



COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY 2025 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor C. Gordon – Presiding Member
Councillor E.M. Aldworth – Deputy Presiding Member

Councillors:

M. Adams, C. Andrews, A. Angel, C. Bishop, C. Bissex-Foster, A. Broughton-Pettit, M. Chacon-Dawson, R. Chapman, P. Cook, S. Cook, D. Cushing, C. Cuss, E. Davies, D.T. Davies MBE, N. Dix, G. Ead, C. Elsbury, G. Enright, M. Evans, C. Forehead, E. Forehead, J.E. Fussell, A. Gair, N. George, D. Harse, T. Heron, D. Ingram-Jones, M. James, L. Jeremiah, J. Jones, S. Kent, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, C. Mann, B. Miles, C. Morgan, S. Morgan, T. Parry, L. Phipps, M. Powell, D.W.R. Preece, H. Pritchard, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, J. Rao, J. Reed, J. Roberts, J. Scriven, J. Simmonds, E. Stenner, J. Taylor, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, L. Whittle, S. Williams, W. Williams, J. Winslade, C. Wright and K. Woodland.

Together with:

R. Edmunds (Chief Executive), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), D. Street (Deputy Chief Executive), G. Jenkins (Interim Corporate Director Social Services), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer), L. Sykes (Deputy Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer), L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services), M. Lloyd (Head of Infrastructure), L. Donovan, (Head of People Services), A. Dallimore (Regeneration Services Manager), S. Pugh (Communications Manager), S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer) and J. Lloyd (Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Presiding Member reminded those present the meeting was being live streamed and a recording would be available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items – [Click Here to View](#). He advised that decisions would be made by Microsoft Forms.

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Etheridge, A. Farina-Childs, A. Hussey, G. Johnston, A. McConnell, B. Owen, R. Saralis and S. Skivens, together with M.S. Williams (Corporate Director Economy and Environment).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

There were no awards presented.

4. COUNCIL HELD ON 14TH JANUARY 2025

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th January 2025 be approved as a correct record.

5. SPECIAL COUNCIL HELD ON 30TH JANUARY 2025

RESOLVED that the minutes of the special meeting of Council held on 30th January 2025 be approved as a correct record.

6. CHARTER FOR FAMILIES BEREAVED THROUGH PUBLIC TRAGEDY

Consideration was given to the report which sought Council approval to adopt the Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy. It was noted that following the conclusion of the second Hillsborough inquests in April 2016, the former Bishop of Liverpool, Bishop James Jones was commissioned by the UK Government to produce a report on the experiences of the Hillsborough families so that their 'perspective is not lost'. His report included a 'Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy', which was written to ensure that the suffering endured by families bereaved following the 1989 Hillsborough disaster is not repeated should similar tragedies occur in the future.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 55 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy be adopted.

7. AUDIT WALES ENQUIRIES RETURN 2023/24

Consideration was given to the report which presented Council with responses to Audit Wales in relation to enquiries around the Council's management processes relating to financial reporting, the prevention and detection of fraud, and compliance with laws and regulations in respect of disclosures in the 2023/24 Financial Statements.

A Member referred to the Audit Wales review of counter-fraud arrangements for Caerphilly CBC and asked how the recommendations for improvement have been actioned. In response, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer advised that a Fraud Response Plan and a Fraud Risk Assessment was presented to and agreed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 8th October 2024. At the following meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee on 3rd December 2024 an updated Anti-Fraud Action Plan was also agreed, and the Committee will now receive updates on progress against that plan. Members were informed that at the forthcoming meeting on 15th April 2025, the Governance and Audit Committee will be presented with updated versions of the range of counter-fraud policies and details of updated financial regulations and

standing orders for contracts. Members were further informed that Fraud Awareness Training will be scheduled for the Leadership Team and Management Network and then following that, compulsory online training that has been commissioned for all staff will be rolled out.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 59 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the response appended to the report be endorsed.

8. CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 2025/2026

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval of the Authority's Capital Strategy report for the 2025/26 financial year in accordance with the Prudential Code that was introduced by the Local Government Act 2003.

Responding to a query raised on the capital budget for the Waste Strategy, the Head of Infrastructure assured Members that the money would be spent as there is a detailed programme and an outline business case to support delivery of the Strategy.

A Member asked how capital investments can be monitored and delivered in a timely manner. In response, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that quarterly capital budget monitoring reports will be provided for Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet, and that there will be a renewed focus on three-year forecasting. There will also be additional oversight and scrutiny through the Place Shaping Board, which has now been established under the Mobilising Team Caerphilly Transformation Programme. Furthermore, it was explained that the 2024/25 Outturn report that will be prepared in June/July will provide a detailed assessment of year-end underspends which will include recommendations on what funding needs to be slipped into future years and what funding is available for reinvestment in the wider capital programme.

In response to a Member's query, it was explained that the level of borrowing will vary for individual Councils. The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer reassured Members that the level of borrowing undertaken in recent years has been very low. However, moving forward, given the size of the Capital Programme, there will be a borrowing requirement at some point.

A Member raised a number of questions in relation to specific grants. In response, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that grants come with specific terms and conditions, and Members were assured that expenditure would not be incurred until grant terms and conditions had been agreed and signed off.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendation be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 49 For, 4 Against and 7 Abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the annual Capital Strategy Report be approved.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL STRATEGY, CAPITAL FINANCE PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY FOR 2025/2026

Consideration was given to the report which sought approval of the Authority's Annual Strategy for Treasury Management.

