

Legal and Regulatory Services /
Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddiol
Direct line / Deialu uniongyrchol: 01656 643148
Ask for / Gofynnwch am: Mark Galvin

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

Date / Dyddiad: 30th March 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, 7 April 2015 at 2.00 pm.**

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. Principles Document 3 - 14
Invitees:

Deborah McMillan - Corporate Director - Education and Transformation
Susan Cooper - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Councillor Huw David - Cabinet Member Children & Young People
Nicola Echanis - Head of Strategy Commissioning and Partnerships
Sue Roberts - Group Manager School Improvement
4. Child Sexual Exploitation 15 - 26
Invitees:

Deborah McMillan - Corporate Director - Education and Transformation
Susan Cooper - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Councillor Huw David - Cabinet Member Children & Young People
Colin Turner - Head of Safeguarding and Family Support

5. Social Services Annual Reporting Framework - Nominations for Joint Research and Evaluation Panel 27 - 30
6. Forward Work Programme Update 31 - 34
7. 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

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7TH APRIL 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

PRINCIPLES DOCUMENT (FOR INFORMATION)

1. Purpose of Report.

The purpose of this report is to inform Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the Children's Directorate's revised Principles document to inform the planning for school improvement.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

The information in this report relates to strategic priority 2 in the Corporate Plan 'Working Together to Raise Ambitions and Drive Up Educational Achievement'.

3. Background

3.1 The Children's Directorate has revised the Principles which were established on 13th September 2006 and upon which planning for school organisation should be based.

3.2 The rationale for the revision is to ensure that plans for further school improvement take into account the current context of falling rolls, a number of surplus primary and secondary school places, a number of Head Teachers reaching retirement age in the next 5 years and financial constraints, which means that a strategy for sustainable provision is required.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 A set of Principles and criteria (Appendix 1) to underpin the future of education and learning provision which can then be applied to establish a strategic development plan for the next ten years has been developed. These criteria will provide a framework upon which decisions will be made.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 The content of this report has no effect upon policy and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no direct equality impact issues arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the document.

Deborah McMillan
Director of Education and Transformation

Contact Officer:

Telephone: (01656) 642616

E-mail: Deborah.McMillan@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Children's Directorate
Bridgend County Borough Council
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

SCHOOLS TASK GROUP:

A STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME: PRINCIPLES TO UNDERPIN CHANGE

Rationale :

The rationale for the task group being established is in the context of falling rolls, a large number of surplus primary and secondary school places, a number of Head Teachers reaching retirement age in the next 5 years and financial constraints leading to a growing number of schools in a deficit budget situation. Maintaining the status quo may not be an option, but at the same time acknowledging the great variety and diversity across the County needs to be taken into account in any future plans. A strategy for sustainable provision is required.

1. Background

School re-organisation is an evolving process, driven by events both locally and nationally. It is the means by which a local authority responds to changing circumstances that impact upon its ability to meet its duty to secure efficient primary and secondary education in its area and to promote high standards and the fulfillment of every child's potential (Education Act 1996).

This paper sets out the principles underpinning the process of school re-organisation in Bridgend County Borough. The principles have been developed to support an overarching strategy for school improvement that aims to provide 'fit for purpose' schools capable of delivering high quality educational experiences for all pupils. It is in this context that the principles are to be applied. They provide clarity of purpose and transparency of approach and determine the main factors that will be taken into account in considering all proposals for change, including, where necessary, school closures and alternative school models. Full and effective implementation of a school improvement programme will need a long term strategy for delivery, one that maps out proposals for change over an elongated period, delivered by means of a rolling programme reviewed annually.

To ensure a coherent and integrated County Borough-wide approach to the strategic school improvement programme, there is a strong and explicit relationship between the principles articulated in this document and corporate policies and priorities. The principles reflect the priorities of the Corporate / Partnership Plan. They also draw upon the Welsh Government guidance document 'School Organisation Proposals' (Circular No: 23/02) which requires prime consideration be given to the effect of any proposed change on the standards of teaching and attainment in schools and the Welsh Government guidance 'Federation process of maintained schools in Wales' (Circular No:011/2014).

Embodied in the principles is the vision for education articulated in the Partnership Plan; a vision that enhances achievement through continued school improvement and places education at the centre of community development. Delivering change that will allow all the citizens of Bridgend the opportunity to access services of the highest standard is an aim of the Partnership Plan that is supported by the principles.

Similarly, the principles, guided by a sustainable development theme, promote a long term perspective in planning for future interests, whilst recognising the demands of today's needs.

Within this context, the Children's Directorate is well placed to take forward a strategic school improvement programme. It already has school improvement as the cornerstone of its delivery and making a positive difference to the lives of children and young people within Bridgend, both now and in the years ahead, is a core function of the Service.

The Service holds detailed information on educational performance, pupil numbers, school organisation and capacities, and the suitability and sufficiency of building stock. This combined with contextual information from other services enables the Children's Directorate to develop plans for the future of education within the County Borough from an informed base.

