor Edwards, Thomas Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Jean Forsyth, Gweno Glyn, Simon Glyn, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Siân Gwenllian, Annwen Hughes, Chris Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Peredur Jenkins, Anne Lloyd Jones, Charles W.Jones, Dyfrig Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones, John Wynn Jones, Linda Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, June Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Christopher O'Neal, Dewi Owen, Michael Sol Owen, W.Roy Owen, W.Tudor Owen, Nigel Pickavance, Peter Read, E.Caerwyn Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Liz Saville Roberts, W.Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Hefin Williams, John Wyn Williams, Owain Williams, R.H.Wyn Williams, Mandy Williams-Davies, Robert J.Wright and Eurig Wyn.

During the discussion on the remainder of the report, it was noted:-

- (i) Unfortunately, Central Government cuts and a grant reduction from the Welsh Government meant that this Council had no choice but to accept the budget.
- (ii) That Gwynedd was a poor area and should campaign for a better settlement for local government in Wales.
- (iii) That the Council Tax in Gwynedd had increased 30% since 2008 and none of the residents had received a pay rise that corresponded to this.
- (iv) That a lot of thorough work had gone into establishing the budget and that it was important that all members showed their support to the Cabinet Member.

It was proposed and seconded to adopt the proposed budget, which meant a 4.5% increase in Council Tax.

It was noted that the families that were being hit the hardest should be considered and a motion to increase Council Tax by 3.5% was proposed and seconded.

In response to the amendments, the Chief Executive noted that increasing the Council Tax by 3.5% would mean using an additional £500,000 from the balances and would add £500,000 to the £15m cuts currently needed, thus affecting those very same people who were dependent on Council services.

During the discussion on the amendment, it was noted:-

- (i) That it was very hard for people who were on low incomes, but not eligible to receive support to pay the tax.
- (ii) That people saw themselves having to pay more Council Tax, only to receive fewer services.
- (iii) That inflation was currently at only 1%.
- (iv) That the Welsh Government did not understand the higher cost of providing services in rural areas and it was agreed to refer the matter to the next meeting of the Business Group in order for group leaders to work together on presenting this case to the Government.

- (v) All in all, the Council Tax did address people's financial circumstances and therefore the proposed budget and the tax level did strike the right balance and would assist the Council in protecting crucial services for people who were dependent on public services.
- (vi) That reducing the Council Tax increase by 1% in order to help people who were able to pay, and to do so at the expense of poor people who were dependent on Council services, could not be justified.
- (vii) There was room to push for further savings.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it fell.

A vote was taken on the original proposal and it was carried.

RESOLVED

- (1) To approve the recommendations of the Cabinet, i.e:-
 - (a) Set a budget of £228,193,060 for 2015/16 to be funded by £168,311,990 of Government Grant and an increase of 4.5% in Council Tax which would generate Council Tax income of £57,862,480 with the remaining gap being funded by utilizing £2,018,590 of Council balances.
 - (b) Also, to establish a capital programme of £19.179m in 2015/16 and £21.270m in 2016/17 to be funded from sources noted in clause 9.4 of the appendix.
 - (c) Note the continuation of the medium term strategy to consult on the proposals to address the funding gap facing us over the next three years.
- (2) That it be noted that the Cabinet Member for Resources, in a decision notice dated 12 November 2014, approved the calculation of the following amounts for 2015/16 in accordance with Regulations made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("The Act"):-
 - (a) 49,835.48 being the amount calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 as amended, as its Council Tax base for the year.
 - (b) Part of the Council's Area - Community -