Reference was made to the borrowing sources that will be considered by the Authority to fund short-term and long-term borrowing. In response to a Member's query, the Head of Financial

Services and Section 151 Officer clarified that any bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK would be considered, subject to prevailing interest rates.

Reference was also made to raising capital finance by methods that are not borrowing but may be classed as other debt liabilities. In response to a Member's query, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer confirmed that the Private Finance Initiative would not be considered at the present time.

A Member asked about the percentage return on investments, and the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer advised that this is currently 4.29% and that this is expected to be maintained in the short-term.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 47 For, 4 Against and 7 Abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The Annual Strategy for Treasury Management 2025/26 be approved.
2. The strategy be reviewed quarterly within the Treasury Management monitoring reports presented to the Corporate and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and any changes recommended be referred to Cabinet, in the first instance, and to Council for a decision. The Authority will also prepare quarterly reports on Treasury Management activities.
3. The Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management, as per Appendix 5, be approved.
4. The Prudential Indicators for Capital Financing, as per Appendices 6 and 7, be approved.
5. The MRP policy, as set out in Appendix 8, be adopted.
6. The 2024/25 investment strategy and the lending to financial institutions and Corporates in accordance with the minimum credit rating criteria disclosed within this report be continued.
7. The investment grade scale as a minimum credit rating criterion to assess the credit worthiness of suitable counterparties when placing investments continues to be adopted.
8. The monetary and investment duration limits, as set in Appendix 3 of the report, be adopted.

10. BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2025/26

Consideration was given to the report which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 27th February 2025 and sought Council's approval of the budget proposals for 2025/26.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance introduced the report which presented a balanced, measured and fully considered budget, which demonstrated the Council's ongoing effective financial management. A number of key points were highlighted which included an extra £7.9m for adult and children's social care, schools to receive an extra £12.1m, £11.2m capital funding had been identified for infrastructure works across the area including flood alleviation, £63.6m capital investment is available for a range of exciting new initiatives such as new schools and leisure facilities, £116m capital investment for improvements to the Council's existing housing

stock and new build programmes and £25.1m to deliver an ambitious waste and recycling strategy.

It was noted that the budget proposals included a proposed increase of 7.9% in Council Tax for the 2025/26 financial year, which would increase the Caerphilly CBC Band D precept from £1,446.37 to £1,560.63, an annual increase of £114.26 or weekly increase of £2.20. Members were reminded that even with this increase, Caerphilly will still have one of the lowest levels of Council Tax in Wales in the forthcoming financial year. The Cabinet Member appreciated that no-one wanted to see an increase in Council Tax, however without this increase the Council would need to consider more unpalatable and unpopular cuts to services.

Another proposal in the report was a further one-off use of Council reserves in 2025/26 totalling £4.9m. The Cabinet Member stressed that the strategic use of reserves is an important element in the budget considerations, however Members all need to be mindful that the use of reserves in the long-term is not a sustainable option. It was further noted that the budget proposals included a range of permanent and temporary savings totalling £21.3m, which were detailed in the report and have been subject to a period of public consultation.

The Cabinet Member advised that following receipt this week of the expected WG Bus Network Grant support funding for local bus services in 2025/26, it now transpires that the way the funding will be administered regionally makes it far more complex to achieve the proposed bus subsidy savings of £197,780 for 2025/26 without wider knock-on implications to other bus services.

However, on a positive note, Council was informed that the Bus Network Grant funding allocated to the Council in 2025/26 is likely to be greater than that received in 2024/25 and therefore will require a reduced level of funding contribution from the Council than was currently allocated in the revenue budget. Furthermore, this situation was likely to continue in future years if Bus Network Grant funding is maintained. It was therefore proposed that the original saving proposal referenced as EE4 in Appendix 3 of the report be removed and replaced with a proposal that the £197,780 saving will now be achieved through confirmed additional WG grant funding and a reduced level of funding contribution from Caerphilly CBC.

In closing, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance placed on record her thanks to all those who have been involved in the preparation of the report for all their hard work. She also thanked staff at all levels across the organisation for doing their bit to make improvements and deliver efficiencies for the residents of Caerphilly county borough. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance moved the recommendations in the Officer's report.

The Leader of Council, in seconding the motion, commented on the budget proposals for 2025/26. It was explained that the proposals have been developed against the ongoing backdrop of significant financial pressures and unprecedented savings targets, with £45 million of savings to be found over the next three years. A robust and sustainable budget has been developed which is tailored to meet the needs of the community. The Leader expressed that he is working closely with the new Chief Executive to ensure that the Council puts the customer at the heart of everything the Council does, placing a strong emphasis on getting the basics right.

The Leader highlighted one of the proposals in the report regarding the use of Council reserves totalling £4.9m. The use of reserves was not welcomed by the Leader, in stating that you can only use reserves once and the savings the Council needs to find must be permanent savings. It was highlighted that if the Council constantly uses its reserves to plug gaps in budgets, it will inevitably run out of reserves only to find the budget gap has grown to unsustainable levels and at that point the Council could no longer table a legally balanced budget.

The Leader pointed out that the budget was not all about cuts and that significant investment had been identified in areas that are key for residents including an extra £7.9m revenue funding for adult and children's social care and schools will receive an extra £12.1m in revenue funding. Capital investments on new schools, leisure facilities, improvements to the council housing stock

and new build programmes, along with investments in infrastructure and flood alleviation works were also highlighted.