2. Contextual Information

i) General

Bridgend County Borough Council is a unitary authority sharing borders with 3 other authorities. The County Borough covers an area of about 28,500 hectares and is economically and linguistically diverse. The employment rate is 71.7% compared to the Wales average of 66.7% (Estyn 2012), which is above the national average. Eleven of the 85 areas in Bridgend are now in the 10% most deprived areas in Wales. (WIMD 2011) The percentage of pupils of compulsory school age eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM) is the 8th overall average of 'compulsory' aged children who were FSM at PLASC 2014.

ii) Schools

Currently, Bridgend County Borough Council, the local authority, maintains 60 schools: 49 primary /infant/junior schools, 9 secondary schools, 2 special schools and one pupil referral unit. Within this structure the authority also supports 22 (for 2013-14) learning support centres located within our mainstream schools and 1 within a special school.

In January 2014 279 Nursery Year 1(2-3 year olds) and 1602 Nursery Year 2 (3-4 years) accessed the authority's early years' provision.

The school population is around 22,690 pupils.

The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 20.65%, which is above the Wales average of 19.14% and the 8th highest in Wales (PLASC 2014).

iii) Surplus Places

The Welsh Government defines significant surplus capacity as 25% or more of a school's capacity and at least 30 unfilled places.

It is generally accepted that the term 'small school', in relation to primary schools, is applied to schools with fewer than 91 pupils and, in relation to secondary schools, is applied to schools with fewer than 600 pupils (700 pupils for schools with a 6th Form).

- Bridgend Primary Schools

All surplus place data is under review and verification.

Indicative figures suggest that there are 1092 surplus places within the primary school sector. Currently, 5 of the 49 primary schools have significant surplus capacity.

4 primary schools fall into the category of being 'small schools' (under 91 pupils) when nursery pupil numbers are excluded and 1 of these is below 91 (including nursery pupil numbers).

- Bridgend Secondary Schools

All surplus place data is under review and verification.

From the January 2014 census, 1 secondary school falls into the category of being a 'small school' and has significant surplus capacity.

Pupil population predictions indicate that, for the period April 2014 to April 2018, primary school pupil numbers will increase from 12,705 to 13,868 rising again to 14,470 by 2022. Secondary school pupil numbers are projected to fall from 9,612 to 9,322 between 2014 and 2018 and then increase again to 9,646 by 2022. However, these (which include 6th form pupils) are subject to change and will, therefore, need to be reviewed annually.

3. The Principles

The principles underpinning the process of developing and implementing school improvement proposals are set out below.

- 1 Commitment to high standards and excellence in provision
- 2 Equality of opportunity, so that all pupils can access quality learning opportunities, regardless of which school they attend
- 3 Inclusive schools, which cater for the learning needs of all their pupils
- 4 Community focused schools, where the school actively engages with its local community
- 5 Value for money

4. Policy And Planning Framework

To put these key principles into practice we need a policy and planning framework. We believe this should include the following areas:

A *School performance, quality and standards*

- considering pupils' attainment and progress, as indicated by National Curriculum assessment and public examination results, and their broader achievement.
- taking account of the outcomes of school inspections and self-evaluation.

B *Quality of the learning environment*

- ensuring that pupils experience a physical learning environment which is of high quality, safe and secure and which has an appropriate range of facilities and resources.
- providing accommodation of sufficient size to meet national standards and guidelines and which is permanent rather than temporary.

C *Diversity of provision*

- providing choice for parents and pupils by maintaining and developing Welsh medium provision in primary schools maintaining an appropriate range of primary and secondary denominational provision, in association with the Diocesan Authorities.

D *Local schools*

- providing high quality local schools for local children, preferably within walking distance to reduce travelling time and contribute to better health and greater sustainability.
- planning new provision and making changes to catchment areas where necessary, to reflect changes in the distribution of the population over time.

E *Size of schools*

- ensuring that all Bridgend's primary schools are large enough to make the full range of necessary provision, limiting wherever possible, the age-range within individual classes and avoiding classes which include pupils from more than one key stage.
- having secondary schools that are large enough to offer a broad and effective curriculum that includes scope for choice and diversity of provision, either on their own or, increasingly, in partnership with others.
- ensuring that all schools are not so large that they become impersonal institutions or difficult to manage because of their scale.

F Social inclusion

- securing equal access to a high quality education for all pupils whatever their circumstances.
- ensuring that all pupils attend the most suitable school in mainstream education wherever appropriate and supporting all schools in making relevant provision.

G Special educational needs

- ensuring that there is early identification of need and appropriate intervention, in conjunction with parents/carers, schools and other agencies.
- making provision that is broad and balanced, but targeted at individual pupils' needs.

H Community-focused schools

- ensuring that all Bridgend's schools have an active and coherent community focus, a sense of place and a local identity.
- making effective use of schools' resources to develop further out-of-hours activities, family learning, extended schooling and adult and community learning.
- Ensuring as far as possible that all new schools are designed with a community-focus emphasis.

I Parental preference

- meeting parental preference in choice of schools wherever possible by providing and allocating places on the basis of clear and agreed admissions criteria.
- expanding provision, where this is feasible and cost effective, in schools that are over-subscribed from within their catchment area and taking action to remove unnecessary surplus places in others.

J Continuity of education

- providing the greatest degree of continuity and progression in children's learning with a smooth transition from one key stage to the next.
- providing, 'all-through' primary school (3 to 11 years) provision as the best way of delivering nursery, infant and junior education
- and consider extending this from 3-16 or 3-19, as appropriate.

