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Our ref / Ein cyf:
Your ref / Eich cyf:

Date / Dyddiad: 11 February 2015

Dear Councillor,

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Tuesday, 17 February 2015** at **2.00pm**.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence (to include reasons, where appropriate) from Members/Officers.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 01 September 2008. (Including whipping declarations)
3. Minutes of Previous Meetings 3 - 26
To receive for approval the minutes of meetings of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 25th November and 17th December 2014 and the 6th January 2015.
4. Learner Travel Policy 27 - 90
Invitees:

Deborah McMillan - Corporate Director – Education & Transformation
Councillor Huw David - Cabinet Member - Children & Young People
Nicola Echanis - Head of Strategy Commissioning & Partnerships
Robin Davies - Group Manager Business Strategy & Performance
Kevin Mulcahy - Group Manager Transport
Michele Hatcher - Group Manager Inclusion

5. Forward Work Programme Update

91 - 94

6. Urgent Items

To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Yours faithfully

P A Jolley

Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services

Distribution:

Councillors:

PA Davies
DK Edwards
EP Foley
CA Green
DM Hughes

Councillors

PN John
M Jones
DG Owen
G Phillips
RL Thomas

Councillors

HJ Townsend
C Westwood
DBF White
RE Young

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON TUESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 2.00PM

Present:

Councillor E P Foley – Chairperson

D K Edwards
C A Green

M Jones
G Phillips

H J Townsend
C Westwood
R E Young

Registered Representatives & Co-opted Members:

Mr W Bond (Special School Parent Governor)
Mr R Thomas (Primary School Parent Governor)
Mr I Davies (ATL)

Officers:

R Keepins - Scrutiny Officer
J Monks - Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Invitees:

Councillor H J David - Cabinet Member - Children and Young People
D McMillan - Corporate Director – Children
C Turner - Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
N Echanis - Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships
N Sutton - Principal Officer Business & Management Support
T Haddon - Flying Start Manager

140 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following Members:

Councillor P A Davies - Unwell
Councillor P N John - Unwell
Councillor R L Thomas - Work Commitments
Councillor D B F White - Work Commitments
Mr T Cahalane - Work Commitments
Reverend Cannon E J Evans - Work Commitments
Mr K Pascoe - Work Commitments

141 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

142 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of meetings of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 2nd September and 13th October 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

The Scrutiny Officer drew Members' attention to the first bullet point of the recommendations in the 13th October 2014 minutes, in relation to lobbying the Welsh Government regarding salary scales and conditions for Social Workers. She informed the Committee that the report had not

yet been presented to Cabinet due to legal issues, as more evidence was required in order to clarify the information currently being received which had indicated that it was not a pay issue.

144 CHILDREN'S DIRECTORATE CHANGE PROGRAMME

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support presented a report to update the Committee on the Directorate's Change Programme and the fundamental changes being made to the structure this year, to ensure that the service could fully support a whole system approach for the delivery of the Children's Services, working alongside integrated partners across the public, voluntary and private sectors, including health and education.

He informed Members that 18 months ago there were around eight or nine programmes across the Children's Directorate, bringing together professionals to deliver those services within the community with a more holistic approach by exploring different ways to work more effectively with families that have the most chronic and complex difficulties, and who draw on a wide range of services. The vast majority of those services are now being relocated through the establishment of multi-agency community hubs, located in school cluster areas, in order to provide early intervention for those families at risk or in need of help. Clients will then only need to access one point of contact to obtain help instead of several, and would each be allocated a lead professional who would stay with them throughout the whole process. Connecting Families were

He pointed out that there were significant corporate changes impacting on how the services are delivered, moving dramatically to agile working by using technology, enabling Social Workers and health visitors to minimise the amount of paperwork, thus allowing them more time with families and children. He described how the change champions played an important role within the Change Programme through mingling and eliciting innovative ideas to become more efficient, and the Children's Change Project Board met once a month to monitor progress, as well as those areas which were not working so well.

The Chairperson asked whether the public were aware of these changes and if they had started to use the hubs.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support informed the Committee that there would be a total of three hubs; the first to the west of the Borough is situated at Pyle Life Centre and another is based at Coleg y Dderwen to the north of the Borough. The whole of the Safeguarding and Family Support Team have been moved from Civic Offices and co-located to the hubs as well as library support, health and midwives, and reviews are now taking place at those hubs. He explained that the first communication was to let residents know of these hubs, and clients already receiving services would have been notified in writing, and visited by their Social Workers. He reported that Social Workers and Family Support Officers had moved from the offices at Sunnyside to the Civic Offices and it was anticipated that other agencies, such as health and midwifery, as well as aspects of the Youth Service, would also be co-locating there. He informed the Committee that he was not aware of any negative feedback as a result of these moves.

In response to a question from Members, the Head of Safeguarding and Family Support reported that every Social Worker within the whole of the Directorate had been issued with a laptop with Wi-Fi connection, which allowed them to work from any Council building. Also, Digi pens were due to be piloted. He advised that the Digi pens were something he was excited about and once they had been tested, he would demonstrate them to the Committee. The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships explained that Digi pens would allow information to be recorded and downloaded from any docking station saving the Social Workers a substantial number of hours.

Members asked for some examples of the Directorate working with other organisations to achieve outcomes.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support explained that predominantly the Directorate was working with health and social care to improve synergy. They had recently discussed a better way of tackling child sexual exploitation in light of the recent case in Rotherham, which was motivating debates on better information and intelligence sharing. He advised that children's safeguarding planning or review meetings were supported by inter-agencies including GPs, health, Police, education and teachers. Plans are formulated at an operational level and from a strategic level, with the Directors influencing such change. He reported that there were some concerns regarding interfacing with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) and the ABMU Planning Group would be re-commissioning CAHMS over the next 18 months. He confirmed that he was not aware of any issues from members of the public or staff as a result of the move from Sunnyside to Civic Offices and invited Members to visit the new venues.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People reported that he had visited the Pyle Life Centre after the relocation and had taken the opportunity to speak with staff. He advised that the general opinion amongst them was that they were delighted with their new location. Also, feedback from staff relocated to Coleg y Dderwen and Civic Offices was also positive. The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships added that although some staff were not yet used to agile working, they understood the need for this move. The Flying Start Manager advised that her team had also been relocated and one of the reasons she had nominated herself as a Change Champion was to bring positivity to working within the community.

The Chairperson asked whether there was reasonable confidence that these programmes would be funded in the future. The Flying Start Manager advised that funding was secure up to the general election, with capital expenditure being allocated for 2015/16.

The Committee asked whether they were actively promoting and training volunteers.

The Head of Strategy Commissioning and Partnerships explained that this was most relevant to the Youth Service, as over the last few years the Council had taken on a number of tasks which previously would have been carried out by the third sector. She advised that it was essential to develop support from voluntary organisations in the future and a number of restructures were being undertaken as part of the Change Programme to strengthen the role of volunteers. She could not confirm however whether or not the Council would be training volunteers, as such organisations usually preferred to carry out their own training.

One Member referred to a recent local review he had attended on domestic homicide, where a child protection issue was raised, and asked whether the Council was engaged in addressing such issues. He further asked whether annual or bi-annual performance management had been put in place in each of the hubs.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support reported that he had chaired one of two reviews on domestic abuse and was fully engaged in the process of both. With regard to performance management, he advised that the hubs were monitored by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) who would be reviewing the fostering service in the next few weeks. Also an internal quality assurance process was in place, and completed assessments by Social Workers were not signed off until they were verified by a Manager. Furthermore, at the conclusion of every piece of work involving a child, feedback is obtained from the families; although some of them did not want social services involved, many were grateful for the support they had received.

The Flying Start Manager reported that she had attended a partnership event involving domestic abuse issues and advised that relationships with partners were strong and growing. The Flying Start team had taken on board the subject of domestic homicide, resulting in enhanced training

across a wide range of professionals who worked alongside all victims of domestic abuse. She explained that the team were not domestic abuse workers, but did have some understanding and would signpost victims to the right support.

Conclusions:

Following their discussions with Officers, members agreed the following conclusions:

- That following the pilot of Digipens for social workers undertaking home visits, the use of Digipens be expanded for application in other areas such as minutes for LAC Reviews in order to ensure that the minutes are produced in a timely manner.
- Members expressed concerns that whilst everything was reported to be fine and all staff within the children's directorate happy with the restructure and relocation, there was obviously further reorganisation and restructure ahead. The Committee therefore requested that they revisit this next year under the subject of Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers to review the situation and examine any issues impacting upon social workers.
- Members commented on the large number of Change Projects that formed the Change Programme and questioned whether having 49 projects was realistic in terms of their deliverability.

145 WESTERN BAY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support presented a report to provide the Committee with information regarding the Western Bay Safeguarding Children Annual Report and Business Plan, published on the 31st July 2014. The report also provided information on the governance arrangements which had been put in place to ensure the effectiveness of the Board's activity.

He advised that there was so much change happening in local government at the moment and reported that he had recently observed a debate on local authority mergers. Three years ago there had been debates regarding the move towards collaboration with Western Bay by the Deputy Minister who had expressed that she wanted services co-located within the health board. This resulted in some early projects and programmes being identified in Wales, and there were two fundamental directions which would lead to change. The first was a directive by the Welsh Government to establish a regional adoption service, due to become operational in 2015, as children waited too long to be adopted. Also the Welsh Government had directed that the current 22 Regional Boards would need to be reduced to eight or nine Regional Safeguarding Children's Boards, and the Corporate Director – Children at the time had recommended that Bridgend should steer this directive to comply with legislation, rather than being told what to do. To that effect a development group was set up with Directors, which included Social Services and Education; from that group a Regional Safeguarding Board was established which was now in its second year.

The Chairperson asked whether access to Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) was still available on the website, which had been mentioned in the report.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support explained that people would be redirected to a new site via the BCBC website. However, there was a question over how long SCRs should remain available due to their personal and sensitive nature, and although identifiable information was redacted, the people concerned knew which report related to them, which he advised could be disabling. He stated that it was important to disseminate and develop learning in order to influence change.

A Member referred to the strategic priority on child sexual exploitation (CSE), listed on page 52 of the report, and asked whether there was any strategic information to tackle the issue along with partner agencies.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support explained that when local authorities combine, statistics on similar issues are inevitably compared, and it was found that CSEs were no more a problem in Bridgend than anywhere else, as investigation on cases in Rotherham showed that offenders were transient and used interactive technology. He was very concerned at the low number of offenders who were actually prosecuted, with only one successful prosecution in Bridgend over the last five years. This was being addressed with Police colleagues and had led to a Strategic Group being formed to further consider these issues. He informed Members that Western Bay had written to the Police Crime Commissioner, who had taken a personal interest and provided resources. The Commissioner had indicated his commitment to the Joint Strategic Groups that were being set up, and had been challenging his own Police Officers on the low number of prosecutions. The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships advised that the Chair of Western Bay had encouraged partner organisations to feed in any information on CSEs and their approach to it. Also schools were considering whether the programme could be rolled out, as it was particularly effective in raising awareness.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People reported that he had requested a pre-Council briefing on CSE for all elected Members. He explained that although 36 Joint Strategic Groups had been set up, that did not mean there were 36 children being exploited; however it did demonstrate that all allegations were taken seriously and investigated, which would be explained in detail at the briefing.

The Committee questioned the lack of scrutiny in the Western Bay Health and Social Care Programme and asked whether any progress was being made in developing strategic issues, whilst at the time ensuring local services were being maintained.

The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships explained that scrutiny was a big agenda item in Western Bay and there was a critical issue in how to resolve it as they did not want to lose the local scrutiny. Also, they did not want to increase the staff's workload. She advised that the Youth Offending Service and the Integrated Family Support Service duplicated reports and she was uncertain whether that could be improved on.

One Member pointed out that the original plan for Bridgend to have a joint scrutiny arrangement with Merthyr, Rhondda Cynon Taff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff, with two elected Members from each of those local authorities and suggested this format could be used in Western Bay.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that there was no mandate for inspecting the consortium. However, the Wales Audit Office was currently carrying out a thematic review to look at value for money and would report back to the Welsh Government (WG) and Estyn. Western Bay was lobbying WG for a joint scrutiny, as the current arrangement requires the Managing Director of Western Bay to attend five different Scrutiny Committees which was not considered value for money.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People advised that the Cabinet Member for Education in the Vale of Glamorgan Council had expressed that he would be happy to visit other Scrutiny Committees along with the Managing Director; which Cardiff Council had already agreed to. He suggested that if the Committee were in agreement, they could also take him up on his offer.

The Scrutiny Officer informed Members that a number of members from the consortium would be attending the January meeting of the Committee and suggested extending an invitation to the Cabinet Member for Education.

Conclusions:

1. Members requested that feedback be taken to the Board to ask that a RAG (Traffic light – Red Amber Green) status be attached to the WBSCB Business Action Plan to indicate whether actions had been completed, were on track or at risk.
2. Members commented on the 36 cases in the past six months of interagency strategy discussions over a child at risk of Sexual Exploitation. Members agreed that this demonstrated vigilance by the Local Authority but were concerned over the lack of prosecutions and what the police were doing to protect children from sexual exploitation. The Committee asked that Cllr Martyn Jones undertake further work to determine the possible reasons for the lack of prosecutions and report back to the Committee for further consideration.
3. Members expressed concerns over the lack of a formal Scrutiny process for the Regional Safeguarding Children's Board. Whilst at a strategic level each local authority could receive the annual report, Members expressed concern over the lack of local level information. Given the fact that the work of the SCB involves children of Bridgend, and significant investment from BCBC, Members believe that some process needs to be determined to ensure that there is suitable accountability with the involvement of Scrutiny.
4. Similarly, Members also expressed concern over the WBSCB's inconsistency of reporting to each Local Authority's Service Board, as referred to in the WBSCB Annual Report. The Committee further commented on the invisibility of Bridgend's own Local Service Board. Members therefore agreed that their concerns needed to be forwarded to our own LSB Scrutiny Panel and that the Panel be asked to explore the reporting inconsistencies further with Bridgend's LSB to ensure that there was suitable governance being carried out of the WBSCB.

146 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report outlining the items due to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee on the 17th December 2014 and further sought confirmation of the invitees to attend the subsequent scheduled meeting to be held on the 6th January 2015.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted the topics due to be considered at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for the 17th December 2014. The Committee also acknowledged the invitees to attend the subsequent meeting on the 6th January 2015 and requested that the Attendance Strategy be included on the agenda for that meeting.

