

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2015 AT 3.00PM

Present:

Councillor G Thomas - Mayor and Chairperson

M W Butcher	E M Hughes	J E Lewis	C E Smith
N Clarke	R M James	L C Morgan	J C Spanswick
H J David	P John	D R W Lewis	M Thomas
G Davies	C L Jones	J E Lewis	H Townsend
P A Davies	R C Jones	J R McCarthy	E Venables
G W Davies MBE	M Jones	H E Morgan	K J Watts
E Dodd	B Jones	M E J Nott OBE	C Westwood
D K Edwards	R D Jenkins	D G Owen	D B F White
E P Foley	C J James	D R Pugh	P J White
C A Green	P James	C Reeves	H M Williams
M Gregory	D R W Lewis	M Reeves	R Williams
D Hughes	J E Lewis	C E Smith	R E Young

Officers:

D Mepham	- Chief Executive
R Davies	- Group Manager, Business Strategy and Performance
Z Shell	- Head of Neighbourhood Services
R Hemingway	- Head of Finance and ICT
N Young	- Corporate Director - Resources
J Davies	- Head of Adult Social Care
P A Jolley	- Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer
G P Jones	- Head of Democratic Services (Electronic Support)
M A Galvin	- Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

452 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members/Officers for the reasons so stated:

Councillor S Apsey	- Work commitments
Councillor L Ellis	- Medical appointment
Councillor D Sage	- Hospital
M Shephard	- Work commitments
D McMillan	- Work commitments
S Cooper	Work commitments

453 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

454 CORPORATE PLAN FOR 2013-17

The Chief Executive presented a report, the purpose of which, was to present to Members of the Authorities reviewed Corporate Plan 2013-17 (attached at Appendix A to the report) for Council to consider and approve.

He confirmed that the Corporate Plan was annually reviewed and looked at delivering certain agreed commitments for 2015-16, and the latest review has concluded that the six improvement priorities outlined originally, were still relevant. These were shown in bullet point format in paragraph 4.2 of the report.

The Chief Executive added that the desired outcomes against priorities were the same as last year, however, the actions in order to deliver these had changed and reduced in number in order to ensure a clear focus on the areas that matter the most to County Borough citizens.

He added that the Council's Community Safety and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the reviewed improvement priorities, actions to deliver those priorities, and the commitments for 2015-16. The Committee invited all Scrutiny Chairpersons to this meeting, to ensure a corporate response to the consultation.

Of the comments and suggestions recommended by this Committee, all had been incorporated into the Plan added the Chief Executive, with the exception of one, which is, that the Committee suggested under the heading 'What do we want to achieve by 31 March 2017', it should state "we aim to" rather than "we will". The reason for not adopting this suggestion though, was due to the fact that the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the statutory guidance, require that improvement objectives "both describe the overall purpose and the scope of action to deliver it". The term 'Aim to', was deemed too broad to meet this requirement.

The Chief Executive advised that there were financial implications relating to the Corporate Plan despite this not being referenced to in the report, in that it was directly linked to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

A Member advised that a recent survey had been undertaken with members of the public in respect of local authority services, asking them if they were satisfied with what was being provided and the level of standard of such services. He added that only 50% of the public had confirmed they were happy with the services being provided by BCBC. He asked the Cabinet and Officers what was being done to address this issue through the Corporate Plan.

The Chief Executive confirmed that this survey had only recently been undertaken, after the Corporate Plan had been prepared and put together and shared with Overview and Scrutiny and considered by the Cabinet. Therefore, the provisions of the document would not include anything that responds to the survey so referred to, though the results of this survey would be examined by appropriate Officers.

A Member referred to pages 42, 43 and 46 of the Corporate Plan and Performance Indicators. He felt that in terms of increases and reductions shown in the target columns for the various Indicators so listed, there should be specific figures or percentages outlined there, even if these were just projections. The document he felt should also confirm as to whether or not specific targets in 2014-15 had been made met (or not) in all categories of PI's shown, and similarly for 2015-16, an indicator if targets set for this period were likely to be met or not.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the reflection of some PI information, ie those which have broader outcomes associated with them, were more vague in terms of figures and percentages of targets, due to the fact they were not specifically covered individually by BCBC, but pieces of work undertaken through a multi-agency arrangement of which this Authority were not necessarily leading upon.