K Post 16 education

- ensuring that all pupils have access to a comprehensive range of viable post 16 learning opportunities and pathways in schools, in Further Education or in work-based learning.

- extending participation in learning post 16 and improving progression, choice and flexibility.

L Class sizes

- meeting legal requirements and guidelines concerning the size of classes in primary schools and ensuring that health and safety issues are considered first and foremost in all schools.
- meeting requirements concerning space and child: adult ratios for the Foundation Phase is-in Wales.

M Travel

- ensuring that we continue to promote and actively support the use of healthy routes to school.
- Ensuring that, where offered, home to school/college transport is provided in a safe, efficient and effective manner, in line with Council policy.

N Site organisation

- ensuring that the layout of schools' accommodation and of the site in general do not become a barrier to effective learning and teaching.
- avoiding 'split site' schools (where possible) and re-organising provision to achieve this.
-

O Sustainable development

- ensuring that the environment that schools provide is sustainable, makes use of renewable resources where appropriate and eliminates waste.
- considering, in every potential development, issues such as energy conservation, the use of low maintenance materials and recycling.

P Value for money, efficiency and effectiveness

- ensuring that provision is made as economically and efficiently as possible by being innovative and by rigorously monitoring the impact of spending, resource management and procurement.
- narrowing the gap between the most and the least expensive provision currently

Q Consistency with the Council's strategic plans

- ensuring that any proposed changes in provision are in line with the priorities and policies set out in the Council's key strategic plans.
- continuing to consult widely with a range of key groups and networks.

We recognise that there will be occasions when aspects of these policies may conflict, for example, there may be differences between the parents' preferences and a policy of reducing travel to school by car or bus. It may not always be possible to achieve the optimum space and learning environment due to site availability and funding constraints. However, there is a need to identify proposals which meet the greatest number of policy objectives as possible, and improving the quality of education will be our goal.

5. Other considerations

In applying the principles, consideration will also be given to alternatives to school closure and community impact, in particular to:

- whether alternatives to closure have been actively considered, in particular, whether revised catchment areas, amalgamation options and the potential to federate have been looked at (taking account of the scope for use of ICT links between school sites) and the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative to closure
- whether the possibilities of making fuller use of the existing buildings as an educational/community resource within the locality have been explored
- emerging priorities as articulated in the Children's Directorate Plan

In addition, the views of interested parties will be sought, in particular:

- the views of parents and other local residents, including those relating to parental choice and the impact on the local community
- the views of children
- the concerns of other LAs affected by the proposals
- the concerns of any diocese affected by the proposals
- the views of other schools, playgroups or other providers in the area
- other interested parties

6. Developing a Strategic School Improvement Programme

This principles paper is the first stage in the development of a comprehensive improvement programme for Bridgend schools. It forms the basis of a structured approach to the rationalisation of educational provision in the County Borough, an approach that will be evidenced based and one that will draw upon data and information from a variety of sources in order to reach informed conclusions about

the nature of provision and the need to add, remove or relocate school places. As necessary, school improvement proposals will use the Authority's statutory powers to establish, transfer, alter the character of and discontinue schools.

Legislative processes apply to the significant alteration or closure of a school which includes statutory consultation periods. Even without allowing for planning, development and building construction work it is advisable to allow 18 to 24 months in which to undertake the necessary statutory processes.

The purpose of the strategic school improvement programme is to set out the context in which decisions on the organisation of school places in Bridgend are made and to plan the delivery of a managed programme for change. The nature of change in school organisation will mean that some schemes can be effected within a short timescale whilst others will only be achieved over an extended period.

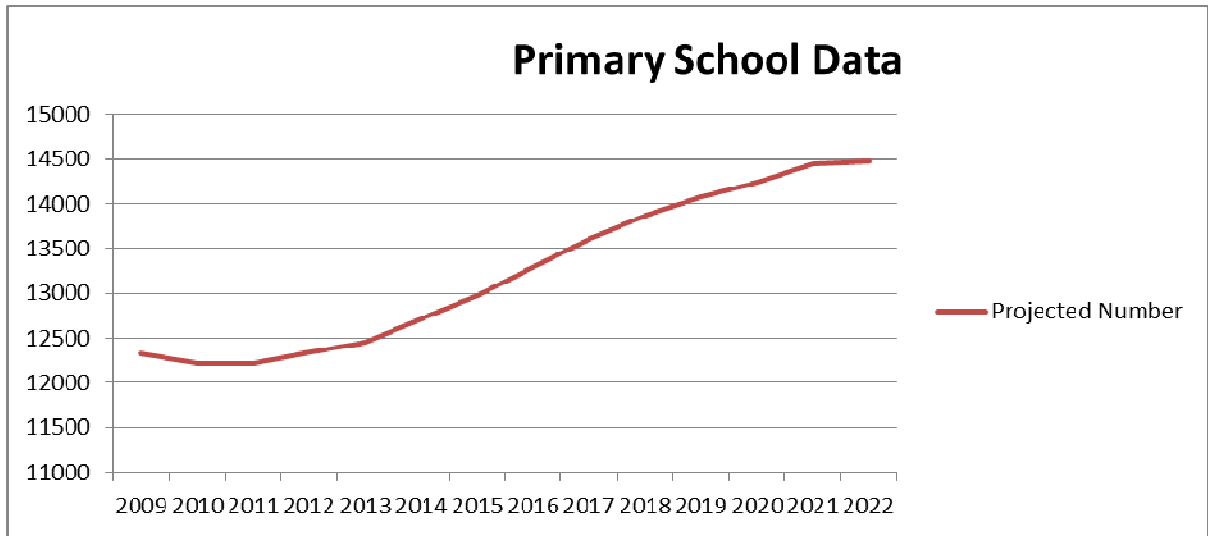
Proposals will be clearly linked to corporate priorities articulated in the Authority's plans and policies. They will focus upon making the most effective, efficient and flexible use of finite resources in order to raise educational standards and support continuous improvement. In developing proposals for 'fit for purpose' schools that will meet the educational demands of a modern society, consideration will need to be given to both the rationalisation and development of provision across the County Borough. Whereas reducing surplus places and managing building stock more efficiently will feature prominently in a strategic school improvement programme, in meeting the twin aspirations of raising educational standards and supporting continuous improvement an essential requirement is the provision of suitable and sufficient schools; that is - right school in the right place. A strategic school improvement programme will, therefore, need to address key issues at both primary and secondary levels in areas such as: Welsh medium provision, faith education, additional learning needs, curriculum developments, teaching and learning initiatives and a community focus for schools.