Members proposed the following subjects for scoping and possible addition to the Committee's Annual Forward Work Programme:

- Equalities in Schools
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Teenage Pregnancies

The meeting closed at 4:00pm.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON WEDNESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2014 AT 2.00 PM

Present:

Councillor EP Foley - Chairperson

DK Edwards	CA Green	M Jones	RL Thomas
C Westwood	DBF White	RE Young	

Registered Representatives & Co-opted Members:

Mr R Thomas (Primary School Parent Governor)
Mr T Cahalane (Roman Catholic Church)
Reverend Canon E J Evans (Church in Wales)

Officers:

R Keepins	-	Scrutiny Officer
J Monks	-	Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Invitees:

Councillor H J David	-	Cabinet Member - Children and Young People
D McMillan	-	Corporate Director - Children
C Turner	-	Head of Safeguarding and Family Support
N Echanis	-	Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships
A Norman	-	Finance Manager – Children’s Services
H Castle	-	School Budget Forum Representative

147 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:

Councillor P A Davies	-	Unwell
Councillor D M Hughes	-	Work Commitments
Councillor P N John	-	Personal
Councillor G Phillips	-	Unwell
Mr W Bond	-	Unwell

148 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor White declared a personal interest under Item 3 regarding Western Bay, as he is employed by Swansea Council and also his cousin’s wife works for the Music Service.

149 DRAFT BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report the purpose of which was to provide Members with a copy of the draft Cabinet Budget proposals for 2015-16, together with the background information as to the consultative role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the work of the Standing Budget Research and Evaluation Panel in respect of the budget setting process. The report also informed Members of the results of the public consultation process in relation to the draft budget proposals.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed to the meeting the Headteacher of Cynffig Comprehensive School, representing the School Budget Forum.

Discussion ensued and the Committee questioned the fact that the impact column contained no element of analysis as to what the impact was likely to be as a result of the proposed budget saving.

The Corporate Director – Children reassured Members that each project contained a proposal plan which detailed how the savings would be undertaken, together with a full risk assessment, and this was overseen by the Children’s Change Programme Board, chaired by the Corporate Director- Children, and this fed into PMB chaired by the Chief Executive.

The Committee asked whether there would be any manpower implications as a result of savings being made to nursery provision.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People advised that no decision had been made regarding moving nursery provision from full time to part time as this was still under consideration.

The Committee commented that this seemed to be a reversal of a decision previously made by the Cabinet, which had appeared at the time to be a reasonable compromise, and asked why it had changed.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People explained that there were a number of proposals put forward for the MTFs for 2017/18 and this particular issue would need to be revisited by Cabinet, as well as undertaking a consultation process before any final decision was made.

The Committee asked for an update on the Placement and Permanence Strategy.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that the entire transformation of the Children’s Service focussed on meeting the needs of the children and young people early, and therefore the Early Intervention Strategy, together with the Placement and Permanence Strategy allows those needs to be met, with more concentration on early action. She explained that this was part of the process for reducing the number of Looked After Children (LAC) through early intervention before those children reached the stage of entering the system.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support advised that it was a constant challenge as there would always be some children who would need safety and protection. He reported that during the last six weeks, 18 children had acquired permanent placements, and as there were a significant number of babies coming into the system it was important to act swiftly on many occasions. This financial year a record number of 23 children had been placed for adoption and by the end of the financial year they would have exceeded their target by eight children, with the average cost of an adoption placement amounting to £27k. He explained that it was not always in a child’s best interest to be placed within the Borough, and on those occasions such placements are sold onto an alternative local authority. He advised that the Adoption Service was moving towards a regional rather than national service with the Authority linking with Neath Port Talbot (NPT) Council, which was due to go live in 2015. This move would give more focus on being able to increase the number of adopters with the opportunity to then place children in NPT locations. In terms of monitoring and measuring, he reported that ambitious targets were set in January 2014 with a total of 418 LAC and by the end of November; the number had decreased to 390. Unfortunately, eight children (not from the same family) were recently brought into care for significant safety reasons. He described how as part of the Placement and Permanence

Strategy, there is a programme known as “Edge of Care” which attempts to rehabilitate children.

The Committee referred to the retendering of learner transport and asked if there was a structure in place to guarantee the safety of children.

The Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Commissioning advised that the department worked closely with Officers in the Transport Department to ensure the service is cost effective and safe for children. There had been some problems with certain contractors in the past, but there was now a more robust process in place to provide the best value for money, and any reported incidents or complaints would be fully investigated.

The Committee were concerned that Officers had not been able to explain the reported savings and asked what the likely consequences would be if those savings were not met.

The Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Commissioning advised that some figures had been difficult to arrive at as they had relied on Officers in the Transport Department for that information, and as there were no reliable historical figures available, they had to a certain degree based estimates against those figures.

The Committee questioned the estimated £500k in possible income regarding home to school transport.

The Corporate Director – Children explained that they were RAG status proposals, which means there were a number of reasons for the estimates. Cabinet would ultimately make the decision and her advice would be based on the results of the public consultation. She added that if these proposals were not accepted, savings would have to be found elsewhere. The Committee suggested that the figures had been based on the fact that there were 2,004 pupils who would not require transport and at least one of those figures was a cause for concern as they had been based on a school within the Borough which did not have any children dependent on school transport. One Member believed that the budget proposals were based on estimated figures rather than factual, which caused extreme concern.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that the estimate was based on the figures available at the start of consultation. She explained that in terms of RAG status proposals if Cabinet decided not to make any changes, then the projected proposals for 2016/17 would be brought forward and alternatives would need to be found for future years.

The Committee referred to the managed service reduction of the Youth Offending Service Collaboration and asked for feedback on what the impact of that might be and which neighbouring local authorities were participating in the collaboration. Members were also concerned at the reduction in the Youth Service provision across the Borough.

The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships informed Members that the Authority was collaborating with Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils and the predicted savings were based on that collaboration. Unfortunately, she advised that the numbers in the Youth Service had dropped significantly, part of which was around Statutory and Wellbeing Rehabilitation Orders and more focus had been placed on preventative services instead in order to obtain best value. The savings were based on how to share resources and work more efficiently. Grant funding mainly came from Families First rather than one-off grants from the Big Lottery, as well as Communities First and grants from the Welsh Government.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People advised that the Youth Offending Service is managed through a joint Management Board, involving all relevant agencies, with the Board forming part of the decision-making budget process.

One Member commented that the Review of the Education and Welfare Service plays a massive role in improving school attendance levels and meetings were held last week with parents and an Education and Welfare Officer. His concern was that by cutting the service at the same time as the proposals to cut home to school transport it would have a knock on effect, with parents having to choose between paying for their children to attend school, or other priorities.

The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships provided some assurance that the cuts will be less than originally predicted and consideration was being given to the role of the Education and Welfare Officers. She advised that the newly formed hubs would help provide further support to families.

A Member was concerned at the proposal to cut support for the Music Service and asked whether this would in future form part of the school budgets which were already under pressure. He believed that this move would mean taking away money from teaching resources and the education of the children, and the biggest impact would be with the smaller primary schools.

The Corporate Director – Children informed Members that the £40k savings would come from management of the service within the Directorate, and the project group had been working with Officers with regard to the County Music Service to consider ways to make it self-sufficient. There was a range of options which could result in a full cost recovery, and one option is to move the Service into a Trust to enable it to attract grant funding. Earlier in the report the decision was made to overwrite the previous decision to top slice school budgets to part fund nursery education being cognisant of the pressure on schools from both the Authority and the Welsh Government which was the reason for trying to find alternative funding to mitigate those pressures.

The Headteacher Cynffig Comprehensive School informed the Committee that Headteachers had welcomed that decision, although it was recognised that schools were facing serious budget pressures which she believed was being compounded by schools having to pay out of their budgets for such things as copy write licenses, transport and carbon reduction, which caused concern. It was hoped those costs could be minimised in order to safeguard the standards schools are required to deliver. She reported that the Estyn inspection at her school had been successful; however given the budget pressures those standards would be difficult to maintain.

One Member asked what the reaction was from Headteachers regarding the fact that schools would be required to pay for part of the Educational Psychology Service in the future.

The Headteacher advised that there was already a process in place where schools were entitled to the provision and it was a concern for Headteachers and she hoped it did not reach the stage where a school was unable to afford to pay for that profession.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that in the past the Service had offered the very best and had raised the bar in terms of expectations. The Authority is obliged to provide statutory services and work was being undertaken in the Directorate to understand the core service to meet children's needs and to work around managing demand to ensure a positive outcome for children. Consideration was also being given as to where demand could be diverted to another part of the service, as well as the services within the third sector. She advised that the EPS trading arm was initiated as a way of generating funds to

maintain the service and not have to reduce it. She reported that £20k to £25k a year would be generated from those wishing to buy in extra services. Core statutory services are not part of the EPS trading arm – these services will continue to be delivered to schools for free.

The Head of Strategy, Commissioning and Partnerships advised that plans were being made to remodel part of the service, as the next phase would be to restructure the inclusion service. Over the next year they would be developing smarter service by linking up with other local authorities and a training programme offered to schools and other professionals had proved successful.

The Committee asked for examples of those services schools would be charged for which were non-statutory.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that some schools wanted to carry out staff inset training around foetal alcohol syndrome and ADHD, which were bespoke packages sold to schools. SEN assessments are statutory, but the optional extras would need to be paid for.

A Member asked whether there was a baseline budget available to that service. He commented that the biggest challenge would be customer expectations in the future that the service would be providing statutory provision.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People advised that Cabinet had indicated that in future a process would be put in place to review base budgets and not just top slicing each budget by a percentage. With regard to early intervention and prevention, he advised that 90% of those services were non-statutory.

One Member referred to the report on completed English assessments where 30 children missed out in the last quarter and investigations were ongoing to find out why this had happened. He asked how confident Members could be in the proposed savings, given the fluidity and the current budget pressures.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support advised that those 30 cases were desk top assessments. The Authority received a number of anonymous referrals from members of the public, but it only interferes in families' lives when necessary. In terms of savings, he advised that it was a challenge as it was impossible to predict. He explained that statutory services were very expensive and there were not the resources to meet all of the responsibilities, which was why the Authority needed to invest in early intervention. He informed Members that a new Social Services and Wellbeing Act had been introduced which would explain the statutory responsibilities and to ensure that a child has access to professional advocacy. Also young carers would receive a service; however there would not be a budget from Central Government to make that happen.

The Chairperson referred to the £500k plus projected savings within the next two years that early intervention would start to pay off; however he was concerned at the size of the projected savings.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that no savings had been put against the Early Intervention and Prevention nor LAC Strategies for this year or next year as it needed two years to embed for transformation to take place and to start to realise any savings through children's needs being met earlier and in the right place. The savings against safeguarding would not come into play for three years. The savings are shown in the report as red due to the risk. The figures may change, but were predicated on a pattern and evidence based which showed a reduction year on year of around 36 LAC. Through the whole system approach, a number of children in need currently managed through Social Services would transfer to integrated working teams which would relieve pressure on the whole system

and Social Services would then be able to work with those children with complex needs, resulting in some savings in the latter years.

The Committee questioned the reduction in the number of care beds, against the policy to reduce the number of out of county placements.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support explained that it saddened staff when a child had to be sent out of the Borough. A project was being embarked on to look at care history of children and other local authorities at specialist evidence based proactive interventions and tried and tested techniques. He commented that the Authority could not afford not to try new theories and practices. The intention was to reduce the number of residential beds and pay for them out of investment in therapeutic techniques, to observe during the next four years whether such prevention would reduce the number of beds which were needed. He informed Members that there would always be a case of some children who had to be placed out of county and also those children who needed residential care.

The Chairperson commented that he was under the impression that the Authority was increasing the provision for children with complex needs through the Heronsbridge School rather than out of county.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that discussions had taken place to consider a complete review of residential units and it was therefore put on hold in order to follow due process to go out to consultation and to then bring a range of options to Cabinet in January 2015. She commented that Heronsbridge School may be one option.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support explained that there were currently 14 children placed out of county; a few of them had severe autism and two had needs that were so complex and when they become teenagers, they are a risk to other children in a school the size of Heronsbridge. Some of those children needed around the clock provision. He informed Members that some children had been brought back into the Borough and were attending Heronsbridge on a weekly basis.

The Committee asked for feedback on the reduction in school budgets and the surplus places and school provision.

The Corporate Director – Children explained that there were a significant number of surplus places, particularly in Secondary schools, as well as issues around aspiration to raise standards; whilst they were good there was an ambition to further improve them, which is linked to good leadership. She advised that there was an inability to recruit good Headteachers across Wales in both Secondary and Primary schools due to the poor quality of applicants, which there was a history of across Wales just recently. Therefore it was important to ensure that the good Headteachers employed by this Authority were kept and to grow the Deputy Headteachers. She informed Members that she had written to schools to encourage participation in the Schools Task Group; there were also a number of smaller task and finish groups under that to consider educational arrangements in the long term. In the past the local authorities led on what the school modernisation programme should look like whereas the new senior management team also wanted schools involved in the future design. The Directorate was currently looking at innovative practice where pupils from the age of 3 to 19 are educated on one site, as well as federated schools to see whether there was good leadership. She reported that £1m had been put against the Schools Task Group and as it was regarded as high risk, it was shown in the report in red.

The Chairperson thanked the invitees for the attendance and invited the Headteacher Cynffig Comprehensive School to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

Conclusions:

- a) Members commented on the lack of detail provided in relation to the 'impact' of the savings proposals put forward for the Children's Directorate. The Committee felt that there should be more explanation provided in order for Members to understand the implications of each proposal and provide suitable comment on them. It was also felt that this detail was necessary given that the report is a public document and therefore should allow for any member of the public to confidently understand each proposal and its impact.
- b) Following discussions with Officers over the savings proposals relating to Learner Transport, the Committee commented that they had no confidence in what was presented in the report due to the lack of evidence over where the figures had been derived from. The Committee recommended that these figures needed considerable examination by Officers as there was a risk that these savings, as presented, were not realistic and achievable.
- c) The Committee expressed concern over the 'one-off pressure' of £350,000 put forward for Looked After Children (LAC), given that Officers could not assure that this pressure would not continue into following years due to the unpredictable nature of the service area. This resulted in further concerns and a lack of confidence in achieving the related savings proposal CH25; 'Reduction in Safeguarding LAC numbers and related reduction in costs.' Members felt that the uncertainty over whether or not the pressure was a 'one-off', somewhat contradicted the evidence supporting CH25 in that it was based on a predicted 'trend'.
- d) CH17: The Committee expressed concern over decreasing the Educational Welfare Service at a time when the need for this service was increasing. Members commented that the reliance being placed on EWOs by schools and the authority for such aspects as improving attendance, when there were also plans to reduce home to school transport services, did not then correspond with reducing the budget for this provision.
- e) In relation to the proposal to remodel Children's Residential Care, Members questioned the rationale behind this for a number of reasons:
 1. the Specialist provision currently provided has almost always been reported as full;
 2. the rationale behind the current complex needs residential provision set up in 2012 was to enable the Authority to bring LAC who are, or would be, placed Out of County, within County at a reduced financial cost to the Authority;
 3. Due to relatively new strategies and new projects, there is not yet evidence that the early intervention work being carried out in Bridgend has yet led to a reduction of children needing to come into residential care. Whilst supporting early intervention, Members questioned what is to be done in the meantime for those young people who have already passed the point where early intervention would be appropriate;
 4. Whilst supporting the involvement of parents with children with disabilities in decisions over where money could be spent to better support them, the removal of respite care to these parents could be detrimental;

Given the uncertainties surrounding this proposal, Members questioned the achievability of this saving, particularly given that there is a projected saving on this area of £300,000 for the coming year.