In terms of community engagement, Members were reminded that over recent weeks the budget and savings proposals have been subject to a period of public consultation and the feedback received has helped shape the final budget proposals. The Leader of Council thanked all those who took the time to participate in the consultation and also thanked all the Officers and Members who have worked so hard over recent months to prepare the budget proposals.

Councillor G. Ead moved an amendment in that the Plaid Cymru alternative budget proposals for 2025/26 be considered by Council. Councillor G. Ead presented a report which had been shared with all Members and identified circa £3.145m from Other Earmarked Reserves that are unallocated and unspent to be released. Members were informed that the alternative budget proposals aimed to protect key services that residents rely upon, mitigate the severity of proposed cuts in areas such as highways, public protection and environmental projects, reduce the proposed increases to fees charged to residents in areas such as parking, waste collections, leisure centres and reduce the proposed Council Tax increase whilst maintaining financial stability. It was explained that the alternative budget proposals only focused on Other Earmarked Reserves, leaving £100m of ringfenced reserves in the HRA, schools and unused capital receipts reserves.

Members heard how the Plaid Cymru group had conducted an analysis of Other Earmarked Reserves, that have zero uncommitted expenditure over the next 3 financial years. Councillor G. Ead stated that the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer had not identified any errors in the analysis, but he had made a number of comments relating to the purpose of the reserves and the viability of releasing those reserves. Members were provided with a summary of the analysis and feedback.

It was highlighted that there are a further 21 reserves totalling £7.543m that could be released, but some of these have uncalculated costs or are held pending service updates, etc. This would need further analysis and discussion with the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer and Senior Officers, but it could be reasonably expected that a third of these could be released in the next year to alleviate financial pressures and service cuts.

It was expressed how the Plaid Cymru group believed that, in the face of the economic crisis many citizens in UK, Wales and Caerphilly are experiencing, the Council should be protecting and insulating residents as far as reasonably possible from this economic crisis. By identifying underspent and unallocated reserves and releasing these back to support the 2025/26 budget the alternative budget proposed to reduce the proposed 5% increase to 3% for all Caerphilly County Borough Council fees and charges, reduce the proposed 7.9% increase in Council Tax to 5.9% and cancel and revoke 15 Economy and Environment direct service cuts and increases.

In conclusion, the Plaid Cymru group believed that their alternative budget proposals for 2025/26 provided a viable and financially responsible alternative that prioritised public services and economic sustainability, whilst reducing the burden on residents. They urged members of the Council to consider these amendments to ensure a fairer, more balanced budget for 2025/26.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor C. Mann. The Presiding Member opened the debate and invited Members to ask questions or comment on the amendment only.

The Leader of Council responded to the alternative budget proposals for 2025/26 and explained why the Labour Group would not be supporting the amendment. It was noted that the alternative budget proposals asks that reserves be spent to keep services running for another year, whilst not showing how they will be paid for in the next financial year or even in subsequent years. The Leader emphasised that the Labour administration will continue to take the difficult decisions and will continue to undertake the transformation programme, which is reaping rewards in productivity and sustainability and saving the key services that residents need. The Leader also reminded

Members that Birmingham City Council had been issued with a S114 Notice because of its financial situation.

The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer responded to the alternative budget proposals for 2025/26, particularly in relation to the Other Earmarked Reserves analysis. It was clarified that his specific comments in the spreadsheet appended to Plaid Cymru's alternative budget proposals for 2025/26 were set out in the column titled 'Comments'. There is also a column titled 'S151 Officer' where it is indicated whether reserves can possibly be released, can be released, or cannot be released. It was further clarified that this column has not been directly populated by the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer and that the content reflected Councillor Ead's assessment of the comments provided,

The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer noted that Plaid Cymru's alternative budget proposal indicated that reserves totalling £3.145m can be released immediately, however he asked all Members to be mindful of the comments he had provided. For example, it was proposed that the balance on the Cost-of-Living Hardship Fund of £1.39m should be released. However, in his comments the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer stressed that this would mean that some fixed-term posts would no longer be funded, and initiatives funded through the reserve would cease. It was also proposed that the Apprenticeship reserve of £558k be released but in his comments the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer stressed that this would mean there would be no funding available to support new apprenticeships moving forward.

Focussing on the bigger picture, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that reserves of circa £28m had already been used to balance the budgets in 2023/24 and 2024/25, and there is also a further proposed call on reserves of £4.9m for 2025/26. This is not a sustainable position moving forward as reserves can only be used once. The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer stressed again to all Members the need to identify and agree recurring savings proposals to address the financial gap of circa £23m that the Council will still face for the two-year period 2026/27 to 2027/28.

Concerns were raised regarding the proposal to remove the reserve for the expansion of MyST Intensive Fostering Service and a Member asked what the implications would be in removing that reserve. In response, Councillor G. Ead explained that it was originally proposed not to use any of the Social Services reserves, however the Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer commented that this reserve can potentially be released.

Responding to a Member's comments, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that raising additional revenue is one of the core principles being looked at through the Mobilising Team Caerphilly programme.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer clarified that £44m of the Capital Programme has been re-profiled based on updated delivery plans for projects. Members were informed that projects do get delayed for various reasons, particularly in relation to new school builds etc. Also, in many cases grant funding will be used first and the Council's contribution will be re-profiled. Monitoring processes will be put in place including reports to Scrutiny and Cabinet and oversight through the Place Shaping Board, and all balances will be reviewed as part of the 2024/25 Capital Outturn report.

