

Public Document Pack
Bridgend County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr



Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB

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

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

Date / Dyddiad: 15 September 2015

Dear Councillor,

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

A meeting of the Town & Community Council Forum will be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Monday, 21 September 2015 at 4.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Appointment of a Chairperson
To appoint a Chairperson for the meeting (in the absence of the Chairperson & Vice-Chairperson)
2. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence (to include reasons, where appropriate) from Members/Officers
3. 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 1 September 2008
4. Approval of Minutes
To receive for approval the Minutes of a meeting of the Town and Community Council Forum dated 29 June 2015
5. Budget Strategy and Transformation Report 3 - 4
6. Community Asset Transfer 5 - 30
7. Charter between BCBC and Town and Community Councils 31 - 48
8. Schedule of Agenda Items 49 - 52

Tel/Ffôn: 01656 643643

SMS Messaging/Negeseuon SMS: 07581 157014

Fax/Facs: 01656 668126

Twitter@bridgendCBC

Email/Ebost: talktous@bridgend.gov.uk

Website/Gwefan: www.bridgend.gov.uk

Text relay: Put 18001 before any of our phone numbers for the text relay service

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9. Urgent Items

To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Rule 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:

S Aspey
M Butcher
L Ellis
EM Hughes
RD Jenkins
CL Jones
HE Morgan

Councillors

MEJ Nott OBE
DG Owen
G Phillips
DR Pugh
CL Reeves
M Reeves
D Sage

Councillors

CE Smith
RL Thomas
HJ Townsend
R Williams
M Winter

Plus a representative from each of the Town/Community Councils

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

BUDGET STRATEGY AND TRANSFORMATION REPORT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Town and Community Council Forum with an update on progress of the Council's Budget and Transformation strategy. A presentation will support this report on the day.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report links to all of the Council's Corporate priorities. The Council's corporate priorities and areas of focus form the core elements of the Corporate Plan. They are developed to deliver the Council's vision and outcomes that matter most to local citizens.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council published a four-year Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in February 2013. The strategy identified the resources to support the delivery of the improvement priorities as well as those required to support 'business as usual' activities. The strategy is reviewed annually. The current MTFS covers the period 2015-16 to 2018-19.
- 3.2 Since the publication of its Corporate Plan 2013-17, the Council entered a period of unprecedented financial challenge, and is currently facing a funding shortfall of approximately £49 million between 2016-17 and 2018-19. This means the Council needs to change in response to increasing demand, more complex needs and to an expected sustained reduction in its funding.
- 3.3 Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board (CMB) have identified the need to revise and more tightly focus the Council's corporate priorities to design and shape a sustainable and significantly smaller authority.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The corporate strategy, with its revised corporate priorities, will inform the allocation of resources in the MTFS period 2016-2020. This will mean that, rather than following a "salami slicing" approach in which all service directorates face the same proportional reductions, in future some element of prioritisation may be afforded to specific budget areas which deliver against the new objectives.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The Council's Corporate Plan forms part of the Policy Framework. It provides the general direction for service delivery. Priorities with specific policy implications will be the subject of separate reports in accordance with the requirements of the constitution and legislation.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The final budget proposals will cover a wide range of services and it is inevitable that the necessary budget reductions in developing these proposals will impact on the local population in different ways. The Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out and included with the final budget and reported to Council in March 2016.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The Council's priorities and corporate plan are supported by its MTFS. The 2016-2020 MTFS is in the process of development and there will be a joint public consultation on the corporate priorities and emerging MTFS proposals in the autumn.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 Members are requested to note the report.

Darren Mepham
Chief Executive
September 2015

Contact Officer:

Telephone: (01656) 643643

E-mail: darren.mepham@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Bridgend County Borough Council.
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

JOINT REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR RESOURCES AND

CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present for information proposals approved by the Council's Cabinet in July 2015 to both improve the pace and extend the number of Community Asset Transfers (CAT).

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives

- 2.1 The recommendations seek to achieve the best management arrangements for public sector property assets supporting the corporate priority 'to make the best use of resources' and the principles of the Asset Management Plan (AMP) 2021 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2015-2019.

