

**COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2026**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB / REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 16:00**

Present

Councillor HJ David – Mayor/Chairperson

H T Bennett  
JPD Blundell  
S Easterbrook  
W R Goode  
D M Hughes  
M Lewis  
T Thomas  
A Wathan  
MJ Williams

A R Berrow  
E L P Caparros  
M J Evans  
RM Granville  
M R John  
R J Smith  
JH Tildesley MBE  
AJ Williams  
R Williams

F D Bletsoe  
O Clatworthy  
N Farr  
GC Haines  
M Jones  
JC Spanswick  
A Ulberini-Williams  
HM Williams  
E D Winstanley

S J Bletsoe  
RJ Collins  
J Gebbie  
M L Hughes  
W J Kendall  
I M Spiller  
G Walter  
I Williams  
T Wood

Present Virtually

S Aspey  
P Davies  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins

N Clarke  
P Ford  
RL Penhale-Thomas

C Davies  
H Griffiths

J E Pratt  
P W Jenkins

Officers:

Lindsay Harvey  
Rachel Keepins  
Carys Lord  
Claire Marchant  
Jake Morgan  
Janine Nightingale

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Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People  
Democratic Services Manager  
Corporate Director - Finance and Transformation  
Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing  
Chief Executive  
Corporate Director - Communities

**This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**

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Michael Pitman  
Mark Galvin  
Kelly Watson  
Deb Exton  
Oscar Roberts

Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees  
Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy  
Deputy Head of Finance – Finance, Housing and Change  
Temporary Democratic Services Officer - Committees

**250. Apologies for absence**

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from the following members:-  Councillor Chris Davies Councillor Norah Clarke
Date Decision Made	25 February 2026

**251. Declarations of Interest**

Decision Made	The following declarations of interest were made:-  Councillor Amanda Williams declared a personal interest in Item 5 as she is a community governor at Coity Primary School, which is mentioned in the report.
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

**252. To receive announcements from:**

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the following (no decisions required/made):-  • Mayor;
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Date Decision Made	26 February 2026
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**253. To receive announcements by the Leader**

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the Leader (no decisions required/made).
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

**254. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-27 to 2029-30**

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of this report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, was to seek Council approval of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-27 to 2029-30, attached at Annex 3 (along with associated Appendices A to I), which includes a financial forecast for 2026-30, a detailed revenue budget for 2026-27 and a Capital Programme for 2025-26 to 2035-36.</p> <p>The Mayor invited the Leader of the Largest Opposition Group to present their alternative budget proposal, which proposed a reduction in the Council tax increase from 4.7% to 4.0%. This reduction would result in £736,000 of unallocated reserves not being collected and would total in a Band D property saving of £13.42 per year. Concerns were shared around the tax burden on residents and the financial prudence of maintaining adequate reserves for future use and protection of Council services.</p> <p>Members raised the following questions on this alternative budget proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The likelihood and confidence of further funding increases from Welsh Government.</li><li>• The purpose of keeping £736,000 of unallocated reserves as part of the Executive's budget proposal.</li></ul> <p>These questions were addressed by the Leader of the Largest Opposition Group and the Cabinet Member for Finance &amp; Performance. It was clarified that the £736,000 of reserves discussed has been placed into the pay and price pressures budget.</p> <p>A verbal vote was then conducted on the alternative budget proposal, the result of which was as follows:-</p>
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	<u>For (the motion)</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>
	16	30	0
<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, the Corporate Director - Finance and Transformation and Members thanked the Finance team for their work and effort preparing the Medium Term Financial Plan report. The report noted that it is assumed that a budget reduction of £32.7 million will be required over the course of the MTFS with predicted Council tax raises of 4.5% per year. The net revenue budget requirement for the next financial year was set at £408 million, with a breakdown of service allocations detailed within the report. Cost pressures for the financial year have been considered including pay and price inflation, service cost pressures, emerging growth pressures and additional growth pressures. A revised Capital Programme was also summarised, with additional funding allocated to highway maintenance, improved funding to BCBC-owned sports facilities and upgrading of play areas.</p> <p>The Corporate Director - Finance and Transformation reminded Members of the Council's legal requirement to approve a balanced budget and set the Council tax rate for the coming financial year. Long term reserves and financial sustainability were cited as areas of consideration to be monitored by officers during the medium and long term. It was also confirmed that the Council's current level of reserves is sufficient to protect the Council from unknown demands or emergencies as well as current funding levels.</p> <p>Members posed questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The public consultation undertaken on the budget.</li><li>• The resilience of the budget against unexpected cost demands.</li><li>• How the budget supports wellbeing, homelessness prevention and independent living.</li><li>• Whether the Council is charging blue badge holders for parking.</li><li>• How the budget helps residents seeking temporary accommodation.</li><li>• Whether it is normal practice to protect service budgets using unallocated reserves rather than being allocated to the relevant service itself.</li><li>• Which decarbonisation projects are most vulnerable to any projected shortfalls in funding to meet BCBC's goal of achieving net zero by 2030.</li><li>• The rationale behind 28% of the Council's budget coming from Council tax.</li><li>• What progress is being made on Public Realm initiatives.</li><li>• What the £736,000 of unallocated reserves are allocated to as well as details of its spending and return to the public.</li></ul>			