In response to the Leader's reference to Birmingham City Council receiving a S114 Notice, a Member clarified that the reason for this was mainly due to equal pay obligations.

By way of Microsoft Forms (and in noting there were 19 votes For, 41 votes Against and 0 Abstentions) the amendment was declared lost.

RESOLVED that the amendment was declared lost.

Discussion then took place on the substantive motion.

Clarification and further information were sought on schools cost pressures totalling £12.094m. The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that this will fund inflationary pressures that schools will face in the forthcoming financial year. It was acknowledged that there are some schools with underlying deficits which will still need to be addressed, and Members were informed that the Education Finance Team and other Officers are working closely with schools to develop recovery plans to turn those deficits around.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Infrastructure confirmed that the Bus Network Grant funding allocated to the Council in 2025/26 will be increased, so the proposal to reduce the bus subsidy can be withdrawn from the 2025/26 savings proposals.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change was asked to provide an update on the Coffi Vista rental income projection and provide an assurance that the events programme will be maintained next year. Members were informed that the projected annual rental income the Council will receive from the new Rosita's Café Bar is circa £23k, and it was noted that the information was detailed in the report appendix. Members were asked to consider what the full extent of the new offering at Rosita's entailed, which included more employment than the former Coffi Vista venue, longer opening hours and promoting longer dwell times at the premises and in the town centre. It was highlighted that the venue will not receive circa £100k a year in subsidy and will provide an income to the Council. When it comes to delivering for small businesses up and down the length and breadth of Caerphilly Borough, the Deputy Leader was pleased to say the Council will be maintaining their increased events programme in 2025/26. The allocation of the SPF budget is currently being scrutinised to see how the events programme can be supported going forward and the Deputy Leader was hopeful of making more announcements in the coming months.

A Member referred to the charges for public health pest control and asked how many local authorities in Wales charge for rat treatment. Members were informed that of those who provide the service, there are two local authorities in Wales that do not charge for rat treatment. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection also commented on the pest control fees and charges. It was estimated that one third of customers who live in privately owned properties would pay for rat treatment and approximately 27% of those customers would be eligible for a 50% concession.

During the course of debate concerns were expressed regarding the proposal to increase Council Tax by 7.9%, particularly in relation to working families. The Leader of Council acknowledged the concerns raised and reiterated that, even with the increase, Caerphilly would still be likely to have one of the lowest levels of Council Tax in Wales.

In response to a Member's question, the Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces explained why Bowls Clubs will be expected to take on 25% of the cost of bowling greens maintenance in 2025/26 and the full cost in 2026/27. It was highlighted that Officers will continue to liaise with the Bowls Clubs throughout the period of change.

Responding to a Members query regarding the indicative funding allocation in respect of Extended Producer Responsibility, the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer explained that once the funding is confirmed a report will be prepared for Cabinet confirming the quantum and recommending that, in the first instance, the funding should be earmarked annually to support delivery of the Council's Waste Strategy and consequently reduce borrowing requirements moving forward. In response to a further query, the Head of Infrastructure confirmed that the expectation of the funding would be that the objectives set out in paragraph 5.2.12 of the report be achieved.

The Cabinet Member for Housing was asked to provide clarification on growing temporary accommodation pressures. Members heard that between March 2021 and 2024, the number of households in temporary accommodation across Wales rose by 75% while the annual costs of temporary accommodation increased by 140%, with almost £100m being spent by Welsh councils last year. It was explained how there are a number of factors for the increased use of temporary accommodation, such as the impact of rising inflation leading to increasing mortgages and rents, the ending of the Universal Credit top up, continuation of the freeze in Local Housing Allowance and legislative changes made by Welsh Government, which has enhanced renters' rights but has led to some landlords leaving the sector. The Cabinet Member also provided an update on the number of Council voids and the reasons why properties are void. It was highlighted that bringing voids back into use is a high priority, but the new Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 compliance checks must be managed. During the course of discussion further comments were made in relation to temporary accommodation and the number of Council voids which were addressed by the Cabinet Member for Housing.

A Member asked what mitigations could be put in place for tackling anti-social behaviour in the county borough if the Community Safety Warden Service ceases. The Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services provided examples of arrangements that could be put into place which included the use of a new mobile CCTV van and new initiatives with Gwent Police to assist in tackling anti-social behaviour hotspots in particular town centres across the county borough. Members were also informed that the Community Safety Team have a number of projects in place, working in conjunction with partners, to tackle anti-social behaviour.

A Member raised concerns regarding the removal of one gully cleaning vehicle from operations, considering the recent floodings. The Head of Infrastructure acknowledged the Member's concerns, and that flooding had increased over recent years. It was explained that gully cleansing would be re-categorised and cleansed depending on priority. It was further explained that the gully cleanser to be removed would be retained for emergency purposes.

Clarification and further information were sought on the permanent savings proposal for Social Services and the additional funding announced by Welsh Government. The Interim Director for Social Services referred Members to Appendix 3 which detailed that the majority of the savings proposals are already being achieved through vacancy targets or vacancy management and staff budget re-alignment. It was explained that other smaller amounts were around the more efficient use and monitoring of contracts. The Interim Director for Social Services was pleased to say that other smaller amounts related to specific areas of the service that would have no direct impact on the services provided. The Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer clarified that the letter from the Cabinet Secretary that accompanied the final settlement did allude to additional funding of £30m across Wales for social care and that this would likely be issued via specific grants. However, there will be requirements around how that money is spent and further details would be shared with Members in due course.