- f) Members further commented that should this proposal be progressed, urgent and imminent decisions need to be made in order to clarify the situation for staff to minimise uncertainty and the possibility of valuable and experienced staff leaving the Authority.
- g) As a result of their discussions with Officers, Members questioned the achievability of the savings proposals put forward given that, as stated by Officers, a number of them would either not now be achieved or the saving has been greatly reduced. The examples given were:
 - h) CH17: Officers reported the reduction of the education welfare service was going to be far less than the 50% put forward;
 - i) SCH2: The report states that the reduction in school budgets of £750,000, on condition of a reversal of Cabinet's decision, will not be achieved;
 - j) CH29: Officers reported that the reduction for Remodelling the Youth Service Counselling Function for Schools was under consultation but was going to be less than that stated in the report.
 - k) Given the numerous changes reported, Members expressed concerns over where the Directorate would now find these savings from. The Committee hoped that a revised, more accurate version of the Savings Proposals report, reflecting the above points, and any similar revisions, is planned to be put before Council for final approval.
- l) Furthermore, given the information above obtained by the Committee, as well as concerns over the achievability of other 'predicted' savings such as reducing the numbers of LAC, the proposed remodelling of Children's Residential Care and the uncertainty over the reliability of proposals in relation to Learner Transport, the Committee did not feel that they could have confidence in the accuracy and achievability of the savings proposals put forward for the Children's Directorate in the MTFS.
- m) Members made reference to SCH5, the savings proposal for reducing Nursery Early Years provision, and recommended that any future changes to this service area needed to include further consultation given that the previous decision to top slice school budgets is unlikely to be progressed.
- n) Members suggested that in order to improve Members' knowledge and gain a greater understanding of which budget pressures are most difficult to address, it would be useful for the Committee to receive a more informative breakdown of the baseline budget for statutory provision followed by additional budget information in relation to those budgets where there is greater scope for local discretion.
- o) In relation to the public budget consultation process, the Committee commented on the lack of public attendance and involvement and suggested that other local authorities be looked at to consider other possible methods of engagement and how best to increase this.

Additional info

Members requested that they receive a detailed breakdown for the meeting in February of the proposed savings put forward for Home to School Transport.

Members requested that they receive further detailed information relating to the remodelling of Children's Residential Care as soon as possible in the New Year.

150 COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE AGAINST ITS CORPORATE PLAN 2013-17

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report to introduce the Children's Directorate Dashboard report to the Committee, attached at Appendix 1, with an overview of the Council's progress in delivering its commitments for 2014-15. The report covered performance of services relevant to this Committee as at the end of Quarter Two.

Discussion took place and the Committee were concerned that some LAC had three or more placements during the year.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support advised that it was in fact rare for LAC to have more than three placements; however there were occasions when it was unavoidable when there were complex child protection cases and also when there are a number of siblings from the same family, as attempts were made to keep them together. He stressed that the decision to move a child from one placement to another was not taken lightly. He commented that Bridgend still remained highly regarded across Wales.

The Committee questioned the level of sickness absence in the Directorate.

The Corporate Director – Children explained that there were a number of staff on long term sickness absence; however the focus had recently shifted towards those staff who were regularly off sick, yet not enough to be flagged up within the current system. Therefore, a number of strategies had been put in place to ensure they are supported and have access to a doctor when they need it. She advised that staff within Social Services managed high caseloads which contributed to stress.

The Committee referred to the £246k overspend due to nine agency staff on long term contracts and asked whether this was under control.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support explained that the number of agency staff was being maintained at an absolute minimum. There had been a significant number of highly complex child protection cases however, and he asked Members to note that there had been a need for support from agency staff as a number of Social Workers were only in their second year of practice. He stressed the need to support those Social Workers, otherwise there would be even more staff going off sick and advised that the agency staff were necessary in order to deliver an effective service to those children with complex cases. A Recruitment and Retention Board was put in place and only experienced Social Workers were interviewed, with three considerably experienced Social Workers starting in January next year.

The Committee asked what was being done to support those staff suffering from stress and in ensuring that new Social Workers are retained long term.

The Head of Safeguarding and Family Support advised that emotional pressure was recognised and a proactive stance was taken accordingly, with the supervision given to Social Workers being monitored. They were also offered support in the way of mentoring, with consultant Social Workers providing supervision which had been proved to lower anxiety. They are also offered assistance in writing up case notes, and no new cases are allocated to those who are vulnerable at any time.

Conclusions:

Members requested that they receive further detail in relation to the Additional Sickness Absence Information as the Committee were not clear how the figures presented in the report were calculated.

In light of the concerns expressed by the CRI Scrutiny Committee over sickness absence in schools and schools that do not adopt the corporate sickness absence policy and therefore do not undertake return to work interviews; Members requested that they also receive sickness absence data for schools in their quarterly performance reports.

Members expressed concern over the number of agency staff still employed within Children's Services, given that Officers have reported to Scrutiny over the past year about the drive to reduce agency staff. Members commented that not only are the figures reported similar to the average number engaged last year, but the total cost is higher due to longer engagement. Members agreed to raise this under their further work when looking at the recruitment and retention of social workers.

Forward Work Programme Update

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report outlining the items due to be considered at a special meeting of the Committee due to be held on the 6th January 2015 to discuss School Performance, prior to it going to Cabinet, and further sought confirmation of the invitees to attend the subsequent scheduled meeting to be held on the 17th February 2015.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted the topics due to be considered at a special meeting of the Committee scheduled for the 6th January 2015 and acknowledged the invitees to attend the ordinary meeting of the Committee on the 17th February 2015.

The meeting closed at 5.20 pm

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON TUESDAY, 6 JANUARY 2015 AT 2.00 PM

Present:

Councillor EP Foley - Chairperson

Councillors:

P A Davies	C A Green	H J Townsend
D K Edwards	M Jones	C Westwood
		R E Young

Registered Representatives & Co-opted Members:

Mr W Bond (Special School Parent Governor)
Reverend Canon E J Evans (Church in Wales)
Mr K Pascoe (Secondary School Parent Governor)
Mr R Thomas (Primary School Parent Governor)

Officers:

Councillor H J David	-	Cabinet Member – Children & Young People
D McMillan	-	Corporate Director – Children
N Echan	-	Head of Strategy Partnerships & Commissioning
M Lewis	-	Group Manager – Integrated Working
S Roberts	-	Group Manager – School Improvement
Councillor C Elmore	-	Chairperson of Joint Consultative Committee – Central South Consortium (CSC)
R Hopkins	-	School Improvement Officer (CSC)
P Wolstenholme	-	Bridgend Link Advisor
R Harries	-	Scrutiny Officer
J Monks	-	Democratic Services Officer - Committees

151. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

Councillor P N John	-	Personal
Councillor G Phillips	-	Unwell
Councillor R L Thomas	-	Work Commitments
Councillor D B F White	-	Work Commitments
R Keepins	-	Unwell

152. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

153. ANNUAL SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed Kym Hirons, the temporary Scrutiny Officer, to her first Scrutiny meeting.

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report to provide the Committee with detail and analysis of the 2013-14 school performance for schools within the Borough, and a report by the Corporate

Director – Children, providing all the relevant data, was attached at Appendix 1, including a number of appendices containing statistical information for the Committee’s consideration.

The School Improvement Officer – Central South Consortium (CSC) reported that the general message conveyed in the report provided by the Corporate Director – Children was that there had been overall improvement in school performance in Bridgend, in both the primary and secondary sectors. However, he advised that there was still some work to be carried out to ensure that improvement is sustained extending also to attendance, which had also improved over the past three years.

Discussion took place and the Committee asked for clarity of the terminology that was used within paragraph 3 of the report attached at Appendix A.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) explained that some of the wording was connected to the Estyn Inspection process, and paragraph 3.5 referred to links with target settings for individual pupils as to how well they were performing.

The Committee were concerned that although the schools in the Borough had considerably improved, Bridgend was still rated under the All Wales Indicator as 15th out of 22, therefore the Authority’s aspirations to be in the top 10 by 2016 seemed to be a considerable challenge. Also there had been confusion in schools caused by the constant turnover of Challenge Advisors.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) advised that arrangements within the Consortium, which involved five local authorities, were still at a fairly early stage; and the Consortium would need to demonstrate over a period of time that its input was adding value to schools. He acknowledged there had been changes with the Challenge Advisors and assured Members that attempts were made to try and minimise those changes where possible. This year a number of key modifications had been made to the challenge framework, placing more responsibility on schools, and offering them support by bringing in more experienced colleagues with school leadership skills. He reported that there had been a good response to the Challenge Advisor posts which had been advertised, particularly from Primary School Headteachers.

The Chairperson of the Joint Consultative Committee (CSC) informed Members that he had chaired that Committee since last summer and in that time had seen significant change and improvement in how the Consortium was progressing. It had experienced real success over the past six months and Headteachers were now engaging with the process. He advised that further improvements were expected in the Foundation Phase, KS2 and KS3.

One Member was concerned that the report had indicated a downward trend in the Foundation Phase outlined in the Benchmark Summary on page 9 of the report. She asked what was being done to reverse this trend.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) advised that the Foundation Phase now had a full team, and by fulfilling the mandatory training programme, would be able to offer more intensive support in the Foundation Phase to those schools categorised in amber or red.

One Member was concerned that the report may give a false impression of the schools in the Borough, as some would remain in the red category due to the percentage of pupils with special needs. He asked whether the Challenge Cymru project was regarded as a positive programme, as it could be assumed from the wording of the report that it was not; and he suggested that more information should be provided to deliver a better understanding of the good work which was being achieved by schools.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) explained that the Authority had published extensive information relating to schools on its website and the information provided in the report was in line with the national categorisation process. He advised that there was an issue related to the

extent to which a school's performance drives the category it is placed in; however that did not necessarily mean a school would have to remain in a red category indefinitely. He explained that any school with a Learning Resource Centre (LRC) would be permitted to disaggregate its data provided it could show that the pupils in the LRC were also making good progress. A Standards Group from 1 to 4 would be fixed for the next three years, which would make it possible for a school to rise up those standard groups which would then be reflected in the colour of its support category.

The same Member suggested that this information should be reiterated to Headteachers, as he did not believe it had been made clear enough to them.

The Cabinet Member – Children and Young People explained that in terms of categorisation, he had only been made aware of two schools provisionally categorised as red, and only one of those schools had a LRC. Therefore the vast majority of schools in the Borough would not be categorised as red and a number of them were categorised as yellow. He reminded Members that Estyn had recommended an annual school performance report in order to improve quality and provide information to the Committee, and that the national school categorisation was a directive made by the Welsh Government. The results were due to be published at the end of January and he asked Officers to prepare a report for the Committee in order to explain the contents of categorisations. He added that he did not want parents to get the wrong impression of schools their children attended, rather that they continue to have confidence in their schools and be provided with more information to enable the Committee to challenge those schools which they believed were not doing as well.

One Member reminded Officers that the Committee had in fact requested this information prior to the Estyn recommendation, and had asked for it to be based on a report compiled by Carmarthenshire County Council.

Another Member commented that there appeared to be more talented children in the Foundation Phase and above average in KS2, yet the standard subsequently seemed to drop. She asked what the reason might be, or whether there was process in place to improve this outcome.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) explained that KS3 did appear to do less well in relation to preparing those pupils who performed above the expected level; however the report had included the performance of those more able pupils. He advised that he did not wish to see the categorisation process being viewed in a negative light and explained that in the vast number of cases, the categorisation was reached in agreement with a school. As part of the process it was expected that each school would look at its under-achieving groups, which reflected on teachers to ensure they had strategies in place to stimulate pupils in learning activities. One strategy being developed was to encourage schools to work in school improvement groups and share good practice.

The Chairperson referred to Herbert Thompson Primary School in Cardiff, which had received 'excellent' from its Estyn Inspection, and the Authority had been given the opportunity to receive a presentation from that school. He asked whether the Authority was taking advantage of those types of schools, given that Cardiff was part of the CSC. Another Member asked whether schools outside Wales were also being looked at.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) explained that schools were expected to set targets for all pupils, including the more talented ones to ensure they were achieving above the expected level as they were just as important.

The Bridgend Link Advisor explained that in relation to KS4, the Welsh Government had introduced an A* element for grouping schools and there had been a move to achieve greater balance in terms of how schools are judged. In relation to schools working together to share

good practice, he reported that this was on the increase and each school had been placed in a school improvement group which consisted of around 10 schools across the five local authorities with a mixture of high performing and lower performing schools. He advised that all schools had their strengths in certain areas and were encouraged to gain expertise from within their groups. He informed the Committee that Bridgend was leading in some schools, and described how Maesteg Comprehensive School had developed model leadership in strategy across the region and not just Bridgend. With regard to Estyn only acknowledging good practice if unique to a school, he advised that attempts were being made to break down that barrier through the development of the school improvement groups, which had so far proved to be positive.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) advised that they were trying to reach the point where Headteachers would be concerned about pupils in other schools as well as their own and they were beginning to see signs of Headteachers becoming more involved.

The Chairperson asked for an example of sharing good practice throughout the consortium and beyond local authority boundaries.

The Bridgend Link Advisor advised that a school in the Vale of Glamorgan had three departments considered to be underperforming and Maesteg Comprehensive was providing support to address the difficulties they were encountering through the school improvement group.

The Group Manager – School Improvement advised that during this term Headteachers had made positive progress on a number of occasions, and the Headteacher at Willows High School in Cardiff had visited Coleg Y Dderwen Comprehensive School to look at attendance and learn from its good practice.

One Member was concerned at the widening gap during 2014 between those KS4 pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSMs) achieving 25.1% in the key subjects compared with 61.2% of those pupils who were not eligible for FSMs. He asked what action the Consortium was being taken to rectify this. He then referred to the Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) and asked whether it was being used for those children living in poverty, but did not qualify for FSMs. He enquired whether the Sutton Trust toolkit was being used within the Consortium.

