

**CABINET
DECISION RECORDING LOG**

DECISION DETERMINED ON: 8TH JANUARY 2014

DECISION WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON: 17TH JANUARY 2014
(Subject to "Call-in" by appropriate Select Committee)

SUBJECT: CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 MONTH 8 FORECAST OUTTURN STATEMENT

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: WHOLE AUTHORITY

PURPOSE:

To present the month 8 forecast capital outturn for 2013/14 compared to the total budget for the year. The report identifies and provides explanations for variances against budget and the funding implications of the forecast outturn position. The report also reports slippage anticipated to be carried forward into 2014/15.

DECISION:

1. That Members receive the information in this report regarding the month 8 forecast capital outturn position for 2013/14.
2. That Members note a forecast £246,000 unfinanced budget shortfall resulting from scheme over spends and acknowledge that any such unfinanced balance at year-end will need to be financed from the Authority's useable capital receipts balance.

REASONS:

1. The report and appendices were compiled following meetings with Capital Budget Holders and through monthly Directorate Capital Monitoring Group meetings.

2. Members are advised to take note of the information provided in the body of the report. Chief Officers are to continue in ensuring that capital budget holders provide reliable and timely forecasts and communicate forecast over and under spends at the earliest opportunity.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

As outlined in the body of the report and the adjoining appendices.

CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team, All Cabinet Members, Head of Legal Services, Head of Finance, Capital Working Group members.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

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DECISION DETERMINED ON: 8TH JANUARY 2014

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(Subject to "Call-in" by appropriate Select Committee)

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2014/15

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE:

To present arrangements for the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and to approve it for 2014/15.

DECISION:

1. To note the making of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") 2013 by the Welsh Government on 26 November 2013.
2. To recommend to full Council to adopt the provisions within the Regulations above in respect of its Scheme for the financial year 2014/15 as the Council's local scheme from 1st April 2014, with the following conditions regarding the discretionary elements being consistent with arrangements in 2013/14.
 - To apply a 100% disregard for war disablement pensions, war widows' pensions and war widowers' pensions, for both pensioners and working age claimants.

- Not to increase the extended reduction periods for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard 4 weeks in the Prescribed Scheme.
 - Not to increase the backdate period for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard 3 months contained within the Prescribed Scheme
 - To provide the minimum level of information to customers in order to ensure they are notified of their award in accordance with legislation
3. To note the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken by the Council on the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15

REASONS:

To recommend to Council the adoption of the provisions within the Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013 by the Welsh Government.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

1. The local government 2014/15 grant settlement from the Welsh Government states that the sum provided therein for Council Tax Reductions is at the same level as last year.
2. The Welsh Government's estimate of the whole cost of the scheme (at this time last year) was £244m. The Welsh Government's original intention was to finance 90% of the scheme; hence £222m was put into local government's 2013/14 grant 'settlement'. Later, a further £22m was paid via a specific grant, after the late change of mind to finance 100% in 2013/14.
3. The 2014/15 'settlement' included the commitment for local government to meet the full cost of the Council Tax Reduction scheme (which exceeds £244m)
4. The notional cost of the Council Tax Reduction scheme in Monmouthshire in 2014/15 (according to notional allocation of the total SSA between Services in the conditional settlement's tables) is £5.536m (a sum which corresponds with the national £244m). As well as Monmouthshire's share of the £22m (£549,000), the Council must meet the cost of growth in caseload or increases in entitlement attributable to an increase in the overall level of Council Tax. This has already been factored in to our budgetary calculations in 2014/15.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5. The Council is obliged to make a Council Tax Reduction Scheme under the Prescribed Requirements Regulations. Although the legislation provides for a default scheme to apply in the absence of the Council making a scheme, the Council is nevertheless under a statutory duty to adopt its own scheme, even if it chooses not to apply any of the discretionary elements.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

6. The Council needs to manage the cost of Council Tax Support within its budget. The amount of government support is limited to £5.536 million through the RSG and a share of £22 million provided as specific grant funding. Even though the funding has increased it is provided on a fixed basis rather than the demand-led basis of support to council tax benefit.

CONSULTEES:

Strategic Leadership Team, All Cabinet Members, Head of Legal.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

County Councillor R.G. Harris declared a personal interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as a member of the South East Wales Valuation Tribunal.