A question was raised regarding the proposed change to the bulky waste collection service charges. The Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces explained that the current charges do not cover the full cost of the service and that the proposed charges for 2025 and 2026 will position the bulky waste service to be able to fully recover its costs by 2026/27.

A Member recognised that many residents are struggling financially at the moment and a question was raised as to how many households benefit from the Council Tax reduction scheme and how many residents qualify for 100% Council Tax reduction. In response, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance clarified that just over 16,000 households receive Council Tax reduction with just over 13,500 households receiving a 100% reduction.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection thanked the Community Safety Wardens for doing a fantastic job and asked if the staff would be engaged with to discuss their options moving forward. The Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services explained that if the Community Safety Warden Service ceases the Council does have a range of policies and

processes in place for such circumstances. Also, one to one meetings with those staff would be arranged, with support from HR, to discuss their options going forward.

In response to further questions the Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer clarified that the projected balance on the General Fund reserve for the 31st March 2025 would be £14.329m.

It was further clarified that the 3% NJC pay award is currently an estimate as the final pay award is yet to be agreed. If the agreed pay awards are higher than the budgeted level, then the additional cost will need to be funded in year from reserves. In terms of Council Tax, the 3.9% increases for 2026/27 and 2027/28 are indicative figures and were not put to Members for a decision at this stage.

By way of Microsoft Forms and verbal confirmation (and in noting there were 39 For, 18 Against and 2 Abstentions) the substantive motion was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that: -

1. The revenue budget proposals for 2025/26 of £477.646m as detailed throughout the report and summarised in Appendix 1 be approved.
2. The proposed 20% increase in charges for Caerphilly Adventures and Positive Futures, as detailed in paragraph 5.4.5, be approved.
3. 100% of any 2024/25 Service Directorate revenue budget underspends will be transferred into the General Fund Reserve, as outlined in paragraph 5.6.3, be agreed.
4. The movements on the General Fund in Appendix 4 and the projected balance as at 31 March 2025 of £14.329m be noted.
5. The proposed Capital Programme for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28, as set out in Appendix 5, be approved.
6. The proposal to increase Council Tax by 7.9% for the 2025/26 financial year to ensure that a balanced budget is achieved (Council Tax Band D being set at £1,560.63, which equates to a weekly increase of £2.20 for a Band D property) be approved.
7. The Council Tax Resolutions for 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 7 be approved (as set out below).
8. The indicative Mobilising Team Caerphilly savings targets of £5.5m and £3.4m for 2026/27 and 2027/28 respectively be noted.
9. The indicative residual savings requirement of £14.453m for the two-year period 2026/27 to 2027/28 be noted.

Council Tax Setting Resolution 2025/26

1. That it be noted that at its meeting on the 11th December 2024 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2025/2026 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 and powers granted under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

- (a) **62,675.70** Being the amount calculated by the Cabinet, in accordance with Regulation (3) of The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Wales) Regulations 1995 (as amended), as its council tax base for the year.

(b) **Part of Council's Area:**

Tax Base for each Community Council	<u>Tax Base</u> <u>No. of D Band</u> <u>Equivalent</u> <u>Properties</u>
Aber Valley	2,050.22
Argoed	913.31
Bargoed	3,774.55
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	4,092.32
Blackwood	3,086.45
Caerphilly	6,399.05
Darren Valley	719.99
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	645.10
Gelligaer	6,398.48

Tax Base for each Community Council	<u>Tax Base</u> <u>No. of D Band</u> <u>Equivalent Properties</u>
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	1,537.76
Maesycwmmmer	1,006.88
Nelson	1,621.37
New Tredegar	1,391.43
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	4,635.64
Rhymney	2,624.42
Risca East	2,054.78
Risca West	1,893.34
Van	1,656.41
Remainder	16,174.20
Total	<u>62,675.70</u>

being the amounts calculated by the cabinet, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, 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.

2. *That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2025/2026 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992:-*

(a) **£477,645,735** *being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (d) of the Act;*

(b) **£5,932,397** *being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) (a), (aa) and (c) of the Act;*

- (c) £472,858,045 *being the amount by which the aggregate at (2)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (2)(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year;*
- (d) £373,899,760 *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, revenue support grant, an authority's council tax reduction scheme or additional grant;*
- (e) £1,578.89 *being the amount at (2)(c) above less the amount at (2)(d) above, all be divided by the amount at (1)(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;*
- (f) £1,144,707 *being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in section 34(1) of the Act;*
- (g) £1,560.63 *being the amount at (2)(e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (2)(f) above by the amount at (1)(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;*