Another Member advised that the issue of under achievement had been discussed at a recent School Engagement Research and Evaluation Panel meeting, where the Headteacher of one secondary school in the Borough had described how there was pressure last year for pupils to achieve five or more GCSEs, and the school focussed on that headline figure, with the school being under pressure to improve on that. As a consequence, this led to under achievement by those disadvantaged learners, and the school now found itself in a difficult position, as they needed to make further improvement. She asked how those grants were being tracked, which were meant to be there to put children on an equal playing field. She added that she would like a more in depth report on school performance, as she believed the current report lacked detail as to why those pupils were not achieving and the reasons behind it.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) advised that this issue, which was a high priority for the Welsh Government, was endemic throughout Wales and was reflected in this region. He reported that schools were expected to publish their plans for Pupil Deprivation Grants (PDG) on their websites to ensure the information was in the public domain and open to scrutiny. The Consortium had made available a range of information, including an audit tool kit for schools to evaluate the effectiveness of their best practice work which was in progress. He advised that there was no shortage of information available to schools on strategies which had a reasonably good track record in making a difference to learner achievement, and this year the expected outcome data for secondary schools had been included which would inform whether a school would be on track for the end of the year. Furthermore, Estyn had strengthened the focus on

PDG, issuing guidance and considering whether or not the grant was being spent on the relevant pupils.

The Bridgend Link Advisor informed Members that a group had been set up to meet every half term, and the group would look at the climate of PDGs and the performance of those children on FSMs. The group was formed of senior leaders from secondary schools in Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan to improve best practice and raise attendance of children on FSMs. At the first meeting of the group, Pencoed Comprehensive School was used as a case study, as the school had been recognised by Estyn and there was a great deal of interest in shared resources.

It was agreed that a representative from that group would attend a meeting of this Committee and alternatively, a Member of the Committee could attend one of the group's meetings to provide feedback.

A Member queried the school analysis on page 14 of the report and requested a table format instead in order to establish whether there was correlation between the feeder schools and the comprehensives.

The Group Manager – School Improvement explained that the intention was to show that performance in a school could be affected where there is an LRC and whether a school had taken account of that.

One Member commented that Special Educational Needs (SENs) had only been briefly mentioned in the report and requested more detail. He stated that there remained a culture in some schools where Headteachers were wary of taking on SEN pupils, particularly during mid-term, after targets had been set.

The Chairperson of the Joint Consultative Committee commented that the report had been written by Officers of the Authority with contributions from the Consortium. He advised Members to invite the governance groups, Headteachers' groups and Challenge Advisors to the Committee, for Members to get the full spectrum of what was happening in schools and stressed that the Consortium was in place for the benefit of all five local authorities. He informed Members that the Joint Committee met every term.

The Chairperson commented that the Committee had always been supportive of the Consortium arrangements and wanted it to succeed.

The School Improvement Officer (CSC) referred to a question asked at a previous meeting of the Committee regarding the segregation of boys and girls for the teaching of certain subjects. He informed Members that he had undertaken some work on this and had it to be extremely inconclusive and it had been difficult to compare. He advised that the National Literacy Trust had produced a piece of work on boys in literacy with some recommendations, which colleagues were mindful of when working with schools within the Borough.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted that Estyn inspectors had expressed the view that the Annual School Performance report should not be overly long. The Committee agreed that the report should not be so lengthy as to prevent meaningful discussion and analysis of the data, but considered that the current report format did not provide sufficient detail to allow Members to adequately carry out their support and challenge role.

Therefore the Committee recommended that future reports should be more detailed and should contain enough information for Members to be able to drill down to consider the performance of individual schools and specific subjects at each of the Key Stages. In support of the more

detailed statistical information, the report should also explain the reasons why performance levels/ statistics were as they were, and what actions were being taken to improve/ maintain performance where appropriate.

Specifically, the Committee considered that paragraph 4.3.17 of Appendix A would be better presented as a table or chart, as the narrative format used made it difficult to interpret.

The Committee welcomed the confirmation that data relating to pupils with SEN/ ALN could be disaggregated from data relating to other pupils. When future reports refer to individual schools, the Committee would like to see both the aggregated and disaggregated figures included, to ensure that the performance of schools with a higher number of pupils with SEN/ ALN is reflected fairly. The Committee suggested that it would be useful for Officers to clarify to Headteachers that having a high number of pupils with SEN/ ALN can be taken account of, and would not necessarily result in a school being placed in a low category.

The Committee was concerned to note that the gap in achievement between pupils receiving free school meals and those who do not (FSM/ non FSM) at Key Stage 4 is widening. The Committee welcomed the opportunity offered to attend a meeting of the LEA Secondary Leaders Group that is considering how best to narrow the gap between FSM and non FSM and how the Pupil Deprivation Grant is being deployed.

The Committee also noted the invitees' observation that the Committee can and should call a range of representatives supporting the work of the Consortium, such as the governance group or the Headteachers group, to attend scrutiny meetings.

154. ATTENDANCE STRATEGY

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report for the Committee to consider and discuss the Authority's proposed Attendance Strategy for 2014-2017, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and to determine whether it wants to make any comments or recommendations to Cabinet. Evidence suggests there is a clear link between good educational attainment and high school attendance, as poor attendance has a detrimental effect on a child's learning and can have a significant impact on their wellbeing. Individual school attendance rates for 2013-14, current performance for 2014-15 and targets for 2014-15 were attached at Appendix 2.

One Member pointed out that although it was recognised that attendance at school was critical to education, care should be taken not to alienate parents by putting in strategies which may cause problems. He described how some parents were unable to take annual leave during the school holidays, and suggested that to be refused authorised absence for a child who regularly attended school and who had supportive parents, would lose the good will of such parents.

Another Member referred to the Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) under paragraph 7.8 of Appendix 1. She was concerned that as this was not prescriptive, with any decisions to enforce FPNs being left to the Headteachers, it could result in some schools being more lenient than others which would cause problems. She questioned whether parents who did receive FPNs and could not afford to pay would then be asked to present bank statements as proof that the fine would have an adverse effect on the family. She further asked whether the enforcement of FPNs would penalise employees of the Authority with children of school age, who were unable to take holidays during school holidays.

A Member had spoken with a number of parents on this subject and reported that some schools were taking pupils on holiday to places such as Hawaii and Barbados for trips whose educational value was not clear, and he believed the situation was getting out of control with Headteachers not taking responsibility. He advised that this placed pressure on parents.

The Corporate Director – Children advised that attendance strategies were explained in detail in a report which went to Cabinet in December 2014 on the terms of the policy around FPNs. The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013 sets out the framework for the operation of fixed penalty notice schemes which came into force in September 2013. The Local Authority is required by law to have regard to the guidance supporting the use of these measures and to adopt a Code of Conduct for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices, which are intended as an additional option that can be used as part of a range of interventions and support strategies to tackle circumstances of unauthorised absence from school. She reported that attendance was improving in secondary schools due to a more robust approach; however there remained a cultural problem with attendances in some primary schools.

She explained that it had been made clear to Headteachers that they could authorise absences during term time, provided they take into consideration a child's overall attendance, and the decision to allow such an absence should be an exception rather than the rule. She advised that she would always request to see a Headteacher and the school's Governors where they are regularly authorising absences. With regard to school trips, she stated that she would look into whether there was educational value in them.

One Member asked why the targets for Primary Schools differed from Secondary Schools.

The Bridgend Link Advisor explained that due to difficulties between Primary and Secondary attendance, in order to achieve realistic targets they were set lower for Secondary Schools.

Conclusions:

The Committee welcomed the improvement in attendance levels. In terms of the draft strategy to ensure that this improvement continues, the Committee noted the need to work constructively and in partnership with parents at an early stage, in order to encourage and develop the cultural attitudes that will mean that parents ensure consistently good attendance, and to challenge those cultural attitudes that can work against this.

It was noted that taking children on holiday during term time was one of a number of cultural issues that could impact on attendance. The Committee considered that a clearer identification of which times of the school year are particularly critical in terms of educational attainment (exam or assessment times, for example) would assist schools in working in partnership with parents to ensure good attendance.

The Committee considered that there was a need to ensure greater consistency in terms of Headteachers authorising holidays during term time. The Committee expressed concerns that if there is a lack of consistency regarding the circumstances under which a fixed penalty notice is issued, this could put the Authority at risk of challenge. Whilst accepting that there was a need to retain Headteachers' ability to exercise discretion, the Committee considered that there should be clear guidelines and support for Headteachers to ensure that there is a set of clearly understood common expectations in relation to enforcement activity.

In terms of future reporting requirements, the Committee agreed that it would receive reports on attendance levels on an annual basis. The report should contain comparative data for each school, the attendance rate for all primary schools and the attendance rate for all secondary schools. The Committee would also like to receive further information on the work being done to identify the various reasons for absence and how this is informing the ongoing strategy to reduce absence levels.

155. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report outlining the items due to be considered at a meeting of the Committee due to be held on the 17th February 2015, and further sought confirmation of the invitees to attend the subsequent scheduled meeting due to be held on the 7th April 2015.

Conclusions:

The Committee noted the topics due to be considered at a meeting of the Committee scheduled for the 17th February 2015 and acknowledged the invitees to attend the meeting of the Committee on the 7th April 2015.

The meeting closed at 5.15 pm

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE 17 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

LEARNER TRAVEL POLICY

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the outcome of the public consultation in relation to the review of the Council's learner travel arrangements and for Committee to consider and agree any recommendations it may want to make to Cabinet when it meets to consider the matter in March 2015 in light of the proposals and the consultation responses.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1. The report links to the following corporate priorities:-

- Working together to make the best use of resources.
- Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council's approved medium term financial strategy (MTFS) 2013/14 to 2017/18 seeks to achieve potential revenue savings in the home to school/college transport budget through amendments to the Learner Travel Policy.
- 3.2. Table 1 below indicates the main events since the original public consultation on the learner travel policy to date, including the September 2014 Cabinet approval for a new 12 week consultation on the following three proposals:-

Proposal 1

To increase the distance required for free transport between a pupil's home and their school, to match the distance required by law (including Welsh and religious schools).

Proposal 2

To charge the full cost of a school bus pass for pupils who do not receive free school transport.

Proposal 3

To stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over, who go to school or college.

Table 1: Schedule of events 2013-14

Event	Date	Outcome
Cabinet approval to consult with the public on Learner Travel proposals	17 Sept 2013	Approved
Public consultation commences	16 Dec 2013 to 24 Jan 2014	Consultation suspended on 14 January 2014 in light of views expressed through the consultation process and in light of the national consultation on Learner Travel Operational Guidance.
Cabinet approval to consult with the public on revised Learner Travel proposals	16 Sept 2014	12 week consultation approved
Public consultation commences	29 Sept 2014 to 22 Dec 2014	Successful consultation. Consultation outcome report prepared (see Appendix 1.)
Outcome of consultation reported to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	17 Feb 2015	To be decided
Outcome of consultation reported to Cabinet (including advice from Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of the 17 February 2015)	3 March 2015	To be decided

- 3.3. Consultation held between 29 September 2014 and 22 December 2014.
- 3.4. As a result of lessons learned in respect of the initial consultation in December 2013, there has been a significant investment in the approach that the Local Authority (LA) has taken to consult with the public as a new public consultation exercise.
- 3.5. The consultation took place over a 12 week period and was available bilingually, through a variety of alternative formats.
- 3.6. The consultation included:-
- a full range of scheduled user engagement events at venues across the County Borough.

- full use of the Council's website.
- a web link was sent to all key stakeholders e.g., Bridgend College and promoted on all promotional items such as press releases, posters etc.
- use of social media, especially Twitter.
- letters to parents of all pupils within Bridgend schools (via pupil post).
- Further direct communication with key stakeholders including Head teachers, governing bodies, parent governors, Bridgend Youth Council, etc.
- Schools use of their own texting service and other forms of communication such as newsletters etc.

3.7. Table 2 below details the breakdown of the responses to the survey of which there were 725. Of the responses received 693 were in English and 32 were in Welsh.

Table 2: Breakdown of consultation responses

Format	English	Welsh	Total
Paper	552	1	553
Online	131	31	162
Email	7	0	7
Letter	2	0	2
Report	1	0	1
Total	693	32	725

- 3.8. The questionnaires were developed in plain English with clear proposals that could be easily understood. The focus of the consultation was on seeking feedback on the impact of the proposed policy changes on pupils, parents and families rather than asking respondents to consider whether they agreed with the proposals.
- 3.9. Summary of consultation responses and main findings in respect of each proposal.
- 3.10. Full details of the Learner Travel Review Consultation results are reported in Appendix 1.

Proposal 1

To increase the distance required for free transport between a pupil's home and their school, to match the distance required by law (including Welsh Medium and Voluntary Aided schools)

- 3.11. This would mean that from September 2016 the following would apply to the council's free school transport:-
- Pupils in primary schools living **2 miles** or further from home to their nearest suitable school would receive free transport.
(N.B The current provision for primary schools is 1.5 miles.)
 - Pupils in secondary (comprehensive) schools living **3 miles** or further from home to their nearest suitable school would receive free transport.
(N.B The current provision for secondary schools is 2 miles.)

- Pupils in Voluntary Aided and Welsh Medium schools living **2 miles** or further for primary schools and **3 miles** or further for secondary schools would receive free transport **regardless** of whether the school is the nearest suitable school.
 - Only when a child begins school full-time or changes their school, will the new change apply.
 - If a child is already in receipt of free home to school transport at a school and their brother or sister starts their full-time education at that school whilst they are there, they too will receive free transport until they also change school.
- 3.12. This would mean that the move to statutory minimum distances would equally apply to all schools in Bridgend County Borough, regardless of whether they are mainstream schools, Voluntary Aided or Welsh Medium. Currently all learners attending voluntary aided or Welsh medium schools regardless of whether the school is the nearest suitable school, receive free transport.
- 3.13. The outcome of the consultation indicated that this could be considered as the least contentious proposal.
- 3.14. There were three main responses relating to this proposal (for a full breakdown see consultation report in Appendix 1).
- i. **34%** of respondents indicated that there would be **little or no impact** on them or their families.
 - ii. Of the respondents currently stating they use free transport – **almost two in three (65 per cent)** said that the introduction of proposal one would have little or no impact on either themselves or their family.
 - iii. **16%** indicated that there would likely be some **financial impact** on them in having to find additional monies to fund transport for their child; and
 - iv. **13%** indicated that they would possibly consider a **change from Welsh medium to English medium education** if the proposal was adopted.
- 3.15. Points for consideration:-
- i. A relatively high percentage (34%) of respondents do not consider this proposal to have a significant impact on them or their families.
 - ii. Of the respondents currently stating they use free transport – **almost two in three (65 per cent)** said that the introduction of proposal one would have little or no impact on either themselves or their family.
 - iii. It is possible that the proposal could have a detrimental impact on some families personal finances if they choose to pay for their child's continued home to school transport especially if this proposal is adopted alongside proposal 2 (increasing the cost of a paying place to the actual cost.)
 - iv. There may be scenarios (see Appendix 2 for examples) where secondary school pupils living up to 2.9 miles away from their nearest suitable school and primary school pupils living up to 1.9 miles away, who may also not have access to private transport, or be unable to fund the cost of daily transport, would be required to walk almost 6 miles daily too and from school. Therefore, due to the enhanced rights of pupils with siblings already attending school eligible for free transport, there are likely to be some

inequalities with other pupils of the same age without siblings living at the same distance from their nearest suitable school or potentially at a greater distance. (however such anomalies are likely to exist currently too) See Appendix 2 for example scenarios

- v. ***However, it is important to remember that statutory distances of 2 miles for primary school children and 3 miles for secondary school children are laid down in legislation i.e. the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. BCBC has provided over the statutory minimum for many years.***
- vi. There is the potential for any decision by Cabinet to accept proposal one, to potentially have a greater impact on our Welsh Medium Secondary School, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd (YGG Llangynwyd). YGG Llangynwyd is located in the north of the County Borough which means that any alteration to the free transport distance from two miles to three miles as well as the potential impact of proposal three to withdraw free transport for post 16 pupils (currently provided beyond 2 miles) may have a more significant impact on these pupils. Therefore, if pupils live within walking distance of an English medium comprehensive, the cost and the risk of not being guaranteed a seat on the bus could encourage parents or pupils/students themselves to consider attending an English medium comprehensive.
- vii. Cabinet will therefore need to consider the reasonableness of this in light of the LA's duty in section 10 of the Learner Travel Wales Measure to promote education through the medium of the Welsh language.