The successful development and implementation of the strategic school improvement programme will require a programme and project management approach. Under the direction of the Director of Children's Services, the programme will be developed and overseen by a project manager supported by an internal specialist team.

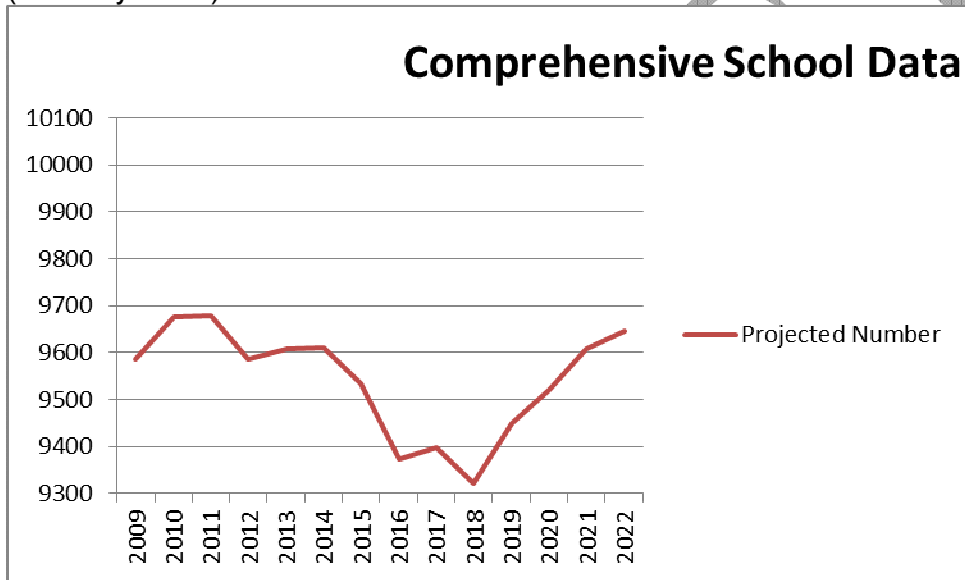
7. Evidence for change – Surplus Places

A review of data relating to surplus places and capacity is underway. There is a need to consider the relationship between capacity and pupil numbers and any increase in the extent of surplus capacity across Bridgend schools in the primary and secondary sectors.

The trend in pupil numbers projected over time. It should be noted that the following information is accurate at January 2014 and will need to be updated continually. Individual school data will need to be considered as the distribution of growth/decline is uneven.



(January 2014)



(January 2014)

This page is intentionally left blank

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th APRIL 2015

REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) within Bridgend County Borough and outline the actions and strategies adopted to respond and prevent incidence of CSE.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report links to the following Community strategy priority:
- Working with children and families to tackle problems early

3. Background

3.1 What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Child Sexual exploitation is the coercion or manipulation of children and young people into taking part in sexual activities. It is a form of sexual abuse involving an exchange of some form of payment which can include money, mobile phones and other items, drugs, alcohol, a place to stay, "protection" or affection. The vulnerability of the young person and grooming process employed by perpetrators renders them powerless to recognise the exploitative nature of relationships and unable to give informed consent.

(All Wales Protocol CSE 2008)

There has been recent and widespread revelations reported in national and international press concerning the plight of a significant number of children living in the County Borough of Rotherham who are now known to have been subjected to serious sexual exploitation between the period 1997 and 2013. Even to this day, no one really knows the true scale of child sexual exploitation (CSE) during this period, but the authors of the recent report (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham) state that their conservative estimate is that approximately 1400 children were sexually exploited over the full period of the inquiry. One third of the children were previously known to services because of child protection concerns and neglect. It is a harsh reality that many of the children

were raped by multiple perpetrators, trafficked to other towns, abducted, beaten and intimidated. Some of the appalling examples of children abused included children who had been doused in petrol and threatened with being set alight, threatened with guns, made to witness brutal violent rapes and threatened that they would be next. Girls as young as 11 years were raped by large numbers of perpetrators. The abuse reported in the report is not just confined to the past demonstrated by the fact that in 2013, the Police received 157 reports concerning child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

- 3.2 The report states that over the period of the inquiry collective failures of political and officer leadership was blatant and that for many years child sexual exploitation had been a serious problem. However, the true scale and seriousness of the problem was underplayed by senior managers within social care. At an operational level, the Police gave no priority to CSE and considered many victims with contempt, failing to act on the abuse they were suffering as crimes.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 BCBC is committed to protecting the most vulnerable members of our community from sexual exploitation and as such all practitioners have access to a number of key documents which provide guidance and structure to their practice. For example;

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) stipulates that the state shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse including 'prostitution', trafficking for sexual purposes and involvement in the production of child sexual abuse images.