A Member commended the proposal to invite Chairpersons of other Overview and Scrutiny Committees well as CMB being to a recent meeting of the Community Safety and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider various Directorate Business

Plans. However, he was disappointed to see from page 42 of the Plan that there would be an increase in the poor condition of A, B and C roads in the future, due to continued austerity measures and the borrowing initiative from Welsh Government towards highway improvements now having ceased. With £1m further being cut from the Communities Directorate he was disappointed to say that conditions of roads that form the highway network would deteriorate in the future, due to there being no money available to continue these improvement works.

A Member referred to page 46 of the Plan and the visits to local authority Sport and Leisure Centres during the year to participate in physical authority, and asked why there was a projected reduction in visits targeted next year and the year after when compared to the total visitors current year. She also sought clarification that the number of visitors all visited for the purpose of participating in sports and social activities rather than any other reason.

The Chief Executive advised that he would find out the answer to this point and in turn provide this to the Member outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That Council approved and adopted the Corporate Plan 2013-17 reviewed for 2015-16 as shown at Appendix A to the report.

455 LEADER'S REPORT

The Leader gave his report as follows in respect to the next item on the agenda, ie the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-16 to 2018-19:-

“Colleagues will be fully aware of the events that have led us here today as we gather to consider the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy, or MTFs.

As you know, local government is facing a very challenging financial outlook.

Putting this strategy together has been an extremely demanding process, but it lays out how we intend to continue with our efforts to deliver high-quality services and achieve our targets and budget reductions for 2015-16.

The MTFs has once again been designed to reflect the priorities of our Corporate Plan – that is, to develop our local economy, raise aspirations and educational achievement, support children and their families, help people to live healthier lives, make better use of resources, and help vulnerable and older people to live independently for as long as possible.

We have already delivered huge reductions via the MTFs, internal efficiencies, collaborative projects, contract renegotiations and the potential transfer of specific services to partner organisations.

Nevertheless, we currently estimate that the authority still needs to identify budget reduction proposals of up to £49m over the next four years.

Faced with cuts of this magnitude, we all need to prepare for the fact that the council will not be in a position to provide the current level and range of services or jobs in future years, and that some particularly difficult decisions are still ahead of us.

While none of us like being in the position of being asked to endorse something that restricts spending or has an impact on council services, we do need to keep in mind the reality of the situation facing local government across Wales, and also the legal requirement for all councils to deliver balanced budgets for the year ahead.

Against this backdrop, I believe that the MTFs for 2015-16 is robust, fit-for-purpose and above all extremely realistic about the challenges that we face.

The 2015-16 revenue budget has been crafted to help us achieve our budget reduction target for the year, protect essential front-line services as far as possible and drive forward improvement in areas that local people feel are most important.

Incorporating a net budget of £252 million, a capital programme of £33 million and budget reductions of £11 million, it ensures that the council can meet all of its statutory responsibilities and reflects the priorities of the Welsh Government as well as UK economic and public expenditure plans.

As laid out in last year's discussions, a council tax increase of 4.8 per cent is reluctantly included in the proposals.

This is the equivalent of an extra £1.10 a week for a Band D property, and is necessary to ensure that the authority can continue to meet the needs of local residents.

Funding for highways and transportation repairs, housing renewal schemes, disabled facilities grants, regeneration initiatives and a range of community projects have all been prioritised in the strategy.

Extra funding for schools has also been provided by the Welsh Government as part of its commitment towards protecting school budgets across Wales.

I think it is important to acknowledge that local residents have played an important role in putting these proposals together by participating with a major public consultation exercise that incorporated a series of public workshops and a questionnaire that was made available in a variety of formats.