3.16. Impact on current identified MTFS savings

- 3.17. Table 3 below identifies the current savings identified in relation to proposals 1-3. However, the total savings are unlikely to be met in the same timescale indicated in the MTFS as these were based on the previous proposals outlined in the report to Cabinet on 17 September 2013.

Table 3: Re-profiled MTFs – Learner Transport (excerpt from July 2014) relevant to current proposals

MTFS Ref.	Savings Proposals	Indicative 2016-17 £000	Indicative 2017-18 £000	Indicative 2018-19 £000
CH5	Review of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel	250	240	
CH7	Increase charges for paid places on home to school transport	25		
CH8	Cease provision of non-statutory free post-16 transport	300	200	400
CH11	Review of learner transport policy regarding charging for post 16 transport	50	25	

3.18. There is now far more complexity around the ability of the Local Authority to meet the savings previously identified in the MTFs during the 2016/17 to 2017/18 period in particular, as the proposal introduces greater complexity around the rights of pupils with siblings and the fact that those pupils currently eligible for free transport of statutory school age, will continue to receive this until they change school. Therefore the overall savings are now very difficult to quantify for both primary and secondary schools.

3.19. Learners who are currently in year 5 and who commence their year 6 education in September 2015 (last year of primary education) will be the first to experience the impact of the policy change when they transition to secondary education in September 2016. Table 4 identifies that there are currently just under 1500 year 7 pupils currently on roll in Bridgend schools. Of these 33% have siblings currently in primary schools who would retain the right to free transport under the ‘family’ element of the current proposal if their sibling currently in the same comprehensive school as they will transition to, is already receiving free transport.

3.20. It is important to note that the impact of the proposal is spread over a period of 5 years (siblings currently in years 2 to 6). Of these, 137 pupils will transition in from primary to secondary education in September 2016 (current yr 5 pupils) as eligible siblings and of these only an estimated 46 pupils (based on 38.8% identified in Table 4 below) are likely to be eligible for free transport across all our comprehensive schools (as pupils living beyond 3 miles).

Table 4: Current year 7 pupils with siblings in Bridgend Comprehensive Schools

	No. of yr. 7 pupils (Jan. 2015)	No. of yr. 7 pupils with siblings (Jan. 2015)	No. of siblings in feeder primary schools in yrs. 2-6	No. of yr. 5 pupils eligible for free transport in Sept 16	Percentage of current year 7 pupils with eligible siblings	Pupils receiving free transport as a percentage of all pupils*
Archbishop McGrath	116	36	45	16	31.0%	79.6%
Brynteg	211	71	86	17	33.6%	29.6%
Bryntirion	163	51	59	16	31.3%	0.0%
C C Y Dderwen	231	78	92	19	33.8%	74.5%
Cynffig	128	45	60	15	35.2%	35.8%
Maesteg	181	60	85	8	33.1%	36.8%
Pencoed	162	43	51	10	26.5%	9.0%
Porthcawl	191	66	71	21	34.6%	10.8%
YGG Llangynwyd	114	47	60	15	41.2%	100%
Total	1497	497	609	137	33.2%	38.8%

*NB Data on pupils eligible for free transport may not be entirely accurate as some eligibility is assessed on previous years data for pupils in years 6 to 7 and years 11 to 12 etc.

- 3.21. It is extremely difficult to undertake the same analysis within primary schools as the data available to us to determine the impact of the ‘family’ element of the policy i.e., non school age pupils who will enter year 1 at the age of 5 in September 2016, is limited. Even though we can identify all pupils in our primary schools, the numbers and spread of their siblings who are likely to enter primary education in September in 2016 is not robust enough to include in any meaningful analysis. There is potential for yet unborn children to be still eligible if their siblings are eligible for free transport in September 2016.

Proposal 2

To charge the full cost of a school bus pass for pupils who do not receive free school transport.

- 3.22. The proposal involves increasing the charge for a surplus seat on a school bus for pupils who are not eligible for free transport.
- 3.23. When setting the budget for 2013/14 full Council agreed to increase the charge to £270 per annum for both primary and secondary school pupils. However this equates to £1.42 per day and is well below the actual cost of a seat as identified in the Table below

Table 5: The actual cost of a paying place on BCBC school buses 2013-14

Cost of primary school transport provision per primary school pupil	£756.41
Total number of operating days 1 st April to 31 st March	190
Cost per day	£3.98
Cost of secondary school transport provision per secondary school pupil	£646.98
Total number of operating days 1 st April to 31 st March	190

Cost per day	£3.41
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- 3.24. The charges above would fluctuate in line with the cost of the service. However, this would likely reduce in line with efficiencies currently being implemented and the cost reductions as a result of the re-procurement of services from operators.
- 3.25. The consultation asked for people’s views and comments about charging the actual cost for a seat on a school bus.
- 3.26. 35% respondents stated that the increase would make a paying place too expensive and suggestions were received that a subsidy should continue to be offered (albeit not at the same rate). However more pragmatic suggestions were also made around spreading the cost by making monthly payments. It is also worth noting that only 2% of respondents identified that they would actually be affected if the increase was introduced.
- 3.27. The second most popular response (23% of respondents) stated that the effect would have little or no effect on them, however it was recognised that the change could potentially affect parents through causing changes in lifestyle such as a change/reduction in working hours and modes of travel that people use.
- 3.28. Our community engagement workshops also highlighted the fact that people felt strongly that if parents/pupils were willing to pay for school transport then it should be available for them. Currently only 48 pupils have a “paying place” on secondary school transport as there are limited surplus places and on some routes there are waiting lists for these places.
- 3.29. Table 6 below illustrates the difference in cost between the actual and currently charged cost of the paying places currently being used, if the proposed increase was introduced.

Table 6: Charging difference between actual and currently charged cost of a paying place

Number of current surplus places being utilised	48
Actual cost to BCBC of surplus places per annum	£31,055
Current charge for these places	£12,960
Benefit to the Council of increasing the charge	£18,095

- 3.30. This proposal implemented on its own would not generate significant savings. However, there are potential significant expected benefits /Income to the Council if implemented in conjunction with one or both of the other current proposals.
- 3.31. The impact of proposal 3 (To stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over, who go to school or college) on the availability of paying places.
- 3.32. Table 7 below identifies the potential availability of paying places as a direct result of post 16 pupils losing their entitlement to free transport from September 2016 who attend Bridgend college. This is the easiest saving to quantify as this is not a service that is put on by the Local Authority, it is for passes for public transport. Therefore if removed, there would be an immediate saving of £253,208 based on the cost of the existing service.

Table 7 – Current cost of providing free transport to Post 16 Learners in Bridgend College

Bridgend College location	No. of post 16 learners currently eligible of free transport	Annual cost of passes
BRIDGEND	412	£151,410
PENCOED	277	£101,798
Total	689	£253,208

- 3.33. The savings to the LA relating to the comprehensive schools of removing post 16 provision is more complicated as post 16 learners use the same buses as pupils of statutory school age. Table 8 below identifies the current numbers of Post 16 learners and the cost of the over all service to the school.

Table 8 – Current cost of providing free transport to Learners in Comprehensive Schools

School	No. of pupils (post 16)	No. of post 16 pupils currently recorded as eligible for free transport*	Percentage of all post 16 pupils currently recorded as eligible for free transport	Annual cost of contract (all ages)
Archbishop McGrath Catholic School	152	154	100%	£300,941
Brynteg School	446	142	31.8%	£145,730
Bryntirion Comprehensive	204	0	0.0%	£0
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	173	259	100%	£174,610
Cynffig Comprehensive	107	33	30.8%	£72,960
Maesteg Comprehensive School	208	102	49.0%	£152,000
Pencoed School	146	15	10.3%	£38,950
Porthcawl Comprehensive	343	33	9.6%	£58,140
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	122	151	100%	£258,020
Grand Total	1901	889	46.8%	£1,201,351

*NB Data on post 16 pupils recorded as eligible for free transport may not be entirely accurate as some eligibility is assessed on previous years data for pupils in years 11 to 12.

- 3.34. Even though there are currently 889 pupils in secondary schools who could potentially lose their entitlement to free transport (N.B the number in September 2016 will vary) it is unlikely that such a proposal would have a significant impact on the overall cost of the service to each Comprehensive School. It would be incorrect to state for example, that the 173 pupils in Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen would significantly reduce the number of buses required as there are currently 16 buses contracted to the school, so the current post 16 pupils would be spread over all of these buses. There may be some opportunity to reduce routes and buses but as yet we are unable to quantify these.
- 3.35. The LA would however, be able to offer the equivalent number of seats freed up as a result of the removal of the free transport provision to post 16 pupils, to learners of statutory school age who would lose their entitlement in September 2016 i.e., those

transitioning from year 6 to year 7 and who do not have siblings in the same school. Table 9 identifies the possible numbers of year 7 pupils who, as based on current data, would and would not be eligible for free transport against the number of seats freed up as a result of the removal of free transport.

- 3.36. For those schools where the number of seats is lower than the number of pupils who are no longer eligible for a free transport such as Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen, or where there is limited take-up of the offer of a paying place, the remaining seats could then be offered to post 16 pupils.
- 3.37. The LA would need to determine the interest in paying places as early as possible, limited interest would mean that existing bus numbers and routes would need to be rationalised to ensure efficiency of the contracts. If these were reduced, the number of paying places would be more limited.
- 3.38. Based on existing numbers of pupils, offering these seats could potentially generate £575,983 of receipts.

Table 9 - Possible overall annual receipts generated by Post 16 paying places

	No. of year 7 pupils (Jan. 2015)	Percentage of current year 7 pupils with eligible siblings	Percentage of current year 7 pupils without eligible siblings	No. of year 7 pupils potentially not eligible for free transport in Sept. 2016	No. of potentially available paying places as a result of removal of post16 eligibility	Possible overall annual receipts generated if all paying places were taken up
Archbishop McGrath	116	31.0%	69.0%	80	154	£99,777
Brynteg School	211	33.6%	66.4%	140	142	£92,002
C C Y Dderwen	231	33.8%	66.2%	153	259	£167,806
Cynffig Comprehensive	128	35.2%	64.8%	83	33	£21,381
Maesteg School	181	33.1%	66.9%	121	102	£66,086
Pencoed School	162	26.5%	73.5%	119	15	£9,719
Porthcawl Comprehensive	191	34.6%	65.4%	125	33	£21,381
YGG Llangynwyd	114	41.2%	58.8%	67	151	£97,833
Total	1334	33.2%	66.8%	891	889	£575,983

Proposal 3
To stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over, who go to school or college.

- 3.39. This proposal applies equally to school pupils in sixth form and students in further education.
- 3.40. However, this proposal includes options to alleviate the impact on learners with the retention of a 'hardship fund' of circa £30k and the opportunity to offer places at full or partial cost, as well as protecting priority groups, for example, those who may be disabled.

- 3.41. It is important to note that some learners will already receive Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). This is an income assessed weekly allowance of £30 to help students with the cost of further education, including transport.
- 3.42. There are considerable opportunities to utilise the seats released on comprehensive school transport as paying places and Table 9 above identifies that there may be an opportunity to offer back these places for pupils of statutory school age and post 16 pupils to purchase.
- 3.43. The outcome of the consultation in respect of removing free transport provision for post 16 pupils (currently provided to those learners who live over 2 miles from either their nearest suitable school or college) indicates that 19% were concerned the proposal would have a negative impact on attendance on FE courses whilst 18% stated that they considered that there would be little or no impact.
- 3.44. Points for consideration:-
- 3.45. Specific concerns raised in the consultations are outlined below:-
- i. 20% of respondents were concerned that the proposal might impact negatively on local communities. Although responses were not explicit in why this might be.
 - ii. Respondents indicated their concern that post 16 attendance maybe negatively impacted
 - iii. That there could potentially be a negative impact on attendance at the only Welsh Medium comprehensive school YGG Llangynwyd.
 - iv. That the current infrastructure, specifically the current bus routes, does not lend itself to easy access for all learners, especially those attending further education establishments;
 - v. 19 per cent stated that the cost may deter pupils from accessing further education.
 - vi. In relation to both Archbishop McGrath High School and YGG Llangynwyd respondents felt that they might be disproportionately affected if the proposal were to be introduced due to their large catchment areas.
 - vii. Qualitative responses indicated that parents and pupils may choose to attend the local English medium comprehensive from the beginning of secondary school as opposed to obtain their GCSE's and subsequently moving schools for further education. Respondents have stated this could in fact have an impact on the pupil's academic performance.
 - viii. At the community engagement workshop in YGG Llangynwyd, attendees also noted the additional risk to the sustainability of the LAs only Welsh Medium Comprehensive school if free transport was to be removed. The main risk outlined was that parents might determine that given that their child would not be receiving free transport Post16 to a school not geographically central to Bridgend and therefore relatively isolated in the North of the County Borough, parents may consider a geographically closer English medium comprehensive school before looking at the option of Welsh medium education further compounded by the proposal to cease free transport at 16.
- 3.46. However in relation to the above, 18 per cent of overall respondents believed the proposal would have little or no impact on themselves or their family.