The Welsh Assembly Government's 7 Core Aims include the right to '*enjoy the best possible physical and mental, social and emotional health, including freedom from abuse, victimisation and exploitation*'. This Core Aim is central to protecting children and young people from sexual exploitation.

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 set out the arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

In '**Safeguarding Children: Working together under the Children Act 2004**' the Welsh Government emphasises that children involved in sexual exploitation should be treated primarily as victims of abuse, and their needs require careful assessment. They are likely to be in need of welfare services and, in many cases, protection under the Children Act 1989.

4.2 Early identification of Child Sexual Abuse

Practitioners within Safeguarding Services in Bridgend have either received CSE training or are part of the ongoing training programme to enhance their knowledge in this area and ensure they are aware of the complexities, signs and risks within the parameters of sexual exploitation.

Social work practitioners continually assess children and young people who may be at risk of sexual exploitation through the completion of Initial Assessments, Core Assessments and Section 47 Investigations. Additional safeguards to identify

sexual exploitation within BCBC are evident within Accommodation and Permanence Panel, Legal Surgeries, Looked After Children Reviews and Child Protection Case conferences.

4.3 CSE Strategy Meetings

Child Sexual Exploitation meetings in Bridgend are held on a weekly basis and are chaired by the Group Manager for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (QA) and the Independent Reviewing Service Manager. This ensures continuity and oversight of the actions identified within safeguarding plans, continuous evaluation of the level of risk posed to the child or young person and identification and monitoring of those persons who pose risks to children. Such individuals are being identified within a number of cases and as such they can be closely monitored by the Police and attending agencies to assist in the protection of young and vulnerable children and in the prosecution of offenders.

Within BCBC between the months of April 2014 and February 2015, thirty four children and young people have been identified as being at risk of child sexual exploitation across Bridgend. Sixty four child sexual exploitation meetings have been convened in respect of these children, fifty five of which have been in respect of young females and nine in respect of young males.

The ages of the children and young people who have been subject to CSE meetings varies between ten years to seventeen years and the majority of children are aged between fourteen years and sixteen years.

Each multi-agency meeting takes into account the specific vulnerabilities of the child or young person to ensure their care plan targets all aspects of their needs and their need to be protected and educated around the facets of grooming and sexual exploitation.

BCBC statistics show that at the time of the child's initial Sexual Exploitation Strategy meeting:

- Nine children were subject to Child Protection procedures.
- Eleven children were Looked After.
- Two children were subject to both Child Protection and Looked After procedures.

It must be noted that numerical data is fluid and often the status of children's cases shifts between Children in Need, Child Protection and Looked After Children. This said, as of 18/03/2015 BCBC's current position is that out of the children who have been subject to CSE meetings:

- Nine children's names are placed on the Child Protection Register.
- Three of the children are now subject to the Child Protection Register.
- Three of the children's names were removed from the Child Protection Register.
- Fifteen children are Looked After.
- Four children ceased to be Looked After.
- Four children's cases have been closed.
- Two young people have attained the age of 18years.

4.4 Joint working with the Police in Bridgend

Good communication and collaborative working with the Police is essential in all cases and particularly so in child protection and CSE cases. The priority for the Police service is to protect children and young people through the investigation and prosecution of offenders. A recent addition to the Child Abuse & Investigation Unit is a dedicated CSE Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) who is an experienced Detective Sergeant, who has responsibility for the overview of all CSE investigations. The Detective Sergeant has a small team of investigators supported by a police analyst who has completed a problem profile for the Bridgend area regarding children who are at risk of being sexually exploited and the perpetrators of exploitation. The public protection department are currently reviewing past cases as well as taking new matters forward. BCBC holds a data base of all young people subject to CSE meetings and also has performance reporting arrangements with the Western Bay Safeguarding Board.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduced new offences to protect all children aged less than 18yrs. The Act now provides specific offences in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation.

More Child Abduction notices are being actioned via the CSE process. This is relevant in situations where a young person is visiting the home of an adult where it is suspected he/she may be at risk of being groomed for exploitation.

Focusing on a multi-agency approach BCBC Safeguarding services, South Wales Police, ABMU Health and BCBC Education department have formed a "CSE Task Force". The task force will address issues such as identifying gaps in training, highlighting and tracking current and new CSE cases, monitoring and mapping children and young people who are reported as Missing. When appropriate, forums will be convened with practitioners to share the group's findings thus ensuring vital information is shared and robust safeguarding measures are implemented.