3. Background

- 3.1 CAT has traditionally been undertaken in BCBC in line with the AMP 2021: Community Asset Transfer Guidance Document was originally published in 2010 in response to requests from a number of community groups and Town and Community Councils. There have been a number of successful CATs in that time, including the former Bridgend Library. However, experience has shown that the process can be complicated and doesn't always succeed. There is recognition that the process could be improved.
- 3.2 In some cases a transfer of the asset to a community group or a Town and Community Council offers an opportunity to maintain and preserve valuable community services which may otherwise be under threat; or alternatively to improve the provision that is already available.
- 3.3 Recognising that councils across Wales are proactively considering CAT the Welsh Government has recently produced a Best Practice Guide – Community Asset Transfer in Wales (2015). The intention of this guidance is to help manage the process and minimise the risk of transfers. The guidance identifies that, "although the principle of a community group taking over a service or building may appear attractive, the Authority has a duty to ensure that the proposal accords with the Authority's strategy and that any Community Council, community group or third sector organisation expressing an interest is fully aware of the liabilities and responsibilities it will face."

3.4 Against that background, in March 2015 the Strong Communities Connecting Services (SCCS) Board, Chaired by the Corporate Director Resources, established a task and finish group to review the Council's approach to CAT with the aim of increasing the pace and the number of CAT.

4. Current Situation/Proposal

4.1 The recommendations of the SCCS Task and Finish group were that:

a) The Council should draw up a list of assets which it is prepared to transfer to the community taking account of our emerging corporate priorities and MTFs budget reduction requirements and giving an indicative timetable;

b) A fixed term dedicated CAT officer post should be created to work with community groups/organisations to progress CAT applications, providing a single point of contact within the Council;

c) The current CAT guidance should be amended in line with the new Welsh Government Best Practice Guide and best practice examples in other authorities, establishing clear roles and responsibilities including and setting out a framework for considering requests for CAT including a 4 stage process made up of, expression of Interest, development of a business plan, formal assessment of the business plan and completion of the transaction;

d) To facilitate CAT, a limited capital funding pot should be created to enable assets to be transferred in a reasonable state of repair and transition revenue funding should be considered, on a case by case basis, subject to a satisfactory business case being made.

4.2 The CAT priorities will be based on the agreed current MTFs proposals and also on what is deemed to be likely to fall out of future MTFs proposals for 2017/18 onwards as outlined in the table below.

Priority 1	Public toilets Parks pavilions Bus shelters Community centres
Priority 2	Playgrounds Playing fields (excluding school playing fields) and bowling green
Priority 3	Miscellaneous assets

4.3 At this stage due diligence is required in respect of all potential assets to identify any legal or other issues that may impact on the ability for CAT. The intention is that a priority list describing specific assets will be published for consultation in September 2015 and expressions of interest will be invited at this stage. The initial list is likely to give priority to assets that are directly linked to proposals in the approved MTFs. The list is intended to be dynamic

with amendments and ongoing development to be approved by the Corporate Director Resources and Corporate Director Communities.

- 4.4 It is anticipated that different legal arrangements will need to be developed for different assets in order to protect the Council's interests and to maximise the benefits of the CAT and the benefits for the community. There will also be a need to consider employment implications of any potential transfer, which may inhibit CAT in some instances.
- 4.5 To support this, the current Guidance referred to above has been updated as shown in **Appendix 1**. The updated document will advise community groups of our guidelines. It takes into account the Welsh Government Best Practice Guide - Community Asset Transfer in Wales (2015) and good practice from other authorities. The Guidance identifies the process for CAT including the role of a proposed CAT Officer and the decision-making process. The Council's Cabinet approved the proposed Community Asset Transfer guidance at its committee in July 2015 and subsequently the guidance has been circulated to Town and Community Council's and other relevant stakeholders for consultation purposes. The consultation period is due to end this month so Town and Community Councils are welcome to provide further comments as necessary at the forum meeting.
- 4.6 The success of the proposals is dependent on the proactive participation of willing Town and Community Councils and community organisations, together with their ability and capacity to manage the asset. There may be different levels of interest depending on the asset under consideration.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 Amendment of Community Asset Transfer Guidance Document.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment for asset transfers will be prepared as appropriate.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 Up to £200,000 will be set aside in the Change Management Ear Marked Reserve to fund a fixed term (three years) dedicated CAT Officer post (subject to job evaluation) and to meet additional legal and property requirements. Grant opportunities will also be explored for example through the Rural Development Programme where supporting the transfer of assets and exploring new ways of providing non-statutory services have been identified as a priority within the Local Development Strategy.
- 7.2 In respect of recommendation 4.1d above it is proposed that any requests for transition revenue funding should be considered by the Council's Programme Management Board (PMB). If successful, time-limited funding should be provided from the Change Management Ear Marked Reserve, subject to a satisfactory business case and affordability. With regard to capital investment,

the Council currently allocates £50,000 per annum from within its capital programme to support Town and Community Councils to undertake capital projects. It is proposed that this fund be re-focused to support CAT between 2016-17 and 2018-19 and supplemented by an additional £50,000 in each of these years from the Change Fund Earmarked Reserve and included in the Capital Programme accordingly.