(h) (h) Part of the Council's Area

**Total County
Borough &
Community
Council Band D
Charge**

	Local Precept	County Borough Levy	
	£	£	£
Aber Valley	19.51	1,560.63	1,580.14
Argoed	16.06	1,560.63	1,576.69
Bargoed	59.41	1,560.63	1,620.04
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	35.00	1,560.63	1,595.63
Blackwood	30.00	1,560.63	1,590.63
Caerphilly	15.50	1,560.63	1,576.13
Darren Valley	23.61	1,560.63	1,584.24
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	32.55	1,560.63	1,593.18
Gelligaer	22.30	1,560.63	1,582.93
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	24.77	1,560.63	1,585.40
Maesycwmmmer	18.17	1,560.63	1,578.80
Nelson	17.93	1,560.63	1,578.56
New Tredegar	12.16	1,560.63	1,572.79
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	15.39	1,560.63	1,576.02
Rhymney	14.48	1,560.63	1,575.11
Risca East	17.00	1,560.63	1,577.63
Risca West	38.00	1,560.63	1,598.63
Van	19.02	1,560.63	1,579.65
Remainder	0.00	1,560.63	1,560.63

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (2)(g) 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 at (1)(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;

(i)

Valuation Bands	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	11.00	13.00	15.00	18.00	21.00
<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
County Borough Council	1,040.42	1,213.82	1,387.23	1,560.63	1,907.44	2,254.24	2,601.05	3,121.26	3,641.47
<u>Community Councils</u>									
Aber Valley	13.01	15.17	17.34	19.51	23.85	28.18	32.52	39.02	45.52
Argoed	10.71	12.49	14.28	16.06	19.63	23.20	26.77	32.12	37.47
Bargoed	39.61	46.21	52.81	59.41	72.61	85.81	99.02	118.82	138.62
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	23.33	27.22	31.11	35.00	42.78	50.56	58.33	70.00	81.67
Blackwood	20.00	23.33	26.67	30.00	36.67	43.33	50.00	60.00	70.00
Caerphilly	10.33	12.06	13.78	15.50	18.94	22.39	25.83	31.00	36.17
Darren Valley	15.74	18.36	20.99	23.61	28.86	34.10	39.35	47.22	55.09
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	21.70	25.32	28.93	32.55	39.78	47.02	54.25	65.10	75.95
Gelligaer	14.87	17.34	19.82	22.30	27.26	32.21	37.17	44.60	52.03
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	16.51	19.27	22.02	24.77	30.27	35.78	41.28	49.54	57.80
Maesycwmmmer	12.11	14.13	16.15	18.17	22.21	26.25	30.28	36.34	42.40
Nelson	11.95	13.95	15.94	17.93	21.91	25.90	29.88	35.86	41.84
New Tredegar	8.11	9.46	10.81	12.16	14.86	17.56	20.27	24.32	28.37
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	10.26	11.97	13.68	15.39	18.81	22.23	25.65	30.78	35.91
Rhymney	9.65	11.26	12.87	14.48	17.70	20.92	24.13	28.96	33.79
Risca East	11.33	13.22	15.11	17.00	20.78	24.56	28.33	34.00	39.67
Risca West	25.33	29.56	33.78	38.00	46.44	54.89	63.33	76.00	88.67
Van	12.68	14.79	16.91	19.02	23.25	27.47	31.70	38.04	44.38
Remainder	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Totals For Community Council Areas</u>									
Aber Valley	1,053.43	1,228.99	1,404.57	1,580.14	1,931.29	2,282.42	2,633.57	3,160.28	3,686.99
Argoed	1,051.13	1,226.31	1,401.51	1,576.69	1,927.07	2,277.44	2,627.82	3,153.38	3,678.94
Bargoed	1,080.03	1,260.03	1,440.04	1,620.04	1,980.05	2,340.05	2,700.07	3,240.08	3,780.09
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	1,063.75	1,241.04	1,418.34	1,595.63	1,950.22	2,304.80	2,659.38	3,191.26	3,723.14
Blackwood	1,060.42	1,237.15	1,413.90	1,590.63	1,944.11	2,297.57	2,651.05	3,181.26	3,711.47
Caerphilly	1,050.75	1,225.88	1,401.01	1,576.13	1,926.38	2,276.63	2,626.88	3,152.26	3,677.64
Darren Valley	1,056.16	1,232.18	1,408.22	1,584.24	1,936.30	2,288.34	2,640.40	3,168.48	3,696.56
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	1,062.12	1,239.14	1,416.16	1,593.18	1,947.22	2,301.26	2,655.30	3,186.36	3,717.42
Gelligaer	1,055.29	1,231.16	1,407.05	1,582.93	1,934.70	2,286.45	2,638.22	3,165.86	3,693.50
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	1,056.93	1,233.09	1,409.25	1,585.40	1,937.71	2,290.02	2,642.33	3,170.80	3,699.27
Maesycwmmmer	1,052.53	1,227.95	1,403.38	1,578.80	1,929.65	2,280.49	2,631.33	3,157.60	3,683.87
Nelson	1,052.37	1,227.77	1,403.17	1,578.56	1,929.35	2,280.14	2,630.93	3,157.12	3,683.31
New Tredegar	1,048.53	1,223.28	1,398.04	1,572.79	1,922.30	2,271.80	2,621.32	3,145.58	3,669.84
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	1,050.68	1,225.79	1,400.91	1,576.02	1,926.25	2,276.47	2,626.70	3,152.04	3,677.38
Rhymney	1,050.07	1,225.08	1,400.10	1,575.11	1,925.14	2,275.16	2,625.18	3,150.22	3,675.26
Risca East	1,051.75	1,227.04	1,402.34	1,577.63	1,928.22	2,278.80	2,629.38	3,155.26	3,681.14
Risca West	1,065.75	1,243.38	1,421.01	1,598.63	1,953.88	2,309.13	2,664.38	3,197.26	3,730.14
Van	1,053.10	1,228.61	1,404.14	1,579.65	1,930.69	2,281.71	2,632.75	3,159.30	3,685.85
Remainder	1,040.42	1,213.82	1,387.23	1,560.63	1,907.44	2,254.24	2,601.05	3,121.26	3,641.47

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (2)(g) and (2)(h) 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 a particular 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.