4.5 Joint working with ABMU in Bridgend

Professionals in BCBC work closely with health professionals from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABMU). The Accident and Emergency (A&E) department within the Princess of Wales Hospital has direct computer access to the Child Protection Register. The Safeguarding lead within the A&E department meets regularly with the Safeguarding Group Manager in BCBC to discuss any issues that may arise. In addition, Health professionals frequently make contact with Child Protection Clerks to make enquiries of children who present at the A&E department where there may be child protection concerns. Links have also been developed with the Hospital's sexual health clinic in order to share information about young people who may be at risk of sexual exploitation. Together, BCBC safeguarding and health professionals continue to work effectively in a variety of arenas to share information and complete holistic assessments to support and protect children and young people.

In particular, the Corporate Safeguarding Team within health provides representation at child sexual exploitation strategy meetings, professional strategy meetings and other complex cases of a safeguarding nature. A multi-agency peer

group provides opportunity for multi-agency challenge and scrutiny of child protection examinations and their findings. In addition health representatives support in the delivery of multi-agency events and there are a number of forums across Western Bay where Safeguarding health representatives work closely alongside BCBC professionals, for example Child Practice Review and other Western Bay Regional Children's Safeguarding sub groups.

4.6 Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

MAPPA are a set of arrangements in place to manage the risk posed by the most serious sexual and violent offenders. These arrangements within Bridgend bring together lead professionals from the Probation Service, Mental Health Service, Housing, Public Protection and Children's Services on a fortnightly basis. These professionals are experienced in this arena and are effective in the sharing of important information between agencies which is key in protecting the most vulnerable people in our society.

BCBC is represented by the Group Manager for Safeguarding and QA, who is also responsible for joint chairing the Child Sexual Exploitation meetings. This ensures continuity in information and process, and individuals who pose a risk to children and young people are identified and brought to the attention of safeguarding practitioners at the earliest stage. The Group Manager also ensures agencies and professionals outside of Safeguarding make the necessary referrals to the department which are then tracked to ensure assessments are carried out in a timely manner to ensure the protection of children, young people and their families. To assist this process, individuals subject to MAPPA are listed on the BCBC Electronic Records Data Base, 'DRAIG' with safeguarding alerts attached to ensure practitioners take a proactive stance to safeguarding children at the earliest stage.

4.7 CSE in Education

Staff in schools, further education colleges and other education establishments in Bridgend are uniquely placed to recognise and refer children who are believed to be vulnerable to CSE.

School staff should be alert and competent to identify and act upon concerns where a child is vulnerable to, at risk of, or experiencing abuse through CSE.

Across Bridgend, The Child Protection Coordinator for Education and Youth Services delivers an annual programme of Child Sexual Exploitation training to year eight pupils with their teachers present. During February 2015, thirty three sexual exploitation awareness sessions aimed at Year 8 pupils were held across ten secondary schools in Bridgend. This training is delivered jointly with South Wales Police Officers and an outcome report is produced on an annual basis.

This training has been regularly reviewed and adapted to keep it up to date and relevant, responding to emerging potential threats to children, for example, Sexting. What is always surprising is the responses of young people and in particular their lack of awareness of the potential risks posed to them through their use of interactive technology.

Through the delivery of training programmes in schools, children and young people within the education establishments in Bridgend receive appropriate early education around the risks and behaviours associated with CSE. The Child Protection Coordinator, Officer and Group Manager are always available to offer additional guidance support and advice.

The Child Protection Coordinator for Education and Youth Service is one of twenty four trainers commissioned and trained via the Western Bay Safeguarding Children Board to deliver CSE awareness raising sessions for professionals. A comprehensive roll-out of this training is currently underway.

In addition the Child Protection Coordinator has also undertaken 'train the trainer' learning in relation to human trafficking / Modern Slavery. This training is currently being rolled out in two forms: three hour awareness raising sessions and a number of full day first responder courses.

The link between CSE and Trafficking is often overlooked as the general view of trafficking is that of persons trafficked into the UK from abroad. What is becoming more prevalent is the danger associated with internal trafficking. In particular in CSE cases young people may be trafficked from one location in the UK to another for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

4.8 Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF)

All social workers within BCBC are familiar with the Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF) and we are confident they are able to identify children at risk of CSE.

In addition to the CSE training which practitioners receive, there is clear guidance within the "All Wales Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People who are at Risk of Abuse through Sexual Exploitation guidance and the All Wales Child Protection procedures. Safeguarding practitioners regularly seek support and advice from the SERAF service provided by Barnardos Cymru.

The SERAF service supports professionals working in BCBC to ensure they have the knowledge to identify risk indicators early, understand the most effective form of intervention and prevent further abuse.

SERAF practitioners are available to offer consultation and advice to practitioners outside of the strategy meetings whether completing a SERAF risk assessment or needing to discuss strategies of work to educate and better protect children and young people from grooming and exploitation.

A representative from the SERAF service is invited to attend at each and every Child Sexual Exploitation strategy meeting held in Bridgend. This ensures that specialist service expertise supports effective decision making and supports the creation of effective safeguarding plans to provide better outcomes for children and young people.