The consultation used an online 'budget simulator' tool to give people an insight into the budget setting process, including the potentially far-reaching implications of having to make budget reductions to specific council services, the authority's need to meet all of its statutory requirements and more.

The results of the consultation demonstrated that half of all participants believed they were already very aware of the council's financial situation, and highlighted some interesting issues.

For example, 64 per cent supported proposals to save £492,000 over three years by delivering library and cultural services through a not-for-profit trust, and more than one in three people thought that residents could help reduce demand on council services by taking on more personal responsibility.

All of the feedback has been reflected in the MTFs, and I would like to offer my thanks to everyone who took the time to pass on their views and help inform the 2015-16 budget.

This has not been an easy process, but then I don't believe that deciding where to prioritise council funding should ever be 'easy'.

We have considered all options very carefully to try and deliver the right balance, and I think that the MTFs before you today achieves this.

Despite the difficulties of the situation, I am still proud of Bridgend County Borough, and still ambitious for the people who live and work here.

The ways in which we provide services are changing to meet many of the challenges we now face, and it is widely accepted that public services across Wales are set to change further in future years, too.

This strategy equips us with the tools necessary to meet this change head on, and ensure that Bridgend County Borough continues to enjoy a sustainable, successful future.”

456 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2015-16 TO 2018-19

The Section 151 Officer submitted a report to present Council with the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the above period, to include a financial forecast for 2015-19, a detailed revenue budget for 2015-16 and a Capital Programme for 2015-16 to 20124-25.

She explained that the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) identify the Council’s service and resource priorities for the next four financial years.

The Section 151 Officer advised that the Council’s MTFS was set within the context of UK economic and public expenditure plans, Welsh Government priorities and legislative programme. The MTFS articulated how the Council planned to use its resources to support the achievement of its corporate priorities and statutory duties, including the management of financial pressures and risks over the next 4 years.

Paragraph 3.3 of the report then advised what the MTFS comprised of and the Section 151 Officer expanded upon this.

In terms of financial context, the Section 151 Officer advised that austerity was set to continue, and that in relation to the Welsh Government Final Local Government Settlement, after considering the additional funding of £10 million for social care in the settlement that has replaced funding previously provided in the form of a specific grant, the settlement equated to a -3.6% settlement on last year. This was a reduction of £134k on the Provisional Settlement..

The Section 151 Officer added that the settlement included extra funding to protect schools, which amounted to a 0.6% cash increase or £508k for BCBC.

With regard to Grant Transfers into the 2015-16 Revenue Settlement, there had been a number of transfers into and out of the final settlement for 2015-16, amounting to £298k for the Authority as shown in paragraph 3.9 of the report.

The next section of the report, gave details regarding the Regional Collaboration Fund (RCF)/Intermediate Care Fund (ICF), which confirmed that for 2015-16 £5m funding had been allocated by Welsh Government under the RCF to cover ongoing projects. This was a significant reduction in the £10m that had been estimated. Projects receiving funding have been asked to consider how they will reconfigure these to manage within revised reduced funding for 2015-16. There was no future funding in the Final Budget for the ICF which was £50m in 2014-15. However, Welsh Government had recently announced £20m of additional funding for the Health Service for 2015-16 to take forward projects funded by the Intermediate Care Fund in 2014-15

The Section 151 Officer then referred Members to paragraph 3.14 of the report and the in-year financial position of the Council as at 31 December 2014, and Table 1 reflected that there was a projected underspend of £297k. This was mainly due to the significant underspend in Legal and Regulatory Services, but the overall figure did mask a number of in-year budget pressures in Safeguarding and Family Support and Adult Social Care. The outturn assumed full implementation of the current year budget reduction requirements across the Council’s budget which amounted to £11.274m. Where proposals to meet this requirement had been delayed or were not achievable, Directorates had met their requirements using other measures such as vacancy management. The Section 151 Officer stated that the latest figures in respect of the outturn were indicating a forecast Directorate underspend of more than £750,000.