3. That it be noted that for the year 2025/2026 the major precepting authority has stated the following amounts in precepts 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:-

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Precepting Authority</u>									
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent	251.54	293.46	335.39	377.31	461.16	545.00	628.85	754.62	880.39

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Aber Valley	1,304.97	1,522.45	1,739.96	1,957.45	2,392.45	2,827.42	3,262.42	3,914.90	4,567.38
Argoed	1,302.67	1,519.77	1,736.90	1,954.00	2,388.23	2,822.44	3,256.67	3,908.00	4,559.33
Bargoed	1,331.57	1,553.49	1,775.43	1,997.35	2,441.21	2,885.05	3,328.92	3,994.70	4,660.48
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	1,315.29	1,534.50	1,753.73	1,972.94	2,411.38	2,849.80	3,288.23	3,945.88	4,603.53
Blackwood	1,311.96	1,530.61	1,749.29	1,967.94	2,405.27	2,842.57	3,279.90	3,935.88	4,591.86
Caerphilly	1,302.29	1,519.34	1,736.40	1,953.44	2,387.54	2,821.63	3,255.73	3,906.88	4,558.03
Darren Valley	1,307.70	1,525.64	1,743.61	1,961.55	2,397.46	2,833.34	3,269.25	3,923.10	4,576.95
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	1,313.66	1,532.60	1,751.55	1,970.49	2,408.38	2,846.26	3,284.15	3,940.98	4,597.81
Gelligaer	1,306.83	1,524.62	1,742.44	1,960.24	2,395.86	2,831.45	3,267.07	3,920.48	4,573.89
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	1,308.47	1,526.55	1,744.64	1,962.71	2,398.87	2,835.02	3,271.18	3,925.42	4,579.66
Maescwmmmer	1,304.07	1,521.41	1,738.77	1,956.11	2,390.81	2,825.49	3,260.18	3,912.22	4,564.26
Nelson	1,303.91	1,521.23	1,738.56	1,955.87	2,390.51	2,825.14	3,259.78	3,911.74	4,563.70
New Tredegar	1,300.07	1,516.74	1,733.43	1,950.10	2,383.46	2,816.80	3,250.17	3,900.20	4,550.23
Penyrheol, Treceynydd & Energlyn	1,302.22	1,519.25	1,736.30	1,953.33	2,387.41	2,821.47	3,255.55	3,906.66	4,557.77
Rhymney	1,301.61	1,518.54	1,735.49	1,952.42	2,386.30	2,820.16	3,254.03	3,904.84	4,555.65
Risca East	1,303.29	1,520.50	1,737.73	1,954.94	2,389.38	2,823.80	3,258.23	3,909.88	4,561.53
Risca West	1,317.29	1,536.84	1,756.40	1,975.94	2,415.04	2,854.13	3,293.23	3,951.88	4,610.53
Van	1,304.64	1,522.07	1,739.53	1,956.96	2,391.85	2,826.71	3,261.60	3,913.92	4,566.24
Remainder	1,291.96	1,507.28	1,722.62	1,937.94	2,368.60	2,799.24	3,229.90	3,875.88	4,521.86

4. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (2)(i) and (3) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts of Council Tax for the year 2025/2026 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Aber Valley	1,304.97	1,522.45	1,739.96	1,957.45	2,392.45	2,827.42	3,262.42	3,914.90	4,567.38
Argoed	1,302.67	1,519.77	1,736.90	1,954.00	2,388.23	2,822.44	3,256.67	3,908.00	4,559.33
Bargoed	1,331.57	1,553.49	1,775.43	1,997.35	2,441.21	2,885.05	3,328.92	3,994.70	4,660.48
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	1,315.29	1,534.50	1,753.73	1,972.94	2,411.38	2,849.80	3,288.23	3,945.88	4,603.53
Blackwood	1,311.96	1,530.61	1,749.29	1,967.94	2,405.27	2,842.57	3,279.90	3,935.88	4,591.86
Caerphilly	1,302.29	1,519.34	1,736.40	1,953.44	2,387.54	2,821.63	3,255.73	3,906.88	4,558.03
Darren Valley	1,307.70	1,525.64	1,743.61	1,961.55	2,397.46	2,833.34	3,269.25	3,923.10	4,576.95
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	1,313.66	1,532.60	1,751.55	1,970.49	2,408.38	2,846.26	3,284.15	3,940.98	4,597.81
Gelligaer	1,306.83	1,524.62	1,742.44	1,960.24	2,395.86	2,831.45	3,267.07	3,920.48	4,573.89
Llanbradach & Pwllypant	1,308.47	1,526.55	1,744.64	1,962.71	2,398.87	2,835.02	3,271.18	3,925.42	4,579.66