- 7.3 Until the core list of assets for potential transfer has been determined and external parties have expressed an interest in running them the potential level of revenue savings arising from CAT cannot be accurately determined or profiled. That said the MTFS 2016-2020 is expected to include draft budget reduction proposals associated with the Council's inevitable withdrawal of support for certain groups of assets in the medium term.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That the Town and Community Council Forum notes:

1. The recommendations at paragraph 4.1;
2. The prioritisation of assets for possible transfer based on MTFS proposals;
3. The revised CAT Guidance at **Appendix 1** for consultation;
4. The funding proposals outlined in paragraph 7.2 to facilitate future CAT and that a report be presented to Council to approve the necessary addition to the Capital Programme.
5. The Council's intention to invite expressions of interest for Community Asset Transfers from interested community groups and Town and Community Councils and third sector organisations at the beginning of October at the conclusion of the consultation period on the draft guidance.

Ness Young
CORPORATE DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

Mark Shephard
CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES
September 2015

Contact Officer: Mark Shephard, Corporate Director Communities
Telephone No: 01656 643380
E-mail: Mark.Shephard@bridgend.gov.uk

Background Documents:

AMP 2021: Community Asset Transfer Guidance Document published in 2010
Welsh Government Best Practice Guide – Community Asset Transfer in Wales (2015)
Cabinet Report 14th July 2015

AMP 2021: Community Asset Transfer Guidance document

Community demand, need and lead



Supporting BCBC aims and priorities



Positive community asset transfer



Transparency



Sustainability

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



BCBC Community Asset Transfer Guidance

This draft guidance is intended to replace the original Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Guidance endorsed by Cabinet in 2010. It reflects the changing financial climate faced by the Council and the increasing empowerment of local communities. The Guidance forms an integral part of the Councils Asset Management Plan process.

Who should read these Guidelines

These guidelines are primarily to inform Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) practice but will also be useful for Community and Town Councils and Third Sector Organisations (TSOs). For ease of reading, the Council means BCBC and reference made to TSOs will include Town and Community Councils. These Guidelines are designed to help TSOs understand the Council's approvals processes and decision making criteria. Templates for applications and key stage procedures are also set out.

Application of the Guidelines

Due to the diverse nature of Council property assets and variety of CAT requests, there cannot be a "one size fits all". A consistent and principled but fluid framework is therefore required. The Guidance is centred on 4 key principles:

- ▶ **Community led to meet community demand and need**
- ▶ **Any asset transfer must support Council aims and priorities**
- ▶ **Transparency including governance and financial implications**
- ▶ **Project sustainability**

Proportionality and common sense is required in application of the Guidelines. A short lease or licence for example, may require less detailed assessment criteria than a 99 year lease for example. A transfer of a small area of land will not need the depth of business planning that a significant building would. Risk cannot be totally eliminated but must be identified and managed appropriately.

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Document Consultation

	Corporate Property Group
	Strong Communities Connected Services
	Cabinet

Document Author

Property services Bridgend County Borough Council

1. Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to encourage property asset transfers to the third sector. It supports the Council's Asset Management Plan (AMP) 2021 and AMP 2021 Disposals Strategy.

The objective is:

To positively enable, where appropriate, asset transfer from BCBC to the third sector.

An appropriate transfer is one which:

- **is community led to meet community demand**
- **supports Council's aims and priorities**
- **is sustainable in the long term**
- **has positive financial implications for the Council**

2. Definition of Community Asset Transfer (CAT)

CAT may take a variety of forms but in essence involves a temporary or permanent transfer of stewardship and/or ownership to the third sector. The method of transfer may include:

- management agreement
- short term licence to occupy
- short or long lease
- freehold transfer (exceptional circumstances)

3. National policy context

A number of national reports, reviews and guidance encourage local authorities to engage with the third sector with a view to a transfer of community assets. Welsh Government's 'Community Asset Transfers in Wales - A Best Practice Guide' March 2015 provides essential guidance for both local authorities and TSOs.