She then explained that the Council could not exceed its approved cash limit budget. As such fortuitous underspends in budgets will be applied to offset overspends on other budgets. In accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, at year end, consideration, will be given to requests from Directors to carry forward any planned Directorate underspends for specific purposes into the following year.

The Section 151 Officer then referred to the MTFs 2015-16 to 2018-19, the development of which, had taken into account Auditors' views and issues arising in 2014-15, underpinned by the ongoing aim to embed a culture of medium term financial planning, closely aligned with corporate planning.

She added that implementation of the MTFs would continue to be led by Cabinet and CMB, supported by financial and performance data, and that it widely understood by internal stakeholders and the general public where appropriate.

The next part of the report outlined the consultation process conducted as part of the MTFs, that included with the public, and that 443 responses had been received, reflecting that 50% of participants believed they were very aware of the current financial situation. In terms of being asked how they would manage the budget effectively going forward, their feedback regarding this was shown in paragraph 4.6 of the report.

The Section 151 Officer confirmed that there was majority support for introducing a charge for pest control, a parking charge for Blue Badge holders in our off-street car parks and for introducing a percentage charge for credit card payments made to the Council. 64% of respondents voted 'yes' to delivering libraries and cultural services through a not for profit trust. Over 1 in 3 (36%) believed that residents could help to reduce demand on the Council by taking more personal responsibility. This was also supported by other respondents suggesting a need for third party and/or voluntary/co-production collaboration and engagement.

In addition to the public consultation Members had participated in the planning process through the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel, Council briefings and a specific Members' budget workshop. The Town and Community Councils (TCC) and the third sector had also been engaged through the T&CC Forum and the Third Sector Review project. The Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee had summarised and collated observations and recommendations. Cabinet has provided a response to these recommendations which was attached to the report at Appendix M.

The Section 151 Officer then referred to paragraph 4.9 of the report, confirming that the principles of the MTFs were the same as they had been for the last few years, and these were itemised 1 -14 in this paragraph. Point 12 was subject to a slight change, with resources being allocated to deliver the Bridgend Change Programme based on clear strategic plans that are kept under review by Corporate Directors to maintain alignment with the MTFs.

With regard to the MTFs Resource Envelope, she explained that the MTFs planning assumptions for 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 are based on a reduction in AEF of -4.5% and an assumed increase in council tax of 4.5% each year. The 2015-16 AEF figure is -3.4% based on the published Final Settlement.

Paragraph 4.11 showed in Table 3 the MTFs Potential Net Budget Reduction Requirement with an estimated budget reduction for the next 4 years of £49m. The 2015-16 figures were based on the actual settlement, with a projection for the following 3 years.

The Section 151 officer then referred to the MTFs Net Budget Requirement of £252,201m outlined in Table 4 within paragraph 4.13 of the report. Appendix A showed the indicative budgets for the next four years based on the most likely scenario. This was built up based

on the assumptions in paragraph 4.12 of the report and predicted on the budget reduction requirement being met from Directorate and Corporate Budgets identified in Table 3.

The next section of the report ie in Table 5, showed the Risk Status of Budget Reduction Proposals 2015-16 to 2018-19 using the RAG formula, ie Red (proposals in development), Amber (Implementation Plans in Development) and Green (Implementation Plans in Place). Despite these proposals, there was still a shortfall against the forecast budget reduction requirement over the next four years of £9,458.000m.

Table 6 then showed Budget Reduction Proposals 2015-16 to 2018-19 by Category. The Section 151 Officer explained that these reductions were being proposed in such a way that the Council minimises the impact on frontline services.

All of the proposals have implications for the Council workforce given that 69% of the Council's net revenue budget relates to pay costs. It follows that annual real terms reductions in Council budgets over the next four years will lead to a reduced workforce over the MTF5 period. The intention is to manage such a reduction through the continuation of a recruitment freeze, redeployment, early retirements and voluntary redundancies, but some compulsory redundancies will continue to be necessary. The costs of redundancies will be significant and the Council will need to ensure there are sufficient funds in earmarked reserves to meet these one off costs.