County Councillor R.J. Higginson declared a personal interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as a member of the South East Wales Valuation Tribunal.

AUTHOR:

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DECISION DETERMINED ON: 8TH JANUARY 2014

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SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF JAFF POSTS

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: COUNTYWIDE

PURPOSE:

To seek approval for the establishment of two posts – Joint Assessment Family Framework Coordinator and Business Support Officer – to ensure the successful development and delivery of the JAFF process in Monmouthshire.

DECISION:

To confirm the proposed establishment of two posts.

REASONS:

1. To ensure that the requirement on the local authority to have a JAFF process in place is met, that families are supported effectively and the process is further embedded ensuring it becomes self-sustaining following the anticipated end of guaranteed external funding via Families First in 2017.
2. A full time JAFF Coordinator is necessary to deal with the referrals and oversee the whole process as well as continuing to roll out what is still a relatively new way of working. The model has clear benefits for families in that it requires their involvement and consent in implementing a Team Around the Family. By having a lead worker appointed after a referral, it also mitigates the difficulties and frustrations families often face in repeating the same information and dealing with several professionals.

3. In view of the changing nature of the support required and the end goal of the process being self-sustaining by 2017, it is proposed that the Coordinator role is temporary for 18 months and then subject to review, the Business Support Officer is for a three year period. It is also proposed that the JAFF posts will sit alongside the management of the Families First Programme within the Partnership and Engagement Team.
4. Setting an exit strategy at this stage reinforces the need for the process to be embedded across agencies and sectors. It also removes the financial implication that would fall on Monmouthshire County Council following the anticipated end of guaranteed external funding via Families First in 2017.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

1. The resource implications relate to salaries and funding has been secured via the local authority's award of Families First funding from Welsh Government. The JAFF Coordinator role will have the salary range of SCP 41-44 and the Business Support Officer SCP 17-21.
2. The Families First Programme is scheduled to run until March 2017 but along with all Welsh Government Funding in the current climate it is not possible to guarantee the levelling remains at its predicted level. However, it remains the Welsh Government's key intervention for addressing Child Poverty and its consequences and the JAF and TAF are central to our response.

CONSULTEES:

Employee Services, CE Finance section, SLT, Cabinet, Social Services Management Team, Children and Young People Management Team.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hacket Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

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DECISION DETERMINED ON: 8TH JANUARY 2014

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SUBJECT: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOLS

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE:

To introduce a revised Complaints Procedure for Schools.

The procedure presented is based on new guidance and a model complaints procedure provided by Welsh Government, and consequently should be read in conjunction with the document *Complaints procedures for school governing bodies in Wales (Circular 011/2012)*. The model complaints procedure was written by a working party consisting of Governors Wales, local authorities, the Children's Commissioner for Wales and the Welsh Government.

DECISION:

That the revised Complaints Procedure for Schools be accepted and commended to governing bodies for adoption as soon as possible.

REASONS:

All schools are committed to dealing effectively with complaints and the aim is to learn from mistakes and use that experience to make improvements.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None.

CONSULTEES:

JAG

All recognised trade unions

Head teachers

Education Achievement Service (EAS)

ADEW Governor Support Group

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

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SUBJECT: WHOLE AUTHORITY STRATEGIC RISK ASSESSMENT 2013/16

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE:

To present the whole authority strategic risk assessment 2013/16 to Cabinet for approval.

DECISION:

Having satisfied themselves that:

- No additional risks facing the authority need to be identified
- No risks should be removed
- The descriptions of the risks logged accurately reflect the issues
- The evidence and rationale used to score the risks and the actual scores are robust
- Actions identified for managing the risks are adequate and appropriate (SMART)
- Accountability for the risks across chief officers and Cabinet member responsibilities has been allocated responsibly

To approve the whole authority strategic risk assessment for 2013/16 as a realistic assessment of the strategic risks facing the authority over the next three years.