4. Local policy context & links to other strategies

BCBC's property strategy seeks to rationalise its property portfolio and obtain the best outcome to help deliver Council objectives. This requires balancing best price considerations and reduction in revenue liabilities against the benefits of alternative use including asset transfer. This is supported by a disposals strategy that works to achieve the best disposal outcome for BCBC.

CATs clearly support BCBC's new priority themes. These include:

- **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – “Taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services”.
- **Smarter use of resources** – “Ensuring that all our resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and as efficiently as possible, and supporting the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver our aims.”

5. The Council’s commitment to Community Asset Transfer

The Council is committed to using CATs where appropriate. However with limited staff resources, it is necessary to **prioritise** applications which most benefit:

- a) the Councils financial position and
- b) impact in the community in terms of:
 - Economic and social enterprise leveraging in additional investment
 - Community empowerment
 - Retain and/or enhance local services that may be lost due to budget restraints and service cuts
 - Building capacity and encouraging a more sustainable third sector
 - Supporting delivery of the Council’s corporate objectives including community led regeneration

This policy sets out a framework to support decision-making and an agreed method of assessing all requests for transfer of assets. The Council will however, support Third Sector Organizations (TSOs) through the CAT process in a number of ways which include:

- Guidance from a dedicated CAT officer
- Supplying relevant information including:
 - running cost data
 - copies of surveys
 - building plans
 - any other relevant information
- A listing of assets potentially suitable for transfer in a ‘Community Asset Schedule’ will be made available and regularly updated.

6. The 4 Principles of BCBC Asset Transfer

In order to grant a CAT, 4 principles will need to be in evidence.

1. Community need

There must be strong links with the local community. Evidence of equality of access will be needed to be demonstrated. Members of the community should be able to influence proposed operations and decision-making. There must be a clear demand for the project.

2. Support Council Aims and Objectives

The proposed transfer must support the delivery of the Council's community strategy and corporate priorities.

3. Transparency

The decision making process is designed to show accountability and is clearly laid out in the section of Framework for considering CATs below. The process needs to be flexible in line with the complexity of applications and available Council staff resources. Decisions will be transparent and communicated clearly.

Monitoring

The CAT officer will undertake an annual review for Members detailing progress of the CAT programme.

4. Sustainability

The applicant is required to demonstrate its ability to manage the asset effectively via a robust business case. This should include an assessment of the financial and organisational capacity of the organisation and includes:

- Income generation proposals for example through hiring of space and facilities.
- The need for the activities being proposed and consideration of whether or not this is being provided by other organisations.
- Efficient use of the facilities in terms of space and time periods.
- Clear management structure showing how premises will be managed on a day to day basis including meeting any statutory requirements.

7. Identifying suitable assets for CAT

To promote the use of CATs, the Council invites interest in the following types of property/sites:

Priority 1	Public Toilets Parks Pavilions Bus shelters Community Centres
Priority 2	Playgrounds Playing fields (excluding School playing fields) and bowling greens
Priority 3	Miscellaneous Assets

A '**Community Asset Schedule**' will list potentially suitable assets from the above categories and be publicly available. **Not included** in this list are those assets which the Council wishes to retain for operational, financial or other purposes. These would include for example income generating commercial/industrial sites, assets reserved for development or those capable of generating a capital receipt if sold.

General applications

Community bodies with a proposal and searching for a suitable property will be given the Community Asset Schedule to enable them identify a potential property. If suitable asset/s are identified, the applicant should then submit an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** shown in Appendix 1 which will be considered against the CAT process **Stage 1 criteria** detailed in Appendix 2.

Priority of applications

Preference will be given to:

- TSOs already in occupation of a building
- Collaborative applications for co-locating TSOs. In such cases, 'umbrella' organisations or partnerships should be considered by applicants.

Where several expressions of interests are received, all will be considered rather than dealing on a "first come first served basis".

8. Framework for considering requests for CATs

Applicants are advised to seek support from organisations such as Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO), Wales Co-operative Centre or, for Town and Community Councils, One Voice Wales. A useful list of resources and links is attached at Appendix 7.