The Section 151 Officer then explained about the Council's Risk Assessment which identifies the key corporate risks and mitigating actions is attached as Appendix L to the report. The main risks which have been taken into account in the preparation of the MTF5 are failure to use resources effectively and achieve the planned reductions target, the impact of welfare reform measures and local government reorganisation and increased support for vulnerable people, including children and their families. The local government reorganisation risk was correct, but references to the Vale of Glamorgan should be removed as the decision on which council BCBC will merge with, is still to be made.

Table 7 of the report then identified the Revenue Budget 2015-16 which totalled £252,201 million, which would be funded through Revenue Support Grant/Non Domestic Rates and Council Tax Income, with a proposal for a 4.8% increase for the latter based on an Average Band D property.

The Section 151 Officer then explained the composition of the budget in respect of Pay, Prices and Demographics, and in relation to Delegated School Budgets, she explained that this had been completely protected from the average 8.5% reductions that other Directorate have had to find. She said the 2015-16 budget provides an additional £508,000 to the schools' budget to meet the Welsh Government's 1% protection commitment.

During 2014-15 a number of unavoidable 2015-16 service budget pressures had arisen totalling £3.270 million, detailed in Appendix B to the report. These have been categorised into one-off pressures and more certain and recurring pressures. In total for 2015-16, the recurring pressures total £2.334 million. The one-off pressures total £936,000 and funding will be retained centrally and allocated to services to meet the cost of these pressures, should they arise during 2015-16.

The Section 151 Officer stated that Corporate budgets included funding for the Council tax reduction scheme, costs of financing capital expenditure, the unallocated inflation budget, a central contingency provision, discretionary rate relief, provision for redundancy related costs and the Carbon Reduction Commitment and Outcome Agreement Grant (OAG).

She added that generally, income from fees and charges will be increased by CPI (at the prevailing rate, currently 0.5%) plus 1%, subject to rounding, or in line with statutory or service requirements. Schedules of fees and charges will be reported separately, as usual, under Delegated Powers. New charges or charges that have been included above the

general increase are shown in Appendix D. A number of new charges are proposed as a consequence of the public consultation exercise.

Table 9 of the report then gave details of the 2015-16 Budget by Corporate Improvement Priority made up of Corporate Improvement Priorities and the Council's statutory obligations ie Core Business. This protocol together with the full details of the earmarked reserves could be found in Appendix G to the report. A summary of the General Fund and Usable Earmarked Reserves were shown in paragraph 4.38 of the report, while paragraph 4.39 outlined information in respect of the proposed Capital Programme for 2015-16 to 2024-25. The Capital Programme was shown in Appendix H to the report, while Table 10 reflected the Capital Programme by Improvement Priority.

The Section 151 Officer then shared with Members information on raising aspirations and improving educational achievement. This was an ambitious programme and it was essential that the planned capital receipts already committed and ring fenced from the sale of school sites to finance the programme are retained for this purpose.

Paragraph 4.44 of the report highlighted the projects that have been included in the Council's approved programme, but funding for each of these would not be confirmed until Welsh Government approved the final business case and sufficient capital receipts had been generated.

The Section 151 Officer then outlined details regarding the additional Capital funding that had been made available for the depot rationalisation project associated with the Parc Afon Ewenni programme, and the options that had been considered in terms of moving the depot from Waterton, near Bridgend.

She then referred to Capital Minor Works, and that the allocation for these proposed in 2015-16 remained at £1.1m. However, it was proposed to top slice the revenue budget by £50,000 in 2015-16, as in 2014-15, to fund prudential borrowing to the value of £500k to enable the Council to progress major packages of repair.

Table 11 of the report then outlined Current Fixed Annual Allocations of Capital Funding. Against the background of the reductions in capital funding, these annual allocations have been reviewed and those that were proposed for the 2015-16 Capital Programme were shown in paragraph 4.49 of the report.