4. Current situation

- 4.1. It should be noted that very early on in the consultation there was confusion around the use of the word 'proposal' as some attendees to the public engagement events reported that they had made the assumption that these were 'options' and the Local Authority would therefore in its determination approve only one of these.
- 4.2. Officers were therefore explicit with attendees in each of the other engagement events to clarify that each proposal was independent and Cabinet could, in its final determination, conclude to approve or not approve any combination of the three proposals.
- 4.3. The outcome of the consultation is a key element for consideration in determining the appropriateness of the three current proposals identified in paragraph 3.2 above.
- 4.4. As is demonstrated above, there is a great financial benefit to the Council in introducing these proposals. However, that needs to be weighed against the risks that these proposals may bring for schools, pupils, parents and families.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1. There are no implications for the Council's policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1. An initial screening was initially carried out and the consultation also invited stakeholders to raise equality issues. A full EIA has since been prepared and is included in Appendix 3.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. The cessation of the original consultation in January 2014 has meant that the original savings identified for 2015/16 could no longer be realised and the MTFs for the Children's directorate has therefore been re-profiled as shown in Table 3.
- 7.2. The failure to realise these savings would have a significant impact on the Children's Directorate capacity to deliver the total savings identified in the MTFs, and equivalent savings would therefore have to be found from our critical and key core services from within the Directorate.

8. Recommendation

1. That Committee note the content of this report and the outcomes from the consultation (see Appendix 1)
2. Consider and agree any recommendations the Committee may wish to make to Cabinet that is consistent with its challenge and support role in light of the proposals and the consultation responses.

Directorate Chief Officer's Name: Deborah McMillan

Directorate Chief Officer's Job Title: Corporate Director, Education and Transformation

January 25th 2015

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Appendix 1: Consultation Report

Appendix 2: Learner Travel Scenario Table

Appendix 3: EIA

Background documents

Cabinet Report, 17th September 2013, Learner Transport Policy

Report to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 12th November 2013, Learner Transport Policy

Cabinet report, 10th December 2013, Learner Transport Policy

Report to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2nd






September 2014, Learner Travel Policy

Cabinet report, 16th September 2014, Learner Travel Policy

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Learner travel scenario table

				Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021					
Example scenario				Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6						
Pupil	Distance from school	Age on 01/09/2016	Siblings in same school already in receipt of transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	
	1.9 miles	5	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
	1.7 miles	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	1.6 miles	7	N	n/a		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	2.9 miles	11	N	n/a						Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
	2.1 miles	11	Y	n/a						Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Secondary transition											Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11
											Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?
											N	N	N	N	N
											N	N	N	N	N
											N	N	N	N	N
Post 16											Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11
											Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?	Eligible for free transport?
											N	N	N	N	N
											N	N	N	N	N
											Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

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Learner Travel Review

Consultation report

Date of issue: 28 January 2015

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1. Overview

A public consultation reviewing Bridgend County Borough Council's home to school transport policy was undertaken over a twelve week period from 29 September 2014 and 22 December 2014. The consultation received 725 responses from a combination of the consultation survey and seven community workshops held across the county borough. This report details the analysis associated with the consultation.

2. Introduction

A public survey inviting views on the proposed reforms for home to school transport was conducted between 29 September 2014 and 22 December 2014. The local authority outlined three independent proposals based upon school pupil's travel to and from school and how any suggested changes to the current policy will affect residents of the county borough. These proposals will affect all mainstream pupils from the age of five upwards.

The survey was made up of three sections, section one asked five questions regarding the respondent to understand their demographic, section two included five qualitative questions regarding the proposals and their potential impact if implemented and section three featured the standard equalities questions suggested by Welsh Government. All questions asked in the survey were optional and all survey respondents had the opportunity to remain anonymous.

The survey was made available to complete electronically in either English or Welsh via a link on the current consultations page of the council's website. Click [here](#)¹ to view the content of the now archived webpage, which still includes an active link to the survey. Paper copies of the consultation document and the accompanying surveys were made available at all local libraries throughout the county borough.

Comments were also invited via letter, email and phone call. Contact details were also provided for anyone wishing to receive a paper copy directly or any alternative formats of the survey.

¹ <http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/services/consultation/hub/learner-travel-review.aspx>

3. Promotional tools and engagement methods

Details of the consultation received promotion within the council through a 'message of the day' notification. Emails were also sent to the following stakeholders: councillors, regional AMs, local MPs, the First Minister, town and community councils, neighbouring councils, Estyn, governors, the Church in Wales, head teachers and all Local Service Board members including the Police. All school pupils received physical letters to read and share with their parents/guardians, secondary heads were also encouraged to use the texting service to inform the pupils' parents, use 'Moodle' to directly message its pupils a link to the online survey, arrange the subject at school council meetings, and place a link to the survey on their websites. The consultation was also referenced as agenda items at the Bridgend Association of Secondary Head teachers' meeting (BASH), the Federation of Primary Head teachers' meeting. The Bridgend Admissions Forum, Bridgend Equalities Forum (BEF) and Bridgend County Borough Youth Council were also asked to cover the topic as an agenda item. A separate meeting was also offered to all Parent Governors however, alternative arrangements were made following low levels of interest.

The screens in the Civic Offices also promoted a bi-lingual message regarding the consultation and events.

3.1 Consultation document and survey

A consultation document was created to provide respondents with information on the consultation itself and included a link to the consultation questionnaire. Contact details were also provided to offer additional support or guidance if necessary. Both documents were written in plain English to maximise potential inclusion and translated into Welsh.

3.2 Social media

The council tweeted its 4900 @BridgendCBC followers and posted to the 560 users who have liked our Facebook page about the consultation on several occasions during the consultation period to help raise awareness of the consultation and the associated seven customer engagement workshops.

3.3 Local press

The consultation also received publicity on the front page of the Glamorgan Gazette² on 2 October 2014 and on the council website (www.bridgend.gov.uk). The topic overall has received high levels of publicity across Wales.

² <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/parents-face-paying-756-school-7865894>

3.4 Community engagement workshops

Six community engagement workshops were proposed based upon the geographical nature of the county borough. Bridgend College, Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School, Porthcawl Comprehensive, Pencoed Comprehensive, Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen and Maesteg Comprehensive were selected to represent the county borough including any associated feeder primary schools. The events were open for all residents of the county borough to attend between 4pm and 7pm. The events were designed to offer support to complete the questionnaire and answer any questions attendees may have had. An additional seventh community engagement workshop was arranged due to demand at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd.

Venue	Date	Attendees
Pencoed Comprehensive	13 October 2014	0
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	15 October 2014	34
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	16 October 2014	1
Porthcawl Comprehensive	20 October 2014	1
Maesteg Comprehensive	22 October 2014	3
Bridgend College	23 October 2014	5
YGG Llangynwyd	25 November 2014	32
Total		76

4. Response rate

725 responses to the survey were received in total by the closing date of Monday 22 December 2014. Of the responses received 694 were in English and 32 were in Welsh.

The responses were made up of:

Format	English	Welsh	Total
Paper	552	1	553
Online	131	31	162
Email	7	0	7
Letter	2	0	2
Report	1	0	1
Total	693	32	725

Two responses for the survey were received online after the closing date which unfortunately could not be included in the final report.

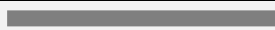




5. Headline figures

- 5.1 Proposal one was the most supported proposal. Over one in three (34 per cent) stated that there would be little to no impact if the proposal were to be introduced.
- 5.2 Of the respondents stating that they themselves or a family member used free transport – almost two in three (65 per cent) said that there would be little or no impact to themselves or their family members if proposal one were to be introduced.
- 5.3 Almost all (94 per cent) of the respondents used one of three commuting methods: by council provided school buses (55 per cent), driving by car (21 per cent) or by walking (18 per cent).
- 5.4 Only two per cent of respondents would be affected if proposal two was introduced however, the majority of respondents (35 per cent) stated that charging the actual cost was too expensive.
- 5.5 Exactly one in five believe introducing proposal three would have a negative impact on the community in the future.
- 5.6 Both Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and YGG Llangynwyd feel they would be disproportionately affected if proposal three were to be introduced due to their large catchment areas.

6. Questions and Analysis

Question one and question two related to personal information which would be used later in conjunction with the final question of the consultation regarding future contact on the outcome of the consultation, if the respondent invited further interaction.

6.1 Organisation / school

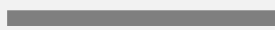





Organisation / school (Q3 + Q4)	#	%	
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	564	75	 75%
YGG Llangynwyd	66	9	 9%
Y Dderwen Comprehensive	38	5	 5%
Bridgend College	10	1	 1%
Other	74	11	 11%

The question offered respondents to select multiple options, as such, the total responses of 752 is larger than the total number of respondents (725).

The majority of respondents were received in paper format from Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School as the school provided the questionnaires to all pupils. As such three in four respondents (75 per cent) were affiliated with the school.

YGG Llangynwyd and Coleg Y Dderwen Comprehensive totalled nine per cent and five per cent of respondents respectively. As predicted, these three schools are arguably the most affected schools due to their large catchment areas. Question four repeated question three for respondents with more than one affiliated schools, the results were combined into the table above to give an overall response.

6.2 Please tick the option(s) that best describes you as a respondent.

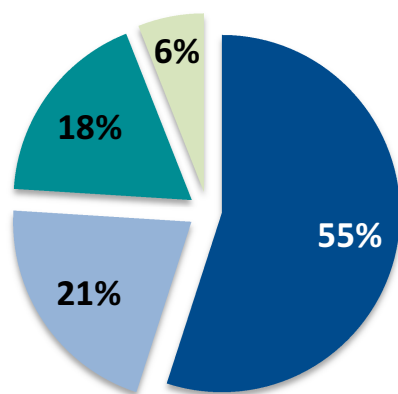
Demographic (Q5)	#	%	
Pupil (secondary)	551	75	 75%
Parent / carer	91	12	 12%
School worker	60	8	 8%
Student	12	2	 2%
School governor	12	2	 2%
Other	12	2	 2%

The question offered respondents to select more than one option, as a multi choice question the total of 738 is higher than the total amount of respondents (725).

Over seven in ten (75 per cent) of the respondents were secondary pupils aged between 11 and 18 years of age. The majority of these responses were received from Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.

There were 91 responses from parents/carers totalling just over one in ten (12 per cent) of the respondents.

6.3 How do you or your child(ren) currently travel to school?

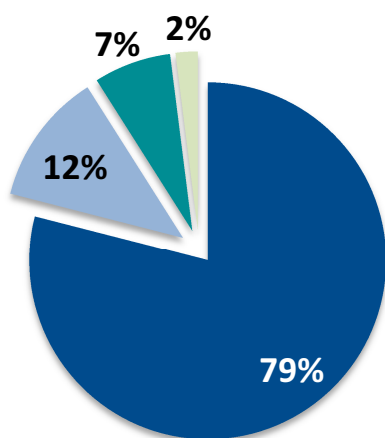


■ School bus (free) ■ Car ■ Walk ■ Other

A mode of transport question was asked to respondents on how either they themselves, or family members, commuted to school/college. The question was used to identify how the respondent and their family members commute to school/college. The highest form of response was on free school buses with over half of the respondents (55 per cent) identifying that they (or a family member) use council provided bus transportation.

Commuting by car and walking received 21 per cent and 18 per cent of responses respectively. These three forms of transport alone total 94 per cent of respondents commuting to and from school.

6.4 Please tick the option(s) that best describes you or your child(ren) as pupils/students



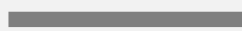

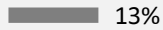







■ Secondary ■ Sixth form ■ Primary ■ Other

As part of understanding the demographic of responses received, respondents were asked to identify what level of study they or their family members were currently undertaking.

Nearly four in five (79 per cent) stated that either themselves or a family member were currently in secondary school (11-16 years of age), with a further one in ten (12 per cent) were in sixth form (17-18 years of age) within secondary school.

6.5 Proposal one

To increase the distance required for free transport between a pupil's home and their school, to match the distance required by law (including Welsh and religious schools).

Proposal one	#	%	
Policy will have little effect	258	34	 34%
Cost on family	122	16	 16%
Change from Welsh to English school	99	13	 13%
Affect parent's working hours	43	6	 6%
Worry regarding attendance	39	5	 5%
Proposed distance too far to walk	39	5	 5%
Safety of children worries	38	5	 5%
Agreement with policy	35	5	 5%
Disagreement with policy - general	35	5	 5%
Other	58	8	 8%

The most popular response to proposal one stated that there would be little to no impact if the proposal was introduced with over one in three (34 per cent) stating this. Of the respondents stating that they themselves or a family member used free transport – almost two in three (65 per cent) said that there would be little or no impact to themselves or their family members if proposal one were to be introduced.

Only two other topics received over ten per cent support with 16 per cent stating that there would be a cost on their family and 13 per cent mentioning that this may cause pupils to change from a Welsh speaking school to an English speaking school. More specifically for the latter point regarding Welsh speaking schools, due to the geographical location of YGG Llangynwyd an alteration to the free transport distance from two miles to three miles is likely to mean pupils/students living in Maesteg having to pay for a bus seat (which may not be guaranteed), whilst potentially living much closer to Maesteg Comprehensive. The cost and the risk of not being guaranteed a seat on the bus could encourage parents or pupils/students themselves to transfer to the English speaking comprehensive school as it could be more convenient for some pupils, with a cost saving for the family.

Other issues raised related to the safety of children. The increase in distance for children walking was mentioned as potentially dangerous particularly in the winter months. Also, the distance was deemed too far to walk by five per cent of respondents. A potential increase in traffic around the school from the current one in five cars transporting children to and from schools (judging on the data gathered from the modes of transport question within this questionnaire).

It is also important to mention that one parent referenced the fact they themselves could neither walk their child to school nor afford the payments for travel if proposal one was introduced due to their disability. Any amendment to the proposals must inform the parent/guardians of the support provided by the council in situations such as these.

6.6 Proposal two

To charge the full cost of a school bus pass for pupils who do not receive free school transport.

Proposal two	#	%	
Increase too expensive	228	35	35%
Little or no effect	151	23	23%
Change of lifestyle/working hours	83	13	13%
Change from WME* to mainstream	56	9	9%
Worry regarding attendance	33	5	5%
Proposed distance too far to walk	33	5	5%
Safety of children worries	30	5	5%
Agreement with policy	25	4	4%
Other	17	2	2%

*Welsh Medium Education (FE)

The most popular response regarding proposal two was over one in three (35 per cent) stating that the introduction of the proposal was too expensive in comparison to the current price charged, while others stated that there would be little or no effect with one in five (23 per cent) mentioning this. The only other proposal to receive reference from over ten per cent of respondents was with 13 per cent stating that the proposal would cause a change of lifestyle for example through alterations to their current transport plans which may directly impact on the parent/guardians ability to attend work on time. Others have urged the council to introduce a subsidy to help with the increase in payment or by issuing the charges on a monthly basis.