Requests will be considered where the criteria contained in the **Application Criteria** (Appendix 3) are met. The process for considering applications is detailed in Appendix 2. The degree to which the criteria are met, the condition

of the asset and the requirements of potential funders will be used to determine the most appropriate type of transfer agreement.

A short term lease or Licence may be more appropriate initially as part of a phased or temporary transfer whilst additional capacity and confidence is built.

Central to this process is a requirement for an outline and detailed **Financial Plan and Business Plan**. Illustrations, with guidelines, are provided at Appendix 4 and 5.

9. Decision processes

The process should be flexible and easy to understand for TSOs. The extent and detail of the business case required may vary with the type of assets/services being transferred. Regard will need to be given by the Council to any staff matters such as TUPE, redundancy and management of change issues.

The Councils due diligence process should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the proposal.

- For large or complex CATs, approval is required from **Strong Communities Connected Services Group (SCCS)**. The Council chairs this group which consists of the key public sector organizations in Bridgend. **Cabinet** approval will also be obtained if appropriate.
- For more straight forward CATs, approval shall be given by **Corporate Property Group (CPG)**.
- Note that for property transactions, Council approval is also usually required via the **delegated powers** scheme from Group Manager Property Services.

The CAT officer shall submit the reports with assistance and advice from Property Services and Legal Services and HR if required.

CPG will be responsible for assessing both **Stage 1** and **Stage 2** applications. CPG will be chaired by Group Manager Property Services and members will include senior officers from the key service directorates. Consultations will be made with Council Members and TSOs as required.

The decision will reflect assessment of the detailed criteria (Appendix 3) including:

- BCBC asset requirements - whether the asset required for future service delivery
- Financial benefits to the Council
- Wider benefits to Council and community

Where appropriate any final decision resting with the Corporate Director Resources and Corporate Director Communities

10. Property and legal considerations

CATs will need to deliver the best disposal option for the Council and only leases, licenses or management agreements will be granted. Freehold transfer will be only be considered in exceptional circumstances and require Cabinet approval.

The length of lease offered will be determined on case by case basis having regard to the particular circumstances of the project, strength of the applicant and sustainability of the business case. As a guide, grant funding for improvements will require a minimum of 20 year lease.

Rent/market values

Community uses do not usually attract commercial revenues. TSOs are often dependent on grant funding and are generally unable to pay market rents/prices for property. By being aligned to Council priorities, the Council's 'return' is therefore based on the social, economic or environmental benefits. The Council however needs to justify and record any decision to transfer a property at an undervalue with reference to:

- A valuation of the property to identify any value being forgone.
- the 'General Consent 2003' which enables local authorities to proceed with transfers at an undervalue
- State Aid provisions to ensure either none is given or to ensure that it is permitted and the Council protected.

A **peppercorn** or discounted rent or any other disposal at below market value may well be justifiable but should not be assumed. A decision to grant concessionary terms needs to be justifiable and recorded by Property Services. Cabinet approval may be required depending on the circumstances. In determining the rent, consideration will be given to:

- Value of the property
- The management and running costs of the property
- TSO financial position
- Extent of benefit to the Council in terms of revenue savings and/or service delivery.

The onus falls on the TSO to demonstrate that concessionary terms are needed. This will best be provided by reference to their business plan or other financial projections.

Other lease terms/conditions

A lease/licence seeks to move responsibilities to empower the tenant in terms of self-management. A list of the main terms to be included in a lease/ licence is shown at Appendix 6.

APPENDIX 1 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) TEMPLATE

Community Asset Transfer – Stage 1 Expression of Interest

Before submitting an application applicants are encouraged to discuss their options, suitability and the scope of community asset transfer with the CAT Officer (01656). These informal discussions will help to prepare for the process of making a formal application for transfer.

The Council recognises that developing the business case and preparing an application for community asset transfer can be both time consuming and resource intensive for applicants. **Stage 1** of the application process has therefore been designed to assess whether any potential application will meet the Council’s suitability criteria. The Council will not be able to process the application unless all the information relevant to the asset transfer is received. It is simple to complete and should avoid spending time and valuable resources on an application that is unlikely to be approved. Applicants that meet the Council’s suitability criteria will be invited to complete a more detailed **Stage 2 application**.

1. Please provide details of the organisation making the application

Name of Organisation:	
Address of Organisation	
Applicant Name:	
Position:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address	
Date:	

2. Type of organisation

What type of organisation are you e.g. registered charity?	
Do you have a formal constitution, governance document or set of rules?	