The Section 151 Officer then advised of the Capital Financing Strategy which was underpinned by the Council's Treasury Management Strategy

She then explained that the Council estimates that around £19 million of capital receipts could be generated over the next three years, of which £6 million is expected to be realised in 2015-16. Of the £19 million, £9.5 million relates to school buildings vacated through the 21st Century Schools Programme, to be used as match funding for the programme. It also includes receipts anticipated from Glanogwr offices, industrial units, and the Waterton site along with the sale of other surplus sites within the County Borough. Receipts are subject to the exchange of contracts, so it is prudent not to commit them until we have a contractual agreement. However, the capital programme does assume £11 million of anticipated capital receipts from the sale of school sites as this was a Welsh Government requirement as part of the match funding for the 21st Century Schools Programme. Confirmation of these receipts will be required before contracts can be awarded for these projects.

The Section 151 Officer confirmed that Prudential Borrowing totalling £34.6 million was approved by Council on 27 February 2014. It was proposed that this borrowing be increased by a further £0.5 million to allow for additional capital minor works. In addition, the Welsh Government will be making funding available to meet the cost of the Council borrowing an additional £3.6 million in 2015-16 and 2016-17 towards the costs of the 21st

Century Schools Programme under the Local Government Borrowing Initiative. This will take the overall level of approved Prudential / Unsupported Borrowing to a minimum of £41.5 million by the end of 2016-17. This does not include the £2.5 million loan, from the Welsh Government Central Capital Retained Fund, to develop sites in the Llynfi Valley.

She then explained about the Council's Treasury Management Strategy 2015-16, and this was attached at Appendix K to the report. The indicators either summarised the expected activity or introduce limits upon the activity, reflect the underlying capital programme and provide assurance that capital investment decisions are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

In respect of paragraph 6 of the report, headed Equality Impact Assessment, the Section 151 Officer stated that a high level equality impact assessment (EIA) has been undertaken on the Council's budget proposals and updated MTFs (see Appendix J of the report). EIAs have been completed for individual 2015-16 proposed budget reduction proposals which may impact on certain groups of citizens within the County Borough.

The Section 151 Officer culminated her submission by confirming the financial implications of the report. The Council's Chief Financial Officer is required to report annually on the robustness of the level of reserves. The level of Council reserves is sufficient to protect the Council in light of unknown demands or emergencies and current funding levels. It must be emphasised that the biggest financial risks the Council is exposed to at the present time relate to realising unplanned budget reduction proposals in future years and the unknown impact of national legislative changes, further collaborations and local government re-organisation. Therefore, it is imperative that the council fund balance is kept at the current level over the term of the MTFs and essential that revenue service expenditure and capital expenditure is contained within the identified budgets.

The Chief Financial Officer is also required to report to Council if he/she does not believe that he/she has sufficient resource to discharge his/her role as required by Section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988. Members should note that there is sufficient resource to discharge this role.

The budget includes estimates which take into account circumstances and events which exist or are reasonably foreseeable at the time of preparing the budget. The budget has been prepared following consultation with Members, the School Budget Forum and service managers. Subject to the risks identified in the body of the report the MTFs provides a firm basis for managing the Council's resources for the year 2015-16 and beyond.

The Cabinet Member – Resources advised that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges over the next four years. He said that we were not alone in this, as Councils across Wales were having to make difficult decisions as a result of cuts imposed by the UK Government. For Bridgend this meant that for 2015-16 the Authority had to find savings of £11.225 million and increase council tax by 4.8% to deliver a balanced revenue budget. Over the four year period 2015 to 2019, it is estimated that savings of £49 million will be needed.

He stressed that the Authority had undertaken an extensive public consultation on the budget, and the budget reduction proposals presented in the MTFs were in line with the responses that the Council received. We had tried to limit the impact of budget reductions on our citizens by developing rigorously pursuing efficiency measures, but the level of cuts are such that there will be an impact on the level and range of services the Council could provide in the next period.

The MTFs also included a Corporate Risk Assessment, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy, all of which have been developed in line with BCBC's corporate improvement priorities and the principles that govern its MTFs.