This service is able to offer structured programmes of work to children and young people of Bridgend who have been identified as being sexually exploited through the CSE strategy meeting:

- 1:1 Risk Awareness Work- 12 wks
 - 1:1 Risk Reduction Work- 24wks
 - 1:1 Risks Reduction Work- 12mnths
 - 1:1 Play Therapy and Counselling Services
- www.barnados.org.uk/serafservice

4.9 Western Bay Children’s Safeguarding Board (WBCSB)

Child Sexual Exploitation has been recognised as one the strategic priorities for the WBCSB with the key objective being;

“To ensure full implementation of the statutory All Wales Safeguarding Children and young people from Sexual Exploitation Protocol.

To understand the extent to which children are involved in CSE across Western Bay.

To have an effective prevention strategy in place to identify risk early and provide appropriate services for children identified as at risk.

To have inter-disciplinary training package in place for all professionals who work with children to help recognise and respond to symptoms of CSE.

The desired outcome of the above priority is to ensure that ;

- Children/Young People who are identified as being sexually exploitation are effectively safeguarded from on-going exploitation.
- Less children/Young People become sexually exploited.
- Children who are identified as at risk of CSE are provided with effective services and interventions to prevent them becoming exploited.”

Following the publication of the Home Office Inquiry report in July 2013 in England, the Chairman of the WBSCB required that work be done across the partner agencies to identify arrangements locally. This work began with a position statement and brief gap analysis which identified that providing agencies were compliant and working under the statutory guidance in place across Wales, then the localities within Western Bay should be able to confidently respond to confirm that systems were robust.

Following receipt of this report the Chairman of WBSCB wrote to Chief Executives, Directors and other senior professionals with responsibility for safeguarding requiring assurance that arrangements were in place, that they were robust, regularly reviewed and that all staff were compliant with the statutory guidance.

Agencies which responded were able to confirm that the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation was taken seriously within their organisation and that compliance with the statutory guidance was either embedded into practice or a priority area to improve awareness.

Each local authority area was asked to respond specifically regarding the safety of

Looked After Children placed both within and outside the local authority boundaries.

All agencies were asked to provide assurances of robust, responsive systems for recognition and response and offer evidence to support their assurances.

Agencies who responded provided a clear response regarding regular awareness raising throughout their workforce areas and clearly referenced the SERAF assessment tool as the robust system for recognition and response with the exception of Barnardo's Cymru who were integral in the development of the statutory guidance and continue to work with Welsh Government on a plan for review and training. Agencies that were unable to offer assurances at the time recognised that work was required to develop robust systems and provided the Board assurances that this is being addressed.

All agencies who responded demonstrated their commitment to working with the WBSCB under its strategic priority for CSE and confirmed their future commitment to promote awareness raising of CSE throughout their agency.

The WBSCB has been assured there is significant work going on across the whole workforce area to prioritise, recognise and respond to issues of CSE. There are many areas of good practice and robust arrangements which can be drawn upon to share experience and skills regionally.

The WBSCB has also be assured that partner agencies are committed to working with the Board to address the issue of child sexual exploitation and this will be further demonstrated by the upcoming CSE audits and performance reporting arrangements established by the Board and its partners. Such reporting will also allow for scrutiny of multi-agency attendance at CSE meetings.

4.10 Bridgend CSE Case Study

One recent example of the use of effective multi-agency procedures and practice across safeguarding services within Bridgend is cited in the recent conviction of a male from Cardiff who has recently been sentenced to serve a 4 year custodial prison term for several sexual offences against a young vulnerable female who is Looked After by BCBC.

The Initial CSE concerns for this young person were identified through thorough assessment and collaborative working with other agencies and professionals across the Borough of Bridgend. In total 10 CSE strategy meetings were convened which included a number of agencies involved in the care planning for this young person. Also in attendance was a representative from the SERAF service, the Missing Person's Coordinator from the Child Abuse & Investigation Unit in Cowbridge and a Detective Inspector from the CID based in Cardiff.

The meetings ensured that all relevant agencies/services, where appropriate, were referred to, all actions within the safeguarding plans were adhered to and professionals worked extremely hard to ensure the young person received the right level of support and advice whilst being part of the criminal investigation. This work was so effective that the young person returned to education and felt informed and supported to the point where she was willing to give evidence in the court. The Police commended those workers involved in the coordination of the CSE meetings

within BCBC which clearly protected this young person and others from the grooming and sexual exploitation perpetrated by this offender.

4.11 Analysis

The background information contained within this report in relation to the extent of CSE in Rothertham clearly evidences the devastating impact upon children and young people. The enormity of such is incomprehensible when concerns have not been identified or acted upon.

What is also evident are the deficiencies in knowledge and understanding of the behaviours and complexities associated with CSE by professionals, both from a victim's perspective and also with regard to the perpetrators' manipulation and coercion of children and young people.

The information within this report evidences how Practitioners, Managers and Senior Managers within BCBC are taking concerns around the sexual exploitation of children and young people extremely seriously.

The extent of CSE in BCBC, based on the numbers of CSE strategy meetings held, bear no comparison to that reported in Rothertham. However, this in no way minimises the importance of ensuring that our children and young people are protected, supported and educated at the earliest opportunity.

In respect of training, there is a clear plan to educate year 8 pupils across BCBC in terms of raising their awareness to the behaviours and risks posed by sexual exploitation. There are also opportunities for front line practitioners to attend training delivered by Barnardo's. However, that said, there are clear gaps in terms of staff training and some of those staff groups are within the Youth Offending Institute in HMP Parc, Foster Carers, Teachers and Governors and Residential staff.