3. What is the structure and purpose of your voluntary or community organisation?

How many people are involved in your organisation?	Management Committee	
	Full Time Employees	
	Part Time Employees	
	Volunteers	
When was the organisation established?		
What is the purpose and main activities of your organisation?		
Does your organisation have experience of managing an asset? If yes please provide details		

4. Please tell us about the asset (land or buildings) you are interested in?

Name and address of asset	
If this is a speculative application please provide details of the type of asset and location required	
Type of transfer you are interested in including level of discount and proposed length of lease	

5. Please tell us about the proposed use of the asset
(please continue on a separate sheet if required but no more than one side of A4)

What do you want the asset for?	
---------------------------------	--

What benefits will this bring to the organisation, the local community and the Council?	

7. Please tell us about any partners, collaborators and stakeholders

If you are proposing any arrangements with public sector or other third sector partners please provide details	
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Please return the completed form to:

**Community Asset Transfer Officer
Communities Directorate
Bridgend County Borough Council
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend CF
Telephone:
Email:**

APPENDIX 2 - CAT PROCESS

APPLICATION STAGE	REQUIREMENTS	DECISION MAKER	TARGET TIMESCALES
STAGE 0 Informal pre-application discussion	Before submitting an Expression of Interest, applicants should discuss their proposals with the CAT officer	N/A	N/A
STAGE 1 Submit formal Expression of Interest (EOI) (Appendix 1) to CAT Officer	<p>Outline business case prepared by TSO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the organisation • Governance arrangements • Proposed use of asset and benefits • Benefits to community, TSO and Council • Support from community/partners <p>If the application is supported, the TSO will be invited to proceed to Stage 2. If the application is not supported a full explanation will be provided.</p>	<p>Corporate Property Group / Strong Communities Connecting Services Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant Ward Members and Town/Community Council • relevant partners 	12 weeks from receipt of Expression of Interest
STAGE 2 Business Plan The Council will provide any relevant asset information available Support may be available from BAVO, and Wales Co-operative Society	<p>Detailed Finance and Business Plans prepared by TSO – (see illustration at Appendix 4 and 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs analysis and projected utilisation • Type of transfer sought and why • Planned outcomes and benefits and how they will be measured/monitored • Details of any proposed partnership/collaborative working • Track record for delivering service/managing property • Capacity to manage the asset • 3 year plans for revenue and capital funding – projected income and expenditure including costs of managing and operating the asset • Financial sustainability and forward planning 		Full business plan to be submitted within a 12 weeks of Stage 1 approval if possible
STAGE 3: Full assessment of Business Plan	<p>Report by CAT Officer to Corporate Property Group or Strong Communities Connecting Services Board (complex/larger cases) with a detailed assessment of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits for community, the TSO and how they relate to delivering Council priorities • Risks in relation to financial and 	<p>Corporate Property Group</p> <p>Strong Communities Connecting Services Board</p>	12 weeks from receipt of full Business Plan

	<p>organisational ability to manage the asset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential loss of capital receipt and existing income or other opportunity cost to the Council arising from the transfer • Establish level of discount (if applicable) • Terms of transfer and any legal issues • Monitoring arrangements e.g. Service Level Agreement 		
<p>STAGE 4:</p> <p>Property transaction approval and completion of agreement</p>	<p>Approval via Councils Delegated Powers or by Cabinet.</p> <p>Instruct Solicitors</p> <p>Legal completion</p>	<p>Group Manager Property Services</p> <p>Cabinet</p> <p>Legal Services Manager</p>	<p>As required</p>

Appendix 3 - Application Criteria

a) The Applicant must be:

A Community/Town Council (CC) or a Third Sector organisation (TSO), which satisfies the following criteria:

- Legal entity that is incorporated and provides limited liability for the stakeholders involved, this would usually be in the form of a company, society, CIO (Charitable incorporated Organisation) or CIC (Community Interest Company). It must enable the management/ownership of buildings and provision of services.
- Exist for community/social/environmental benefit.
- Non-profit distributing – any surpluses must be reinvested to further its community benefits/social aims.
- Demonstrate good governance through open and accountable processes, with appropriate financial and audit controls.
- Demonstrate engagement with the community.
- Demonstrate it has the skills and capacity within or available to effectively deliver its services and manage the asset.
- Provide services or engage in activities that deliver economic, environmental or social benefits to the community.
- Provide copies of the organisation's Annual Report and accounts if available.
- Strong links with the local community and directly benefit the people of the county borough.
- Benefit as wide and diverse a range of local people as possible and demonstrate an inclusive approach to all members of the community.
- Decision making process influenced by local community.