A Member made the point that Council were being asked to approve this year's MTFS on what had been agreed up to the present time in accordance with Table 7 contained within the report. However, she asked if there were overspends or underspends in what has been agreed in relation to the allocation of budgets to each Directorate at the year end, how would this be managed. For example, would this require a further report being submitted to Council to amend proposals previously agreed upon.

The Section 151 Officer advised that any such adjustments would be accounted for in the year-end Financial Outturn and the Financial Statement of the Authority which would firstly be considered by the Audit Committee and then referred on to Council for information.

A Member referred to page 82 of Appendix C to the report and Schools SCH2 and a proposed reduction in Schools budget for 2016-17 amounting to £750k. She asked what this was in respect of.

The Group Manager – Business Strategy and Performance advised that this was anticipated in respect of a budget reduction for Nursery provision.

Members then voted whether or not to conduct a recorded vote on the proposals contained within the report's recommendations and this was agreed by way of an electronic vote.

A recorded vote was then undertaken, the result of which was as follows:-

<u>For</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Did not vote</u>
C J James	G Davies	G Thomas
R D Jenkins	E Venables	B Jones
M Thomas	D M Hughes	
D K Edwards	N Clarke	2
R E Young	C A Green	
H M Williams	K Watts	
R C Jones		
R Williams	6	
J R McCarthy		
D B F White		
C E Rees		
R M James		
M Winter		
D G Owen		
D R Pugh		
D R W Lewis		
J E Lewis		
P James		
E M Hughes		
G Phillips		
G W Davies MBE		
P John		
H E Morgan		
P A Davies		
E P Foley		
E M Dodd		
M W Butcher		
M Jones		
C Westwood		
M Reeves		
R Thomas		
C Reeves		
J C Spanswick		

C L Jones
H J Townsend
J H Tildesley MBE
P J White
H J David
M E J Nott OBE
M Gregory
C E Smith
L C Morgan

42

RESOLVED: That Council approved the MTFS 2015-16 to 2018-19, including the 2015-16 Revenue Budget, the Capital Programme 2015-16 to 2024-25 and the Treasury Management Strategy 2015-16, and in particular, it approved the following specific elements:

- The MTFS 2015-16 to 2018-19
- The Net Budget Requirement of £252,201,218 in 2015-16.
- A Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1249.07 for 2015-16.
- The 2015-16 budgets as allocated in accordance with Table 7 in paragraph 4.25.
- The Capital Programme 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Appendix H).
- The Treasury Management Strategy 2015-16 and Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2015-16 to 2018-19 (Appendix K).

457 2015-16 COUNCIL TAX

The Head of Finance and ICT presented a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Council with details of the Council Tax requirements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and Community/Town Councils.

He advised that the Table shown in Paragraph 4.1 gave details of the approved Budget for 2015-16 Budget, while paragraph 4.2 showed the average County Borough Council Tax, including for Council Tax Base Band D equivalents.

The Head of Finance and ICT, advised that the Police & Crime Commissioner for South Wales had notified the Council that their precept for the financial year ending 31 March 2016 will rise to £10,207,008 which equates to a Council Tax of £199.86 on a Band D property, a 5% increase. The 2015-16 precept was confirmed by the South Wales Police and Crime Panel on 30 January 2015.

He confirmed that the Council, as the billing Authority, was required to formally approve the Council Tax for its area. This required to be set to meet the net budget requirement of the Council and its precepting authorities and was set out in the Table in paragraph 4.4 of the report.

The Head of Finance and ICT added that the Council was also required to approve the following Council Tax charges for Band D properties for the chargeable financial year beginning 1 April for each of the community areas which were shown in the Table in paragraph 4.5 of the report. All calculations shown were for a Band D equivalent property.

The resulting charges for each Band were reproduced in Appendix A to the report.

RESOLVED:

That Council:

- i) Approved the Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,249.07 for 2015-16, and the Council Tax for the area outlined in Paragraph 4.4.
- ii) Approved the Council Tax charges for Band D properties for 2015-16 for each of the community areas as outlined in Paragraph 4.5.

The meeting closed at 3.15pm.