Aberdaron	525.98	Llanddeiniolen	1,794.90
Aberdyfi	931.68	Llandderfel	486.08
Abergwyngregyn	116.15	Llanegryn	144.81
Abermaw (Barmouth)	1,093.59	Llanelltyd	282.93
Arthog	614.79	Llanengan	1,960.68
Y Bala	756.08	Llanfair	311.38
Bangor	3,608.02	Llanfihangel y Pennant	204.98
Beddgelert	320.68	Llanfrothen	214.50
Betws Garmon	134.48	Llangelynnin	397.91
Bethesda	1,634.46	Llangywer	130.25
Bontnewydd	430.35	Llanllechid	334.79
Botwnnog	432.68	Llanllyfni	1,371.38
Brithdir a Llanfachreth	398.56	Llannor	891.02
Bryncrug	334.92	Llanrug	1,115.40
Buan	223.33	Llanuwchllyn	304.11

Caernarfon	3,445.11	Llanwnda	750.93
Clynnog Fawr	429.51	Llanycil	192.33
Corris	294.79	Llanystumdwy	847.24
Criccieth	915.96	Maentwrog	272.13
Dolbenmaen	583.37	Mawddwy	334.83
Dolgellau	1,185.48	Nefyn	1,378.94
Dyffryn Ardudwy	800.89	Pennal	211.52
Y Felinheli	1,086.37	Penrhyndeudraeth	751.97
Ffestiniog	1,674.54	Pentir	971.32
Y Ganllwyd	84.72	Pistyll	241.12
Harlech	730.80	Porthmadog	1,954.94
Llanaelhaearn	427.98	Pwllheli	1,694.74
Llanbedr	303.81	Talsarnau	308.46
Llanbedrog	685.55	Trawsfynydd	492.27
Llanberis	763.90	Tudweiliog	445.56
Llandwrog	998.48	Tywyn	1,544.18
Llandygai	962.41	Waunfawr	568.46

being the amounts calculated as the amounts of its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(3) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Act:-

- (a) £342,268,670 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (2)(a) to (e) of the Act (gross expenditure).
- (b) £114,676,350 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32 (3)(a) to (c) of the Act (income).
- (c) £227,592,320 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3 (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32 (4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year (net budget).
- (ch) £168,052,539 Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its council fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant, less the estimated cost to the Council of discretionary non-domestic rate relief granted.
- (d) £1,194.73 Being the amount at 3 (c) above less the amount at 3 (ch) above, all divided by the amount at 2 (a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year. (Gwynedd Council tax and average community council tax).
- (dd) £1,677,300 Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in

Section 34 (1) of the Act (community council precepts).

- (e) £1,161.07 Being the amount at 3 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3 (dd) above by the amount at 2 (a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates (Band D for Gwynedd Council tax only).

(f) Part of the Council's Area - Community

Aberdaron	1,176.28	Llanddeiniolen	1,168.31
Aberdyfi	1,186.12	Llandderfel	1,175.27
Abergwyngregyn	1,178.29	Llanegryn	1,188.69
Abermaw (Barmouth)	1,199.26	Llanelltyd	1,184.04
Arthog	1,174.90	Llanengan	1,184.02
Y Bala	1,182.89	Llanfair	1,183.55
Bangor	1,249.47	Llanfihangel y Pennant	1,184.27
Beddgelert	1,185.99	Llanfrothen	1,182.52
Betws Garmon	1,170.74	Llangelynnin	1,176.15
Bethesda	1,193.80	Llangywer	1,191.78
Bontnewydd	1,194.76	Llanllechid	1,178.99
Botwnnog	1,171.47	Llanllfyni	1,189.10
Brithdir a Llanfachreth	1,176.12	Llannor	1,176.96
Bryncrug	1,182.00	Llanrug	1,182.59
Buan	1,177.86	Llanuwchllyn	1,190.01
Caernarfon	1,217.01	Llanwnda	1,185.31
Clynnog Fawr	1,179.70	Llanycil	1,178.23
Corris	1,180.65	Llanystumdwy	1,178.77
Criccieth	1,198.19	Maentwrog	1,181.28
Dolbenmaen	1,178.21	Mawddwy	1,176.75
Dolgellau	1,202.40	Nefyn	1,196.74
Dyffryn Ardudwy	1,186.04	Pennal	1,189.44
Y Felinheli	1,188.68	Penrhyndeudraeth	1,206.28
Ffestiniog	1,217.80	Pentir	1,190.81
Y Ganllwyd	1,196.48	Pistyll	1,179.73
Harlech	1,182.96	Porthmadog	1,188.18
Llanaelhaearn	1,196.12	Pwllheli	1,202.08
Llanbedr	1,193.99	Talsarnau	1,193.49
Llanbedrog	1,184.41	Trawsfynydd	1,185.45
Llanberis	1,185.94	Tudweiliog	1,174.09
Llandwrog	1,197.12	Tywyn	1,196.69
Llandygai	1,181.81	Waunfawr	1,182.18