However, further analysis into the data (mode of transport used by respondents) revealed that only 16 of the 725 respondents (two per cent) would be impacted by proposal two if introduced. At present there are 48 pupils currently paying Bridgend County Borough Council for transport.

Through the community engagement workshops, it was suggested that all pupils willing to pay for transport should be guaranteed a seat on the bus – currently due to the requirements of having to provide certain pupils with free transport, if a child in a position to receive free transport requests a place on the school bus, pupils paying for a place could be forced to lose their paid place.

6.7 Proposal three

To stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over, who go to school or college.

Proposal three	#	%	
Negative future impact on the community	127	20	20%
Cost would impact FE* attendance	120	19	19%
Little or no impact	110	18	18%
Religious education could be impacted	81	13	13%
Welsh education could be impacted	56	9	9%
Quality of life would change	48	8	8%
Provide savings required elsewhere	38	6	6%
Introduce hardship fund or subsidy / increase EMA	13	2	2%
Current bus routes insufficient	10	2	2%
Other	23	3	3%

*Further Education (FE)

The most popular answer received was referenced by exactly one in five (20 per cent), of which the respondents believed that proposal three would have a negative impact on the future of the community. Similarly just under one in five (19 per cent) stated that the cost would deter pupils from accessing further education. In direct contrast to this 18 per cent believed it would have little or no impact on themselves or their family.

13 per cent of respondents believed that religious schools could be impacted and nine per cent of respondents believed that Welsh education could be impacted by the introduction of proposal three. Both Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and YGG Llangynwyd as previously mentioned in this paper have large catchment areas unlike mainstream English speaking schools (with the debateable exception of Y Dderwen). Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and YGG Llangynwyd may have to compete much more with the accessibility of English medium comprehensives if the proposal was introduced.. Qualitative responses have mentioned that parents and pupils may choose to attend a mainstream comprehensive from the beginning of secondary school as opposed to obtaining their GCSE's and subsequently moving schools for further education. Respondents have stated this could in fact have an impact on the pupil's academic performance. At the community engagement workshop in YGG Llangynwyd, attendees also noted the additional difficulty of the language barrier if a pupil was to study their GCSE's at the Welsh comprehensive before looking for a closer location to home when enrolling onto further education.

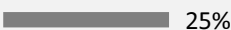

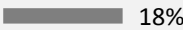






If the proposal was passed, one suggested alternative was to host certain lessons for YGG Llangynwyd sixth form at a more central location, particularly those that are currently conducted alongside Ysgol Llanhari. More generally for all further education establishments, a suggestion given within the consultation was to reform the classes for students to minimise the necessity of travel.

An area that will need addressing according to the respondents if proposal three does go ahead is the availability of bus routes for students in further education to sufficiently attend

their school of choice. At present, some pupils would have to catch multiple buses in order to reach their destination each day.

The consultation did reference the potential of a hardship fund which was also mentioned by two per cent of the respondents. Alternative suggestions to this was to increase EMA, despite the guidance regarding EMA being for transportation costs, many felt an increase to the financial support due to proposal three should be introduced.

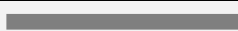

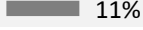




6.8 Are there any groups of learners aged 16 or over who you believe should continue to receive free transport?

Exceptions	#	%	
Disabled children	106	25	 25%
Every child	87	21	 21%
Children in care / care leavers	73	18	 18%
Households on low incomes or certain benefits	57	14	 14%
NEETs / those at risk	26	6	 6%
All of the above	25	6	 6%
Protect Welsh and Faith schools	20	5	 5%
Over 16s	10	2	 2%
Other	13	3	 3%

Exactly one in four respondents (25 per cent) suggested that disabled children should be entitled to continue to receive free transportation. Over one in five (21 per cent) believed that all children should be entitled to free transportation – which would oppose the introduction of proposal three. Children in care and care leavers received almost one in five (18 per cent) of respondents supporting the group having free transport.

The only other area to receive over a one in ten response rate was for households on low incomes or certain benefits with 14 per cent.

6.9 What changes could the council reasonably make to encourage pupils and students to walk or cycle more often to and from school or college?

Exceptions	#	%	
Safe routes	99	35	 35%
Better / new routes	67	24	 24%
Training schemes (improve awareness)	31	11	 11%
Better facilities for bikers (lock ups etc.)	31	11	 11%
Special bike deals / bike schemes	21	7	 7%
Adequate street lighting	15	5	 5%
Other	19	6	 6%

The majority of respondents (35 per cent) believed that introducing safe routes was the preferred way to encourage more pupils and students to walk or cycle more often. Respondents also believed that introducing better routes would help influence pupils and students with almost one in four (24 per cent) making reference to this suggestion. Alongside safer routes it was also suggested by 11 per cent of respondents that training schemes should be offered to improve awareness of the routes available and also teach those that require help. The same percentage (11 per cent) also wanted better facilities for cyclists, for instance bike racks and shower/changing facilities.

Other suggestions offered within the consultation were that schools should receive awards for being 'green' such as certificates and stickers for pupils/students. Alternatively one respondent suggested that by having a communal drop off point further from the school would ensure there is some degree of activity, this has been disputed by others within the consultation as the knowledge their child safely arriving at school is paramount.

7. Conclusion

Each proposal has been summarised below based upon the responses received during the consultation period.

7.1 Proposal one

The consultation has demonstrated that of the three proposals, proposal one was the most accepted by the majority as having a minimal affect. Comparatively, YGG Llangynwyd would be disproportionately affected by the introduction of proposal one in comparison to other schools within the county borough.

7.2 Proposal two

Proposal two will have an impact on a minority of pupils/students however, the majority believe that the introduction of charging the actual cost for a school seat is too expensive. Suggestions of offering a subsidy for those who do have to pay, and guaranteeing the place for the paying pupil were highlighted both in the questionnaire and the customer engagement workshops. At present 48 pupils/students currently pay for transport through Bridgend County Borough Council.

7.3 Proposal three

Proposal three is the most disputed amongst respondents. Concerns are centred on:

- ▶ the current infrastructure – specifically the current bus routes if those attending further education require to use the service;
- ▶ the financial costs the proposal would add to students and families attending further education and how the additional cost may increase the numbers of those currently not in education or training (NEETs); and,
- ▶ both Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School and YGG Llangynwyd feel they are disproportionately affected if the proposal were to be introduced due to their large catchment areas.

8. Additional consultation data

A closed opt-in yes or no question on learner travel was asked in Bridgend County Borough Council's Budget Review 2015³. The results revealed that exactly half of the respondents (50 per cent) opted-in for a review of the current home to school transport with a potential cost savings of £550,000.

9. Appendices

Consultation responses	Appendix 1
EIA screening	Appendix 2

³ <http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/services/consultation/hub/budget-review-2015.aspx>

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Full Equality Impact Assessment:

Name of project, policy, function, service or proposal being assessed	Home to school transport policy
Date assessment completed	19 January 2015

At this stage you will need to re-visit your initial screening template to inform your discussions on consultation and refer to [guidance notes on completing a full EIA](#)

The 3 elements to the Home to School Transport Policy comprised 3 separate proposals which were agreed by Cabinet on 16 September 2014. These were:

Proposal 1: To increase the distance required for free transport between a pupils home and their school, to match the distance required by law (including Welsh Medium and Voluntary Aided Schools);

Proposal 2: To charge the full cost of a school bus pass for pupils who do not receive free school transport;

Proposal 3: To stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over who go to school or college.

1. Consultation

		Action Points
Who do you need to consult with (which equality groups)?	Within each of the protected characteristic groups the council will need to consult with: Head Teachers, Teachers, Governing Bodies, School Councils, School Students (10yrs – 18yrs), School Students (16+), Bridgend County Borough Council Youth Council, Parents, carers and guardians of children and the general public.	The consultation tools and mechanisms to be used should include: Focussed Meetings, Public Meetings, a consultation document and associated questionnaire, publication of all information on the council's website and school websites, press releases, information on the council's customer service screens, all partners, social media, Bridgemembers, schools texting service, Local Service Board, citizens panel
How will you ensure your consultation is inclusive?	The council is mindful that as wide a range of consultation and engagement activities and tools need to be deployed in order to reach as wide an audience of	

	<p>consultees as possible. Consultation and engagement must be maximised in order that public views and concerns are “heard and considered” by the council to identify better ways of working and influence difficult decision making from a representative group.</p> <p>Methods of consultation will include (where appropriate) bilingual (Welsh / English) materials, information produced in languages other than English and Welsh, large print documents, easy read versions of information, provision of audio information and will include a mix of hard copy documents and provision of online forms and information. The council recognises that, key to the</p>	
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	<p>council’s consultation and engagement strategy is the commitment to visiting the public and other consultees in their own locations / communities at times that are convenient to them.</p>	
<p>What consultation was carried out? Consider any consultation activity already carried out, which may not have been specifically about equality but may have information you can use</p>	<p>Consultation activity comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Bridgend Association of Head Teachers (BASH); b) The Federation of Primary Head Teachers; c) Bridgend Equality Forum (comprising representation from public, private and third sector service providers and representative groups). Arrangements were also made to meet with all parent governors but, due to a low level of interest, alternative arrangements were made. 	

	<p>d) 7 Community engagement workshops were arranged geographically covering Bridgend at: Bridgend College, Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School, Porthcawl Comprehensive, Pencoed Comprehensive, Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen, Maesteg Comprehensive and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwydd. These schools were selected to represent the local area and relevant feeder schools.</p>	
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Record of consultation with people from equality groups

The following consultation events were arranged with a view to geographically covering the entire County Borough. The events were publicised via local media, the council's website, public notices, citizens panel, local schools, press and radio advertisements. Despite these arrangements and the development of, what was considered to be, a fully inclusive engagement strategy, attendance was, in some cases, disappointingly low.

Group or persons consulted	Date, venue and number of people	Feedback, areas of concern raised	Action Points
Pencoed Comprehensive School	13 October 2014, Pencoed Comprehensive School. There were no attendees.	There were no attendees	Please see tables within this Full EIA.
Archbishop McGrath High School	15 October 2014, Archbishop McGrath High School, 34 attendees.	Feedback documents were circulated to all attendees at the event for individual considered views to be shared with the council.	Please see tables within this Full EIA.

Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	16 October 2014, Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen, 1 attendee.	Feedback documents were circulated to all attendees at the event for individual considered views to be shared with the council.	Please see tables within this Full EIA.
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	20 October 2014, Porthcawl Comprehensive School, 1 attendee.	Feedback documents were circulated to all attendees at the event for individual considered views to be shared with the council.	Please see tables within this Full EIA.
Maesteg Comprehensive School	22 October 2014, Maesteg Comprehensive School, 3 attendees.	Feedback documents were circulated to all attendees at the event for individual considered views to be shared with the council.	Please see tables within this Full EIA.
Bridgend College	23 October 2014, Bridgend College, 5 attendees.	Feedback documents were circulated to all attendees at the event for individual considered views to be shared with the council.	Please see tables within this Full EIA.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gynradd Llangynwyd	32 October 2014, Ysgol Gymraeg Gynradd Llangynwyd, 32 attendees.	Feedback documents were circulated to all attendees at the event for individual considered views to be shared with the council.	Please see tables within this Full EIA.
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Additionally, 725 responses to the consultation survey were received in total. 694 responses were in English and 32 in Welsh. An analysis of the origin of these responses follows in the table below:

Format	English	Welsh	Total
Paper	552	1	553
Online	131	31	162
E Mail	7	0	7
Letter	2	0	2
Report	1	0	1
Total	693	32	725

The survey comprised of 3 sections:

Section 1: asked 5 questions of the respondent to better understand the demographics;

Section 2: asked 5 qualitative questions regarding the proposals and the potential impact and

Section 3: asked featured the standard equalities questions suggested by Welsh Government.












Headline figures from the consultation and engagement responses were:

- The most popular response to proposal 1 (34%) was that there would be little or no impact if the proposal was introduced;
- 94% of respondents used one of three commuting methods ie council provided school buses (55%), driving by car (21%) and walking (18%);
- Only 2% of respondents would be affected if proposal 2 was introduced. However, the majority of respondents (35%) stated that the proposed cost was too expensive;
- 20% of respondents believed that introducing proposal 3 would have a negative future impact on the community and

- Respondents from both Archbishop McGrath High School and Ysgol Gymraeg Gynradd Llangynwyd feel they would be disproportionately affected if proposal 3 is introduced due to their large catchment areas. A detailed breakdown of consultation responses follows:

Organisation/school (if applicable).

Organisation/School (Q3)

Archbishop McGrath	564		75%
YGG Llangynwyd	66		9%
Y Dderwen	38		5%
Bridgend College	10		1%
Brynteg Comprehensive	8		1%
YGG Cynwyd Sant	8		1%
Ysgol Y Ferch O'r Sger Corneli	7		1%
St Mary's R.C	6		1%
St Mary's & St Patrick's	5		1%
Porthcawl Comprehensive	5		1%
Other	35		5%
Total	752		












The question offered respondents to select multiple options, as such, the total responses of 752 is larger than the total number of respondents (725).

The majority of responses were received in paper format from Archbishop McGrath High School as the school provided the questionnaires to all pupils. As such three in four respondents (75 per cent) were affiliated with the school.

An analysis of respondents follows:

Please tick the option(s) that best describes you as a respondent?

Demographic (Q5)

Pupil (secondary)	551		75%
Parent/carer	91		12%
School worker	60		8%
Student	12		2%
School governor	12		2%
Other	5		1%
Head teacher	3		0%
Charity/voluntary org	2		0%
Pupil (primary)	1		0%
Bus or taxi driver	1		0%
Police force	0		0%
Total	738		









The question offered respondents to select all that applied, as a multi choice question the total of 738 is higher than the total amount of respondents (725).

Over seven in ten of the respondents were secondary pupils (aged between 11-18). The majority of these responses were received from Archbishop McGrath High School.

A mode of transport question was used to identify how the respondent and their family members commute to school. The highest form of response was on free school buses with over half of the respondents (55 per cent) using council provided bus transportation. Commuting by car and walking received 21 per cent and 18 per cent of responses. These three forms of transport alone total 94 per cent of respondents commuting to and from school.

