



CABINET
MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND
VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON
WEDNESDAY 22ND JANUARY 2025 AT 1PM

Councillor S. Morgan – Chair

Councillors:

J. Pritchard (Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change), N. George (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways), P. Leonard (Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection), C. Morgan (Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces), E. Stenner (Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance), S. Cook (Cabinet Member for Housing) and E. Forehead (Cabinet Member for Social Care).

Together with:

D. Street (Deputy Chief Executive) and G. Jenkins (Interim Corporate Director Social Services)

Also in Attendance:

R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer), L. Sykes (Deputy Head of Financial Services and Deputy S151 Officer), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure), M. Headington (Green Spaces and Transport Services Manager).

RECORDING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS.

The Leader reminded those present that the meeting was being live streamed, and a recording would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here To View](#).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from C. Andrews (Cabinet Member for Education), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director Education and Corporate Services), M.S. Williams (Corporate Director for Economy and Environment).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

They were no declarations of interest at the start or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – WEDNESDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 11th December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

4. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – TO NOTE.

Cabinet was provided with the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, which detailed the scheduled reports until April 2025.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the Forward Work Programme be noted. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

5. WHOLE-AUTHORITY REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (PERIOD 7).

Consideration was given to the report that provided details of the projected whole-authority revenue budget expenditure for the 2024/25 financial year as at the 31st October 2025.

Cabinet noted that going forward in support of improving the Council's financial resilience, whole-authority reports would now be presented to Cabinet for periods 3,5,7, 9 and Outturn.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that based on the information available as at the 31st October 24 and adjusted for the grant award from Welsh Government on the 6th December 2024, the projected 2024/25 net year-end revenue budget position is an overspend of £0.922m, this was an improvement of £5.086m from the position reported in period 5. It was noted that the most significant change was in Miscellaneous Finance which had improved by £3.461m from period 5, largely due to receiving a £3.031m grant from Welsh Government in December 2024 in recognition of pay award pressures and £0.641m additional income for backdated NNDR rebates for various Council properties.

It was noted that pressures on Home to School Transport and Temporary Accommodation remain, with both areas forecasting increase overspends, with adverse movements of £0.187m and £0.560m respectively since period 5.

Responding to a query in relation to the current spend on the Home to School Transport budget, the Deputy Section 151 Officer confirmed that for 2024/25 projected outturn was £11.741m which would be a £2.073m overspend.

Clarification was sought in relation to the Mobilising Team Caerphilly programme and the positive outcomes that had been achieved. The Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer confirmed that spend control measures had been put in place to manage the scope of the overspend including restrictions on non-essential spend. A vacancy management process was also in place with all recruitment, including the use of any agency workers being agreed by the Corporate Management Team. Savings were also being achieved across certain areas where business cases had been put forward to enable people to leave the organisation under existing workforce flexibilities policies and Cabinet noted that all of these messages were being reinforced through the Management Network and Operational Managers Group. The Section 151 Officer referred to the Fleet Service and the improvements made there which had seen a service that was overspending by £400,000 a year to one that is managing within its budget.

The Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer advised that there were still a range of 'in-flight' projects working their way through the system and further business cases would be brought forward as we moved into the next financial year. Cabinet was reminded that moving forward there were still targets to be addressed and the Council was still facing a residual savings requirement of £16.8m for the next two financial years.

Responding to a question in relation to General Fund Housing and the forecast overspend due to the increase in homelessness, and the need for temporary accommodation the Interim Chief Executive outlined several initiatives that were being explored and the work already

being done to bring empty properties back into use. The efforts of the Empty Property Team working with local Estate Agents on private rental opportunities was highlighted and Members noted the knock-on effect to support services provided by this authority, as neighbouring local authorities looked for private rental opportunities within this borough.

Following consideration and discussion of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained within the Officers report:

1. The content of the report be noted.
2. The allocation of £0.180m from the Social Services reserves to employ two fixed term financial Assessment Officers until the 31st of March 2027 to improve income collection rates and reduce the number of service user complaints be approved.

6. MOBILISING TEAM CAERPHILLY – FLEET SERVICE REVIEW.

Consideration was given to the report which provided an update to Cabinet on the outcome of the Mobilising Team Caerphilly Fleet Service Review and sought approval for a proposed in-house Corporate Fleet Model.

Cabinet was advised that the Council operated a large fleet of 538 vehicles ranging from small vans to heavy good vehicles based at several locations across the county borough. These vehicles were used to deliver many essential frontline services ranging from housing maintenance to recycling and refuse collection and without these vehicles many services could not operate.

Cabinet also noted that by the end of 2023 the services had been in a challenging position and how working with the Mobilising Team Caerphilly programme the service had explored different ways of working that not only improved the service and enabled savings to be made but also provided future revenue opportunities. Furthermore, it was anticipated that the previous overspend would be removed this year and overall savings of £0.534m over the 2-year period 2025/2027 had been identified.

Cabinet placed on record their appreciation to all those involved in this tremendous service improvement.

In response to a question as to whether the model used with Fleet Services would be utilised elsewhere the Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure confirmed that the buy-in from the Team had been paramount to its success and he would be happy to pass on Cabinet's appreciation for their efforts and confirmed that it was anticipated that this model would be used in other service areas.

The Officer went on to explain how the model had put the Fleet Service on a sound footing moving forward. How changes to driver behaviour were achieved was detailed and the positive impact this had in terms of maintenance, claims and vehicle returns highlighted. Cabinet noted how bringing the management of Fleet finances into one central area was also expected to deliver savings and how the in-house Corporate Fleet Model allowed for a more efficient financial process. Cabinet also noted how the restructuring of the service including the renaming and evaluation of posts, had provided clear and transparent roles and responsibilities and enabled the Team to know what was expected of them, what needed to be accomplished and achieve goals through agreed ways of working.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the positive outcomes that had been achieved in Fleet Services.

Following consideration of the report, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained therein be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for reasons contained within the Officers report:

1. The improvements to the Fleet Service that have been delivered through the Mobilising Team Caerphilly programme be noted.
2. The proposed in-house Corporate Fleet Model be approved.

The meeting closed at 13.30 p.m.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 19th February 2025.

Chair