There is unlimited value to the benefits of multi-agency information sharing and positive productive working between agencies and this was no more evident than within Rothertham. Partnership working is essential to safeguard children and young people but particularly so in child protection cases and cases of sexual exploitation. This is due to the number of persons usually associated with the young person and their contact with professionals across agencies. What has been noticeable across Bridgend is that young people who are or have been subject to CSE strategy meetings are usually, if not always, known to each other or have a friend who has introduced them to other young people who are at risk of exploitation.

Many of these young people known to Safeguarding are also frequenting particular localities or addresses within the area and are also in the presence of named individuals; males who have been identified as a risk within the remit of CSE and also known to the Police and Probation services. The majority of those individuals identified as posing a risk to young people in Bridgend are predominantly slightly older males, in their late teens, early twenties and a very small number of males have been identified to be in their forties. No female perpetrators have been identified but concerns have been shared about females introducing other young girls to males. To date, there is no evidence to indicate that known young people

who are at risk of CSE or adults who pose a risk to children are of any ethnic background other than white Welsh.

As referred to above, the value of interagency working is beyond doubt and to ensure this is maximised a Bridgend CSE Task Force has been established. This multi-agency group consists of the Detective Inspector and the CSE dedicated Sergeant, both from the Child Abuse and Investigation Unit at Cowbridge Police Station; the Safeguarding Group Manager; the Independent Reviewing Service Manager; the Child Protection Coordinator for Education and a Health representative. Representation of other agencies at these meetings is considered when appropriate.

The group will discuss and share information on all high risk CSE cases, consider all new cases of CSE, identify maps and profile perpetrators and consider ongoing prosecutions. In addition, the group will monitor the behaviours of and agency responses to young people who are frequently reported missing. A mapping process has already begun and front line professionals will be presented with information which links young people, perpetrators and locations together, thus ensuring they are fully informed and practitioners are not working in isolation but rather in a unified approach where the sharing of this information can assist in accurately assessing risk and responding with a care plan that, as far as practicably possible, protects children and young people from sexual exploitation.

Another example of inter-agency working is with regard to CSE training. The Task Force will also share resources for training but in the first instance group members will observe each other's training to create a bespoke package of trainers and training for targeted staff across Bridgend.

In terms of statistical data it is acknowledged that at present, this is limited due to reporting arrangements within the Western Bay only being in their infancy. However, in Bridgend, Members can be assured that comprehensive information is maintained in respect of the number of young people who have been identified as vulnerable to CSE. Those currently deemed most at risk are females aged between fourteen years and sixteen years. The collection of CSE data complemented by the CSE Task Force will place Bridgend in a unique position to provide an extensive portfolio around CSE.

Finally, what needs to be acknowledged is that CSE does not just happen in Bridgend, however to date there has been no evidence of organised sexual exploitation by criminal gangs.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

There are no implications on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

As this report is for information purposes only, an EIA is not deemed necessary.

7. Financial Implications

Whilst there are no specific financial implications linked to this information report, it should be noted that the workload demands linked to safeguarding continue to place increasing pressures on staff and individual managers.

8. Recommendation

Overview and Scrutiny asked to note and provide comment about this report.

Susan Cooper
Director of Social Services and Wellbeing

Contact Officer: Colin Turner
Head of Safeguarding & Family Support

Telephone: (01656) 642648

E-mail: colin.turner@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Civic Offices. Bridgend, CF31 4WB

This page is intentionally left blank

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 APRIL 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK – NOMINATIONS FOR JOINT RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PANEL

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To ask the Committee to appoint Members to sit on the joint Research and Evaluation Panel for the Social Services Annual Reporting Framework.

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 Corporate Improvement Objectives were adopted by Council on 19 February 2014 and 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 in November 2009, the Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director – Wellbeing on the Social Services Annual Reporting Framework. This outlined the new arrangements put in place by the Chief Inspector of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW) for the inspection, evaluation and review of local authority social services.
- 3.2 The report explained that this new framework would involve formal engagement with Scrutiny, through the following three stages:
 - As an essential element of the “challenge” groups judging the accuracy of the initial judgements on our effectiveness
 - Agreeing a statement of findings over the year that should be considered by the Director
 - Providing comments on to the final draft report prior to reporting to Cabinet and publication.

3.3 The Committee agreed that this work should be undertaken through a Research and Evaluation Panel established jointly with the Health and Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which subsequently also agreed to this. It was suggested that a total of eight Members would be suitable for a joint Panel, four from both Scrutiny Committees.

3.4 It is proposed that the same procedure without amendment is followed this year in order for the Annual Report to be reported to Cabinet.

4. Current Situation / Proposal.

4.1 The Committee are asked to appoint four of its Members to sit on this panel. A similar request is being considered by the Health and Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 22 April.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview & 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 equalities impact issues arising from the report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. Recommendation

The Committee invites nominations and is asked to appoint four of its Members to sit on the joint Research and Evaluation Panel for the Social Services Annual Reporting Framework.

Mr P A Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services

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

Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution

Bridgend County Borough Council Corporate Improvement Plan 2013 -17

This page is intentionally left blank

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 APRIL 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 next meeting to be held on 11 May 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 11 May 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
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 Member Children & Young People Colin Turner, Head of Safeguarding and Family Support	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.	
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

This page is intentionally left blank