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(e) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount of 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its

Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(ff) In respect of part of the Council's area, the figures noted in Appendix 1, being the amounts given by multiplying the sums specified in 3(f) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

(4) That it be noted that for the year 2015/16 the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales have stated the following amounts in a precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Band I
156.96	183.12	209.28	235.44	287.76	340.08	392.40	470.88	549.36

(5) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3 (ff) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, hereby sets the amounts noted in Appendix 2 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2015/16 for each of the categories of dwellings shown therein.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT – TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STRATEGY AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2015/16

Submitted - the report of the Cabinet Member for Resources requesting that the Council adopted the proposed strategies.

The chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that the committee had discussed the strategies at a seminar and in a formal committee meeting, and supported the recommendations.

RESOLVED to adopt the Treasury Management Policy Statement (Appendices A, B and C), the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2015/16 (Appendix CH), the Prudential Indicators (Appendix D), the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (Appendix DD) and the merger arrangements with the Pension Fund for the investment of daily cash flow.

8. THE CONSTITUTION

8(a) PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION ARISING FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS ACT 2013 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (AMENDMENT) (GOVERNANCE) REGULATIONS 2015

The Cabinet Member for Resources and the Head of Finance submitted:-

- (1) a report recommending that the Council reviewed sections of the Constitution that related to the Local Government Pension Fund to ensure that the Council, as the Administrating Authority for the Gwynedd Local Government Pension Fund, complied with the requirements of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and the

Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015 regarding the establishment of a Local Pension Board.

- (2) an appended report to the Audit Committee on 17 February setting the background and the details.

The chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that that committee agreed with the recommendations.

The officers and members who were involved in the Pension Fund were thanked and the Pensions Committee's readiness to collaborate with the new Board was expressed.

RESOLVED

- (a) **To review sections of the Constitution that relate to the Local Government Pension Fund to ensure that the Council, as the Administrating Authority for the Gwynedd Local Pension Fund, complies with the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015.**
- (b) **To establish the Gwynedd Pension Fund Pension Board in accordance with the report, based on the Terms of Reference and Governance, with delegated powers to the Head of Finance Department, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to make minor amendments to the governance arrangements of the Local Pension Board should the need arise.**

8(b) AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Leader submitted a report, for information, on amendments to the Constitution:-

- (1) in light of re-arranging the Portfolios of Cabinet Members in January, and
 (2) to ensure clarity regarding notice periods.

During the discussion:-

- (i) The fact that women had been appointed to the Cabinet was welcomed and the Leader noted that he had also sought to get more young people on it, so that the membership was a better reflection of the county's population.
- (ii) Dissatisfaction was expressed that only one party was represented on the Cabinet and that it was completely undemocratic as that party did not have a majority on the Council. In response, the Leader noted that he was openminded in terms of which members should be on the Cabinet, and that he would encourage any member who felt that he had a contribution to make to contact him. The Monitoring Officer added that the Leader and Cabinet procedure that was implemented in Gwynedd meant that it was a matter for the Leader to appoint a Cabinet and that this was being reflected in the Consitution.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

9. HUNANIAITH LANGUAGE STRATEGY

A presentation on the Hunaniaith Language Strategy was received. The context was set by the Cabinet Member for the Welsh Language, and the Welsh Language Officer gave a statistical presentation on Welsh language situation in Gwynedd, providing details on Hunaniaith's role and purpose and the strategy's priority fields.