REASONS:

To ensure that:

1. Strategic risks are identified and assessed robustly by the authority and that risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate and supported by effective operational activity to ensure risk reduction / risk management.
2. Responsibility for strategic risk management is taken on board and that:
 - Senior managers are accountable for systematically reviewing and addressing strategic risks facing the authority
 - Cabinet as the executive takes responsibility to oversee the risk management function and ensure that decision making takes all identified risks into account
 - Audit Committee takes responsibility to scrutinise that a risk management culture and effective risk management arrangements are applied across the authority
 - Select Committees challenge officers and members responsible for the risks as an intrinsic part of holding them to account for risk management / mitigation
3. An articulate and documented strategic risk management approach is implemented so that the council is not exposed to the potential of poor regulatory assessment. This also takes on board the related issues of:
 - protecting the council's assets, resources and staff
 - improving business planning and performance and informing calculated risks
 - avoiding unnecessary liabilities and costs
 - avoiding poor reputation and loss of confidence in the council

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no additional resource implications as a result of implementing the strategic risk management process. However, it is likely that resource implications are associated with some risks and in implementing actions to manage them.

CONSULTEES:

Consultations have been completed with:

Chief Officers / Department Management Teams
Senior Leadership Team
Head of Improvement
Head of Finance
Welsh Language & Equalities Officer
Select committees
Audit Committee

Views and challenges have been considered in developing the work.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

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SUBJECT: MODEL PAY POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE:

To introduce the revised Model Pay Policy for Schools.

This pay policy provides a framework for making decisions on teachers' pay. It has been developed to comply with current legislation and the requirements of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and has been consulted on with the recognised trade unions.

DECISION:

That the revised Model Pay Policy for Schools be accepted and commended to governing bodies for adoption as soon as possible.

REASONS:

The Model Pay Policy for schools has been developed on a collaborative basis, in consultation with four other local authorities in the SE Wales area, the Education Achievement Service, and all recognised Trade Union Regional Officers. The policy reflects and incorporates the significant changes to national legislative requirements.

The approval and adoption of this model policy seeks to assist the implementation of pay decisions for teachers for all schools in the SE Wales area, and seeks to ensure equity and fairness.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There is a potential for disparity between funding and meeting the costs of pay decisions taken by schools. There is a potential for budgetary forecasting implications.

CONSULTEES:

JAG

All recognised regional and local Trade Unions

Head teachers

Education Achievement Service (EAS)

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON WHOLE PLACE WORK IN BRYN Y CWM

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: ALL

PURPOSE:

To endorse the Whole Place Plan for Bryn y Cwm and the establishment of the necessary arrangements that will enable its implementation.

DECISION:

To approve the 'Better Bryn y Cwm' Plan and agree the establishment of a Partnership Programme Board to oversee the delivery of the programme of works.

REASONS:

1. The Whole Place approach is built upon the "Total Place" concept which seeks to position the community and its needs within the heart of all decision making. The concept is designed to capture public value and its contributors in a central place. Public value is defined as the value to the citizen being generated from every public service pound being spent.

2. The Bryn y Cwm plan is built on a series of consultations and its development has been overseen by Abergavenny Regeneration Task and Finish group set up as a sub-group of the Area Committee.
3. A Town Team is in the process of being established by members of Abergavenny Town Council, the Civic Society and the Business Club. A constitution is being established with support from Monmouthshire County Council.
4. As a result of the Bryn y Cwm work, an application has been made to Welsh Government for grant funding to assist in the development of a potential Business Improvement District within Abergavenny town centre. The application is a partnership between this Council and the Business Club. If the application is successful it will attract up to £20,000 of WAG funding with match funding of £5,000 being made by the Council and a further £5,000 from other partners.
5. The Regeneration Task and Finish group is currently working on terms of reference for the Programme Board. The current version is attached in Appendix 1, albeit that it should be noted that this will be subject to further change before being agreed.
6. It is intended that the Programme Board will be made up of representatives from the County, Town and Community Councils, Local groups e.g. the Civic Society, Business Club, CAIR and other public sector bodies that deliver services within the area.
7. The Programme Board will be responsible for monitoring the projects, their outputs and performance as contained within the Plan, identifying new areas of work as the Plan and the work evolves and for developing and maintaining communications with the Bryn y Cwm communities.
8. From the recent round of community engagement events and work ongoing in Social Care and Health to mobilise 'Local Area Co-ordination', there is a clear need and opportunity to facilitate higher levels of community-led delivery. Positioning local area delivery much more prominently in our arrangements for enabling service provision has to be a priority and with structural changes set to take place in the New Year, there is an opportunity to afford greater emphasis to whole place and further embed it as a way of working. Aligned to this, plans will be progressed in Lower Wye and Monmouth.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no resource implications directly associated with this report. Intrinsic in the development of the Councils whole place approach is the need to capture the finances being spent in the scope of the programme area and ensuring that it is leveraging additional funding to be being used in a way that most benefits and sustains local communities. Whilst the whole place process is not designed as a way of cutting services or budgets, it will enable us to evaluate the value of the current services to citizens and develop a model of local delivery based upon evidenced need. This provides a sound basis upon which to work with communities to make decisions about the future of their place.