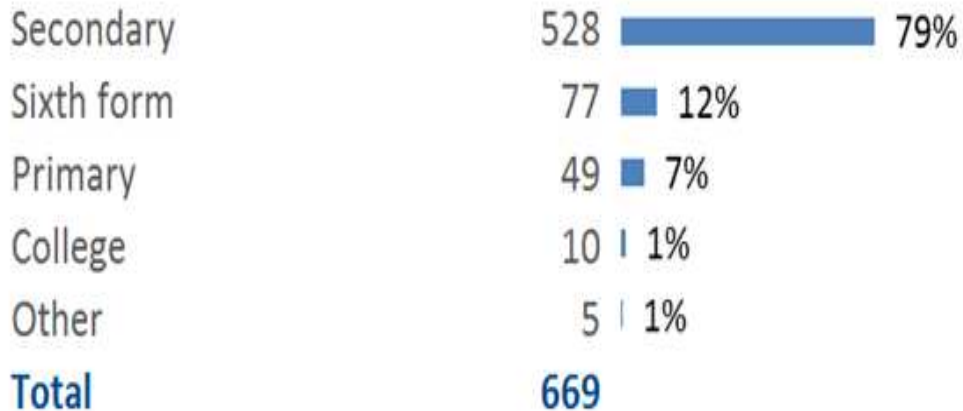
Modes of transport used and described by respondents were:

Modes of transport (Q6)

School bus (free)	419		55%
Car	161		21%
Walk	139		18%
Taxi	17		2%
School bus (paid)	16		2%
Public bus	8		1%
Cycle	2		0%
Other	2		0%
Total	764		

As part of understanding the demographic of responses received, respondents were asked to identify what level of study they or their family members were currently undertaking. Nearly four in five (79 per cent) stated that either themselves or a family member was in secondary school, with a further one in ten (12 per cent) in sixth form within secondary school.

Current level of study (Q7)





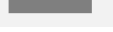







2. Assessment of Impact

Based on the data you have analysed, and the results of consultation or research, consider what the potential impact will be upon people with protected characteristics (negative or positive). If you do identify any adverse impact you **must**:

- a) Liaise with the Equalities Team who may seek legal advice as to whether, based on the evidence provided, an adverse impact is or is potentially discriminatory, and**
- b) Identify steps to mitigate any adverse impact – these actions will need to be included in your action plan.**

Include any examples of how the policy helps to promote equality.

The headline data and responses received on proposal 1 (increase the distance required for free transport between a pupil’s home and their school, to match the statutory distance (including Welsh and faith schools)).



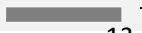

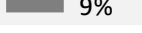

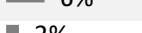
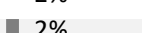
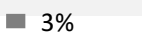
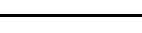
Proposal one	#	%	
Policy will have little effect	258	34	 34%
Cost on family	122	16	 16%
Change from Welsh to English school	99	13	 13%
Affect parent’s working hours	43	6	 6%
Worry regarding attendance	39	5	 5%
Proposed distance too far to walk	39	5	 5%
Safety of children worries	38	5	 5%
Agreement with policy	35	5	 5%
Disagreement with policy - general	35	5	 5%
Other	58	8	 8%

The headline data and responses received on proposal 2 (to charge the full cost of a school bus pass for pupils who do not receive free school transport).

Proposal two	#	%	
Increase too expensive	228	35	35
Little or no effect	151	23	23 %
Change from Welsh to English school	83	13	13 %
Affect parent's working hours	56	9	9%
Worry regarding attendance	33	5	5%
Proposed distance too far to walk	33	5	5%
Safety of children worries	30	5	5%
Agreement with policy	25	4	4%
Other	17	2	2%

Through the community engagement workshops it was suggested that all pupils not receiving free transport should be guaranteed a seat should they be willing to pay – currently due to the requirements of having to provide certain pupils with free transport, if a child in a position to receive free transport requests a place on the school bus, pupils paying for a place could be forced to lose their paid place.

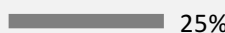

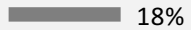

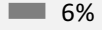
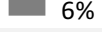
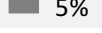


The headline data and responses received on proposal 3 (to stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over who go to school or college)

Proposal three	#	%	
Negative future impact on the community	127	20	 20
Cost would impact FE* attendance	120	19	 19
Little or no impact	110	18	 18
Religious education could be impacted	81	13	 13 %
Welsh education could be impacted	56	9	 9%
Quality of life would change	48	8	 8%
Provide savings required elsewhere	38	6	 6%
Introduce hardship fund or subsidy / increase EMA	13	2	 2%
Current bus routes insufficient	10	2	 2%
Other	23	3	 3%

One suggested alternative was to host lessons for YGG Llangynwyd sixth form at a more central location, particularly those that are currently conducted alongside Ysgol Llanhari. More generally for all further education establishments, a suggestion given within the consultation was to reform the classes for students to minimise the necessity of travel. An area that will need addressing according to the respondents if proposal three does go ahead is the availability of bus routes for students in further

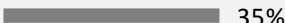






education to sufficiently attend their school of choice. At present, some pupils would have to catch multiple buses in order to reach their destination each day.

The groups of learners aged 16 or over who consultation respondents felt should continue to receive free transport were as follows:

Exceptions	#	%	
Disabled children	106	25	 25%
Every child	87	21	 21%
Children in care / care leavers	73	18	 18%
Households on low incomes or certain benefits	57	14	 14%
NEETs / those at risk	26	6	 6%
All of the above	25	6	 6%
Protect Welsh and Faith schools	20	5	 5%
Over 16s	10	2	 2%
Other	13	3	 3%

One in four respondents (25 per cent) suggested that disabled children should be entitled to continue to receive free transportation. Over one in five (21 per cent) believed that all children should be entitled to free transportation – which would oppose the introduction of proposal three. Children in care and care leavers received almost one in five (18 per cent) respondents supporting the group having free transport.

Respondents to the consultation felt that the changes the council could reasonably make to encourage pupils and students to walk or cycle more often to and from school or college were:

Exceptions	#	%	
Safe routes	99	35	 35%
Better / new routes	67	24	 24%
Training schemes (improve awareness)	31	11	 11%
Better facilities for bikers (lock ups etc.)	31	11	 11%
Special bike deals / bike schemes	21	7	 7%
Adequate street lighting	15	5	 5%
Other	19	6	 6%

The majority of respondents (35 per cent) believed that introducing safe routes was the preferred way to encourage more pupils and students to walk or cycle more often. Respondents also believed that introducing better routes would help with almost one in four (24 per cent) making reference to this suggestion. Alongside safer routes it was also suggested by 11 per cent of respondents that training schemes should be offered to improve awareness of the routes available and also teach those that require help. The same percentage (11 per cent) also wanted better facilities in order for cyclists, for instance lock-ups for bikes and shower/changing facilities. Other suggestions offered within the consultation were that schools should receive awards for being 'green' such as certificates and stickers for pupils/students. Alternatively one respondent suggested that by having a communal drop off point further from the school

would ensure there is some degree of activity, this has been disputed by others within the consultation as the knowledge their child has safely arrived at school is paramount.

The conclusion of the consultation was that:

Proposal one

The consultation has demonstrated that of the three proposals, proposal one was the most accepted by the majority as having a minimal affect. Comparatively, YGG Llangynwyd would be disproportionately affected by the introduction of proposal one in comparison to other schools within the county borough.

Proposal two

Proposal two will have an impact on a minority of pupils/students however, the majority believe that the introduction of charging the actual cost for a school seat is too expensive. Suggestions of offering a subsidy for those who do have to pay, and guaranteeing the place for the paying pupil were highlighted both in the questionnaire and the customer engagement workshops.

Proposal three

Proposal three is the most disputed amongst respondents. Concerns are centred on:

- ▶ the current infrastructure – specifically the current bus routes if those attending further education require to use the service;
- ▶ the financial costs the proposal would add to students and families attending further education and how the additional cost may increase the numbers of those currently not in education or training (NEETs); and,
- ▶ both Archbishop McGrath High School and YGG Llangynwyd feel they are disproportionately affected if the proposal were to be introduced due to their large catchment areas. It is important to note that proposal three does provide a more comprehensive coverage to these schools than legally required.

Gender	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact on women and men.	None	Neither men nor women will be disproportionately negatively affected by this proposal.
Disability	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact on disabled people (ensure consideration of a range of impairments, e.g. physical, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, long-term illness).	25% of respondents felt that disabled children could be negatively impacted by the proposal and that they should continue to have free transportation. Additionally, a number of parents, carers and guardians have expressed concerns that, should children be	Special Educational Needs (SEN) services will be protected, these proposals affecting mainstreaming education only.. The transport requirements of pupils with SEN or a disability depend on individual circumstances and

	<p>required to walk to school, they would not be able to accompany them due to a disability.</p>	<p>the route they must travel. If a pupil cannot walk to school because of the nature of their special education needs or disability, the local authority must provide free home to school transport even if the distance is less than the statutory limit.</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>Impact or potential impact</p>	<p>Actions to mitigate</p>
<p>Identify the impact/potential impact of the service on Black and minority ethnic (BME) people.</p>	<p>Black and minority ethnic people will not be disproportionately negatively affected by this proposal.</p> <p>However, the impact on families</p>	<p>Although BME people will receive equal consideration under these proposals, there is a perceived risk that there may be a drop in students opting for a 6th form education through the medium of</p>

	<p>and individual students expressing a desire to receive a Welsh Medium Education is of most concern to respondents.</p> <p>Due to the geographical location of YGG Llangynwyd, an alteration to the free transport distance from two miles to three miles may mean pupils/students living in Maesteg will have to pay for a bus seat (not guaranteed). While they live within walking distance of Maesteg Comprehensive, the cost and the risk of not being guaranteed a seat on the bus could encourage parents or pupils/students themselves to transfer to the English speaking</p>	<p>Welsh should transportation to and from the Welsh Medium Secondary School which may persuade students to opt for 6th Form education elsewhere. This would have a possible 2 fold impact:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. YGG Llangynwyd’s provision of 6th Form education through the medium of Welsh may no longer be viable and; 2. The number of Welsh speakers in Bridgend and therefore the promotion of the Welsh Language and Culture, may drop significantly over the coming
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	comprehensive as it would be within walking distance for some pupils.	years. This latter impact would require immediate consideration.
Religion and belief	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact of the service on people of different religious and faith groups.	Respondents from Archbishop McGrath High School expressed concern that the proposals would negatively impact families and children from the Roman Catholic Faith due to its large catchment area ie the need for Roman Catholic children from across Bridgend County Borough to have to travel to this school for Secondary School Education within the Roman Catholic Faith.	Proposal three already provides a more comprehensive coverage to Archbishop McGrath High School than the required statutory minimum. There is a perceived risk that there may be a drop in students opting for a 6th form education in Archbishop McGrath High School as transportation to and from the School may persuade students to opt for 6th Form education elsewhere. This would have a possible 2 fold

		<p>impact:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Archbishop McGrath High School’s provision of 6th Form education may no longer be viable and; 2. There may be a significant impact on the Roman Catholic Faith in Bridgend. This latter impact would require immediate consideration.
Sexual Orientation	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact of the service on gay, lesbian and bisexual people.	None	There is no disproportionate or negative affect identified by this proposal in terms of sexual orientation.

Age	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact of the service on older people and younger people.	By the very nature of this proposal, younger people (from age 5 upwards) will be impacted. Additionally, parents, carers and guardians may be affected by the proposal as, if approved, they will need to consider alternative modes of transport to ensure children attend school which, for some may not be viable.	Students aged 16 + will be treated equally whether they opt for 6 th Form education in schools or to go to college. The sibling rule will also be applied enabling children to attend the same school as their siblings.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact on pregnancy and maternity	None	There is no disproportionate or negative affect identified by this proposal in terms of pregnancy

		and maternity.
Transgender	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact of the service on transgender people	None	There is no disproportionate or negative affect identified by this proposal on transgender people.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Impact or potential impact	Actions to mitigate
Identify the impact/potential impact of the service on Marriage and Civil Partnership.	None	There is no disproportionate or negative affect identified by this proposal in terms of marriage and civil partnership

It is essential that you now complete the action plan. Once your action plan is complete, please ensure that the actions are mainstreamed into the relevant Thematic Service Development Plan.

3. Action Plan

Action	Lead Person	Target for completion	Resources needed	Service Development plan for this action
Action 1				

Please outline the name of the independent person (someone other the person undertaking the EIA) countersigning this EIA below:

Please outline how and when this EIA will be monitored in future and when a review will take place:

Signed:

Date:

4. Publication of your results and feedback to consultation groups

It is important that the results of this impact assessment are published in a user friendly accessible format.

It is also important that you feedback to your consultation groups with the actions that you are taking to address their concerns and to mitigate against any potential adverse impact.

Please send completed EIA form to the [Equalities Team](#)

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The report presents the items due to be considered at the Committee’s Special meeting to be held on 7 April 2015 and seeks confirmation of the information required for the subsequent meeting following the Annual General Meeting of Council.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities.

2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013–2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 19 February 2014 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

3.1 At its meeting on 10 June 2014, the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee determined its Annual Forward Work Programme for 2014-15.

4. Current Situation / proposal.

Meetings of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4.1 In relation to the Committee’s next meeting, scheduled to be held on 7 April 2015, the table below lists the items to be considered and the invitees due to attend.

Topic	Invitees	Specific Information Requested	Research to be Undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Unit
Out of County ALN (plus update on statementing)	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children’s Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	Report detailing the work being undertaken to return children with additional needs to in-house provision. Report to also include an update on changes	

		relating to statementing of children	
Schools Task Group	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Nicola Echanis, Head of Strategy Commissioning and Partnerships	Report looking at the rationale behind the Task Group, its purpose, expected outcomes etc.	
Child Sexual Exploitation	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director - Children's Services Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	Report outlining the extent of the issue in Bridgend – with evidence to support this, plus evidence of actions being undertaken to deal with/prevent incidents	
SSARF Nominations	None	Nominations for SSARF Joint Panel	

4.2 The table below lists the items to be considered and the invitees due to attend in respect of the following meeting, the date for which will be agreed at the Annual General Meeting of Council in May.

Topic	Invitees	Specific Information Requested	Research to be Undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Unit
Scrutiny Annual Forward Work Programme 2015-16	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director – Education and Transformation Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Susan Cooper, Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing	Scrutiny Annual Forward Work Programme proposals	
Exclusions in Schools	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director – Education and Transformation Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People	Update on Task and Finish Group work into exclusions in schools – completed?	
Remodelling of Childrens Residential Care	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director – Education and Transformation Susan Cooper, Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing Cllr Huw David, Cabinet	Members requested that they receive further detailed information relating to the remodelling of Children's Residential Care as soon as possible in the new	

	Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	year.	
Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers	Deborah McMillan, Corporate Director – Education and Transformation Susan Cooper, Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing Cllr Huw David, Cabinet Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	Further detailed examination of the key issues affecting recruitment and retention	

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental well being in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equality impacts arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 None.

8. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the topics due be considered at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 7 April 2015 and confirm if it requires any additional specific information to be provided by the invitees listed or the Overview & Scrutiny Unit;
- (ii) Determine the invitees to be invited to attend, any specific information it would like the invitees to provide and any research that it would like the Overview & Scrutiny Unit to undertake in relation to its subsequent meeting following the Annual General Meeting of Council.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services
2014

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01656 643613

Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background Documents:

None