- The reasoning behind the Council's assumptions for future funding increases from Welsh Government.
- What provisions are being made for children's play park refurbishment.
- Why increases in funding have not led to a lesser increase in Council tax.
- How the budget supports schools throughout Bridgend County struggling with the effects of cuts from previous years' budgets.
- How the budget supports the decisions stemming from resident and school consultations.
- Whether the budget could have been passed with unanimous support following recommendations from the opposition groups.
- How the budget seeks to protect residents from the effects of climate change.
- What measures the Council is putting in place to curb the rise of youth anti-social behaviour incidents.

These questions were responded to, in turn, by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services, The Deputy Leader, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development and Housing, the Cabinet Member for Resources, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment and the Corporate Director - Finance and Transformation.

Members further expressed their disappointment that details around the funding earmarked for future education use dependent on a Council tax increase was not made during the scrutiny process.

A verbal vote was then conducted on the alternative budget proposal, the result of which was as follows:-

<u>For (the motion)</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>
28	18	0

**RESOLVED:**

That Council approved the MTFS 2026-27 to 2029-30, including the 2026-27 revenue budget and the Capital Programme 2025-26 to 2035-36, as well as approving also, the following specific elements:

- The MTFS 2026-27 to 2029-30 (Annex 3 of the report, with Appendices A to I).
- The Net Budget Requirement of £408,148,969 in 2026-27.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £2,007.06 for 2026-27 (at Table 17 of the MTFS).</li><li>• The 2026-27 budgets as allocated in accordance with Table 10 in paragraph 4.1.3 of the MTFS.</li><li>• The budget pressures outlined in Appendix C for 2026-27 to 2029-30.</li><li>• The budget reductions outlined in Appendix D for 2026-27 to 2029-30.</li><li>• The Capital Programme 2025-26 to 2035-36, attached at Appendix G of the MTFS.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

**255. Council Tax 2026-27**

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of this report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, was to provide Council with details of the council tax requirement for the County Borough Council, subject to Council approving the Medium Term Financial Strategy on 25 February 2026, together with the requirements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and Town and Community Councils, and to ask the Council to note the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band for 2026-27.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> In light of Council's earlier approval of the proposed net budget requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council of £111,980,641 for 2026-27 and a Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £2,007.06 for 2026-27, Council further agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noted the level of the precept from the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales, as set out in Table 3 of the report:</li><li>• Noted the total Council Tax charges for Band D properties for 2026-27 for each of the Community Council areas as outlined in Table 6 and the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band as outlined in the report at Appendix A.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

**256. Capital Strategy 2026-27 to 2035-36**

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of this report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, was to present to Council the Capital Strategy 2026-27 to 2035-36 (Appendix A to the report), which included the Prudential Indicators against which the Council measures itself during the financial year and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2026-27 (Section 7 of Appendix A) for approval.</p> <p>Members posed questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Council’s priorities in compiling the Strategy and what projects will be focused on first.</li><li>• The ability of the Council to fulfil the Capital Strategy on schedule.</li><li>• What opportunities have been identified for future revenue generation.</li><li>• How the Council’s level of debt compares to other authorities.</li></ul> <p>These questions were addressed by the Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services, the Deputy Leader, the Corporate Director – Finance and Transformation and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council approved the Capital Strategy 2026-27 to 2035-36, including the Prudential Indicators 2026-27 to 2035-36 and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2026-27 at Appendix A to the report.</p>
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

**257. Treasury Management Strategy 2026-27**

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of this report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, was to present to Council the proposed Treasury Management Strategy 2026-27 (Appendix A of the report referred), which included the Borrowing Strategy 2026-27, the Treasury Investment Strategy 2026-27 and the Treasury Management Indicators for the period 2026-27 to 2028-29.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council approved the Treasury Management Strategy 2026-</p>
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	27 including the Treasury Management Indicators 2026-27 to 2028-29 at Appendix A of the report.
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

**258. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	There were no urgent items.
Date Decision Made	26 February 2026

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 19:33.