CONSULTEES:

All Cabinet Members, Leadership Team, Head of Finance, Head of Innovation, Head of Legal Services, Monitoring Officer, Bryn y Cwm Local Members, Head of Economy & Enterprise.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

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DECISION DETERMINED ON: 8TH JANUARY 2014

DECISION WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON: 17TH JANUARY 2014
(Subject to "Call-in" by appropriate Select Committee)

SUBJECT: THE HILL, ABERGAVENNY

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: CANTREF

PURPOSE:

To set out the current position regarding the Hill, Abergavenny and local efforts to devise a community-led solution through which to sustain its future and contribute to the 'whole place' framework aimed at making a Better Bryn-y-Cwm.

DECISION:

To provide in principle backing by way of a letter of support for CASH (Community Action to Save the Hill), in order to enable the group to submit an Expression of Interest to site owners, Coleg Gwent, by 15 January 2014.

REASONS:

1. Further to the above, a special meeting of the Bryn-y-Cwm Area Committee was held on 11 December at the Abergavenny Town Council Chamber. The CASH team attended the meeting and presented their proposals which were met with full support from committee members present. Committee Members present unanimously agreed to recommend to Cabinet support for the proposals via a letter offering in principle support in the ways articulated in 3.5 above.

2. It is clear that community ownerships models which reduce reliance on discretionary public services must be found and supported if we are to unlock new ways of working and develop bespoke self-supported local provision. At this stage, the risks associated with providing in principle and indirect support for an Expression of Interest, are negligible.
3. The Hill is a very visible and symbolic asset and is regarded in the town with much affection and value. It is important that the Council seeks to work with community in ways which enable them to invest in building their own resilience.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no resource implications associated with the report at this stage.

CONSULTEES:

All Cabinet Members, Leadership Team, Head of Finance, Head of Innovation, Bryn-y-Cwm Local Members, Cath Fallon CMC2, CASH.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

Kellie Beirne, Chief Officer Regeneration and Culture on behalf of Bryn-y-Cwm Area Committee

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DECISION WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON: 17TH JANUARY 2014
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**SUBJECT: HOUSING AND REGENERATION MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN
PROJECT MANDATE – INTEGRATED APPROACH TO HOUSING OPTIONS**

DIVISION//WARD AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

PURPOSE:

To approve a proposal to develop an integrated approach to Housing Options delivery with Torfaen County Borough Council. Approval is specifically sought to establish a transitional arrangement for joint delivery under a Memorandum of Understanding and to commence the development of a business plan to introduce a new joint Housing Options Service during 2015.

DECISION:

That the following proposals are approved to:

- Combine the Council's Housing Options (homeless) services with Torfaen County Borough Council's homeless service as per Appendix 1 of the report.
- Deliver a joint approach through a Memorandum of Understanding with effect from 1st July 2014 as a transitional arrangement;
- Whilst delivering under a Memorandum of Understanding, develop a business plan for the introduction of a new joint Housing Options Service;
- Receive a report in the New Year to approve the aforementioned Memorandum of Understanding.

REASONS:

The project supports the Medium Term Financial Plan and helps to prepare for the impending duty to prevent homelessness from April 2015, arising from the recent Housing Bill. It also helps to mitigate against the risks of Welfare Reform.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The project will save £55,000 over the forthcoming 3 years.

CONSULTEES:

Cabinet; Senior Leadership Team; Housing Management Team; Programme and Employee Services Lead; Unison; Head of Housing – Torfaen County Borough Council.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

G.C. Burrows, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, E.J. Hackett Pain, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.B. Jones.

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, R.G. Harris, R.J. Higginson, S.G.M. Howarth, J.L. Prosser.

INTEREST DECLARED:

Nil.

AUTHOR:

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