A response was given to a series of questions/observations by members regarding:-

- (i) The feasibility of the aim to ensure an increase of 5% in the percentage of the population able to speak Welsh in Gwynedd by 2021.
- (ii) The importance of strengthening the economy to strengthen the language.
- (iii) Slowness in achieving the appropriate standards that were expected of private and public bodies, and the need for Gwynedd Council, the Language Committee and other committees that were involved in the language and the progression of Welsh speakers across Gwynedd to persuade the Welsh Government, and in general, so that the standards were met soon.
- (v) The importance of being ambitious and setting challenges in terms of the Welsh language.
- (vi) In terms of measuring effect, the idea of looking at what was happening in other areas and countries, and possibly working with universities.
- (vii) The importance of ensuring that children established the habit of using information technology through the medium of Welsh from a very early age.
- (viii) The need to have open minds regarding the policies that could promote and maintain the Welsh language, e.g. the possible influence of the housing field.
- (ix) The Welsh language was not affected by a single policy, rather it was affected by every policy across the Council and the remainder of the public sector in the county, and if the growth and protection of the language is to be ensured, the remainder of the sector must also make their contribution.
- (x) The importance of discussing the county's housing needs for the future in order to ensure that the accurate types of houses were built.
- (xi) The importance of children using the Welsh language and concern regarding the reluctance of some parents to pass on the Welsh language to the next generation.
- (xii) Post-16 plans.
- (xiii) The idea of creating a Language Champion in every community across Wales.
- (xiv) Members' responsibility to make use of the simultaneous translation service at meetings through continuing to speak Welsh rather than reverting to English.

The Cabinet Member for the Welsh Language noted:-

- (i) That members, as governors, had a responsibility to keep an eye on the implementation of the Language Strategy in their schools.
- (ii) That he was disappointed that young people did not make use of social media, television and radio through the medium of Welsh.
- (ii) That he would like to thank Sharon Warnes who had been responsible for undertaking much of the background work to ensure that the Language Strategy had seen light of day.

It was noted that Gwynedd was pioneering in terms of the Welsh Language, and the Cabinet Member, the Welsh Language Officer and the Hunaniaith Team were thanked for all their work on the various schemes, especially the work with the schools on the Language Charter and for arranging several local events to promote the Welsh language.

10. COMMITTEES CALENDAR 2015/16

The Leader submitted the calendar of dates of Council meetings for 2015/16.

RESOLVED to adopt the Committees Calendar for 2015/16.

11. THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE

The Leader submitted the report reviewing the Council's political balance.

RESOLVED to adopt seat allocation on the Council's committees in accordance with the table below:-

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Corporate	9	4	3	1	1	
Communities	8	4	3	1	1	1
Services	9	4	3	1		1
Audit	9	5	3	1		

OTHER COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Democratic Services	7	4	3	1		
Language	8	4	3			
Planning	7	3	3	1	1	
Central Licensing	7	4	3			1
Employment Appeals	3	1	1	1		1
Chief Officers Appointment	7	4	2	1	1	

Number of seats	74	37	27	8	4	4	154
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	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Pensions	3	2	1		1	
Local Consultative Joint Committee	6	2	2	1		
Special Educational Needs Joint Committee	3	2	1			1
Joint Planning Policy Committee	4 (3 seats and one substitute)	2	1	1		
SACRE	3	2	2			

Total seats	93	47	34	10	5	5	194
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12. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Leader submitted a report requesting that the Council considered and decided on the recommendation of the Consultative Committee to appoint independent members to the Standards Committee as a result of the fact that the second term of office of two of the current independent members had come to an end in February this year.

The Monitoring Officer noted that the Consultative Committee had interviewed seven applicants following a detailed and statutory process and that they recommended that the Council appointed Jacqueline Hughes from Nantlle, who worked for the Health Trust as a Radiologist, but had a Trade Union background, and David Wareing from Groeslon, who was a retired police officer, as members of the Standards Committee.