Maesycwmmwr	1,304.07	1,521.41	1,738.77	1,956.11	2,390.81	2,825.49	3,260.18	3,912.22	4,564.26
Nelson	1,303.91	1,521.23	1,738.56	1,955.87	2,390.51	2,825.14	3,259.78	3,911.74	4,563.70
New Tredegar	1,300.07	1,516.74	1,733.43	1,950.10	2,383.46	2,816.80	3,250.17	3,900.20	4,550.23
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	1,302.22	1,519.25	1,736.30	1,953.33	2,387.41	2,821.47	3,255.55	3,906.66	4,557.77
Rhymney	1,301.61	1,518.54	1,735.49	1,952.42	2,386.30	2,820.16	3,254.03	3,904.84	4,555.65
Risca East	1,303.29	1,520.50	1,737.73	1,954.94	2,389.38	2,823.80	3,258.23	3,909.88	4,561.53
Risca West	1,317.29	1,536.84	1,756.40	1,975.94	2,415.04	2,854.13	3,293.23	3,951.88	4,610.53
Van	1,304.64	1,522.07	1,739.53	1,956.96	2,391.85	2,826.71	3,261.60	3,913.92	4,566.24
Remainder	1,291.96	1,507.28	1,722.62	1,937.94	2,368.60	2,799.24	3,229.90	3,875.88	4,521.86

11. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR

The Mayor's announcements were noted.

12. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 28(3)

There were no petitions received.

13. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(2)

There was no question received.

14. TO RECEIVE AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(3)

Question from Councillor J. Winslade to the Cabinet Member for Social Care, Councillor E. Forehead.

Can the Cabinet Member for Social Care update us on developments in Meals Direct?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Social Care, Councillor E. Forehead, to Councillor J. Winslade.

As part of the £45 million budget pressure, Cabinet previously agreed to consult the public on the Meals Direct service provided by CCBC. The Consultation was open for 6 weeks and ended on 10th September 2024. Responses were received and informed overwhelmingly that this was a much-valued service for users and their families alike. It was evident that the service is valued for the social interaction as much as the meal provided and reassured extended family members of their loved one's wellbeing.

Joint Scrutiny on 24th September 2024 discussed and unanimously agreed that the service was invaluable and called on Cabinet to revise the Meals Direct service in its current format and take into consideration the responses outlined in the consultation, whilst asking Officers to look at options to make the service sustainable and move to a full cost recovery model. This was formally agreed at Cabinet on 25th September 2024.

As a result, Officers have undertaken work to look at a phased approach to moving to a full cost recovery model which will ultimately depend on demand going forward. A report will be presented to Social Services and Education Scrutiny Committee on 22nd April 2025, which will outline a range of options which align to the responses received through the consultation

and will seek Members views prior to report being presented to Cabinet on the 21st May 2025.

Question from Councillor L. Phipps to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways, Councillor N. George.

Can the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Property and Highways give an update on our Fleet Services?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service, Property and Highways, Councillor N. George, to Councillor L. Phipps.

The Council operates a large fleet of vehicles ranging from small vans to heavy goods vehicles. These vehicles are used to deliver many essential frontline services ranging from housing maintenance to recycling and waste collection without which many services could not operate. Our heavy goods vehicles come under the scope of an Operator's Licence which carries strict compliance conditions. Should any non-compliance issues be identified this could result in our Operator's Licence being revoked or curtailed, which will have implications for the operation of frontline services.

A service review was established in 2023 within the Mobilising Team Caerphilly programme and a lot of work has been done to identify and understand areas of improvement.

The Fleet project vision has been to strengthen and improve current processes and practices that will ensure CCBC has a Fleet Service Area that is safe, efficient, compliant, reliable, and low carbon. In January 2024 we appointed two new Fleet Managers who have worked closely with the Fleet Review Team to learn from our discovery work and begin to implement processes and practises that are in line with our vision.

Some of the changes and improvements that have been made to date include:

1. Restructuring and recruitment of the fleet workshop and office ensuring we have the right number of staff with the right skills and experience to meet service demands and future fleet maintenance requirements.
2. Implementation of improved digitisation, including an updated central Fleet Database, Trackers, Defect Apps, SharePoint, Intranet pages and sharing of systems with Service Managers.
3. Increased compliance status. Our vehicles off road rates have reduced from 4 days to 1.5 days, and our Operator Compliance Risk Score has increased from 80% to 91% in Caerphilly making our status Green. This indicates that our vehicles have consistently passed inspections and complied with the law and therefore we are much less likely to be stopped for roadside checks or receive surprise DVSA visits.
4. The service has a much-improved financial outturn forecast for 2024/25 compared to previous years and the review has identified potential savings of approximately half a million pounds over the next 2 years.
5. Development of a Centralised Corporate Fleet Model to create a central area of control to enable the required close monitoring that will continue to lead to improvements in compliance and performance, finances, and economic efficiencies.
6. Improved communication channels across the authority to increase collaboration across service areas.

7. Improved driver behaviour following implementation of performance checks and a close working partnership with Gwent Police over recent months. Recent Police feedback stated, "Since we last met we have spent considerable time in the Caerphilly Borough area and have to say the compliance rate of your vehicles from a load security and seat belt has been impressive. I have been unable to see any that were in breach. This is extremely good news and just highlights the stringent policies you have introduced. We have also spent time monitoring speed, and we have not identified any Council vehicles speeding."

15. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(12) FOR WHICH A WRITTEN RESPONSE WILL BE PROVIDED.

There were no questions received to be answered in writing.

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 8th April 2025 they were signed by the Presiding Member.

PRESIDING MEMBER