During the discussion:-

- (i) It was suggested that letters should be sent to both independent members who had retired from the Standards Committee thanking them for their years of service.
- (ii) In response to an enquiry, the Monitoring Officer noted that neither of the applicants who had been recommended to be appointed on the Standards Committee could speak Welsh and that only one of the seven applicants who had been interviewed could speak Welsh. He explained that there were criteria that the panel had to consider while appointing to the Standards Committee, and although the discussion on skills balance had been held, perhaps there was work to be done for the future to encourage a broader range of applicants.

RESOLVED to appoint Jacqueline Hughes and David Wareing as independent members of the Standards Committee.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

- (A) The following notice of motion was submitted by Councillor Craig ab Iago, in accordance with the Procedure Rules, and it was seconded.

“I call on Gwynedd County Council to support the Traws Link Cymru campaign to reopen the railway line between North and South Wales. Reopening the line would require significant investment and collaboration with all levels of Government. This project would bring investment to Gwynedd which would greatly benefit the local economy and Wales’ economic prospects. It would secure a sustainable transport option for employment and tourism. I propose that Gwynedd Council supports the undertaking of a professional feasibility study and agrees to write to the Minister, Edwina Hart and the First Minister, Carwyn Jones to endorse the Council’s view.”

RESOLVED to accept the motion.

- (B) The following notice of motion was submitted by Councillor R. H. Wyn Williams, in accordance with the Procedural Rules, and it was seconded.

“I call on this Council and other county councils throughout Wales, as well as the Welsh Government, to support the call for the Westminster Government to scrap the Trident project in order to secure a fairer society by prioritising spending on poverty prevention, care, education, health and the economy”.

During the discussion, it was suggested that a letter should be sent to every council in Wales calling on them to support the call for the Westminster Government to scrap the Trident project.

An amendment to the motion was proposed and seconded, namely that this Council re-affirm its anti-nuclear stance and underlined this motion through re-subscribing with Nuclear Free Local Authorities and thereby adding pressure on a national level to the campaign to get rid of nuclear weapons, and that the spending came from the democracy budget.

In response to the amendment, it was noted:-

- (i) That the Council had previously made a decision not to subscribe to this society as part of the savings strategy and that there was potential to complicate the matter.
- (ii) That any member was free to join the society as an individual.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it fell.

The opinion that nuclear weapons had kept the peace in Europe since the end of the Second World War was noted, and that they were necessary in order to be a member of NATO.

An amendment to the motion was proposed and seconded, namely that this Council would write to every county council in Wales calling on them to support the call for the Westminster Government to scrap the Trident project.

During the discussion on the amendment, it was noted:-

- (i) That nuclear weapons were immoral and that the proposal would be supported 100%.
- (ii) That this proposal was amongst the most important that this Council would discuss for several reasons and that nuclear weapons were a threat to the type of world we sought to create, namely a world where there was international collaboration and a world where there was collaboration across country borders where support was extended from rich countries to poor countries.
- (iii) That nuclear weapons had not prevented any of the 250 wars that had occurred since the Second World War.

The proposer of the original motion supported the amendment, repeating the motion as amended, namely:-

“I call on this Council to support the call for the Westminster Government to scrap the Trident project in order to secure a fairer society by prioritising spending on poverty prevention, care, education, health and the economy. A letter should also be sent to every county council throughout Wales, calling on them, as well as the Welsh Government, to support the call in the same way.”

He further noted that 150 countries had done away with any spending on nuclear weapons and he expressed his hope that a seed had been planted at this meeting and that it would grow through Wales before proceeding to London.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it was carried.

RESOLVED to accept the amended motion.

- (C) Submitted – for information, a letter received from Derek Vaughan, MEP, in response to Councillor Elin Walker Jones’s notice of motion to the previous meeting regarding the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

RESOLVED to note the letter.

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 5.05pm.