b) The Asset

- A legal interest owned by the Council from which the organisation can demonstrate community benefit.
- The asset is in the freehold/leasehold ownership of the Council.
- Applications for multi-uses and co-location of services should be encouraged.

c) Proposed Use

- There is both a need and demand for the proposed activities and consideration is given as to whether or not this is being satisfactorily addressed by another organisation.
- The proposed use will support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities.
- The proposed use will maximise opportunities for income generation to ensure sustainability.

- The TSO has established how much space it requires to deliver its proposals, and how they will make optimum use of the asset.
- The proposed use will deliver extensive and inclusive reach into the community and will be open to all.

d) **Business Plan and Finance**

A robust business plan clearly stating the operation and service provision and financial and organisational capacity of the organisation to deliver the proposed services/activities and manage the asset is critical to the success of any transfer.

Appendix 4 Finance plan illustration

Note:	Income	Phase 1	Phase 2		Phase 3		
		Current	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
1	Local authority 'start-up' grant						
2	Other grant aid						
3	Rent & room hire						
	Large Hall						
	Small Hall						
	MUGA						
4	Other income						
	Vending machines						
	Café & shop sales						
	Other						
5	Volunteer time in kind						
6	Own fundraising						
	Total	£121,708	£86,800	£95,800	£107,680	£95,500	£112,500
	Expenditure	Current	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 3	Yr 3
7	Staff salaries & on-costs						
	Centre Manager						
	Caretaker						
	Cleaner(s)						
	Volunteer time in kind						
8	Staff & volunteer training & devt						
9	Caretaking / cleaning costs						
	Cleaning materials						
	Refuse collection						
	Security						
10	Utilities						
	Water						
	Electricity						
	Gas						
11	Rates						
12	Repairs and maintenance						
13	Transport & travel						
14	Centre supplies						
	Tools & materials						
	Equipment hire						
	Office furniture & IT						
	Medical, clothing & PPE						
	Telephones						
	Internet						
15	Centre promotion						
	Printing & publicity material						
	Advertising						
16	Vending machine rental & supplies						
17	Insurances and professional fees						
	Property insurance						
	Public liability insurance						
	Performing rights soc. Fees						
	Accountancy fees						
	Legal fees						
	Architects fees						
	Consultancy fees						
18	Other - sundries & miscellaneous						
	Total	£121,708	£79,300	£84,225	£92,175	£92,175	£92,175
	Surplus (defecit)		£7,500	£11,575	£15,505	£3,325	£20,325
							Accumulated reserves £58,230

Appendix 5 Business plan illustration

Executive summary	p.5
1. Our project	p.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ About ANOther Community Organisation ○ Our values and the mission of our organisation ○ The aims and objectives of our community project 	
2. The market	p.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ About our community ○ Existing & target markets ○ Results of community consultations ○ Knowledge of other existing community services & facilities ○ Opportunities to build partnerships 	
3. Business growth and development	p.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A review of our organisation (SWOT Analysis) ○ Our business development strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1 – Project design (Year 0) ▪ Phase 2 – Centre development (Years 1 - 3) ▪ Phase 3 – Centre expansion (Years 4 & 5) 	
4. Centre management	p.13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Our management committee ○ Staffing and the role of community volunteers ○ Development of community activities ○ Service delivery & programming ○ Policies & procedures ○ Day-to-day operations 	
5. Centre development	p.14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current facilities ○ Potential opportunities for refurbishment & expansion 	
6. Marketing plan	p.14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building our profile ○ Promoting our services 	
7. Financial plan	p.15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Five year income & expenditure (cashflow projection) 	

- Income generation (sales forecasts)
- Fundraising strategy

8. Risk analysis

p.17

- Risk log
- Plan for minimising risks

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Community Consultation and Engagement Plan

Appendix 2: Desk top survey of other community facilities

Appendix 3: SWOT Analysis of ANOther Community Organisation

Appendix 6 - Lease/ licence conditions

Term – the length of the lease or licence will be dependent on the circumstances. 20-30 years will be suitable for a TSO obtaining capital funding. Transitional arrangements may be required until a TSO is able to proceed on a longer basis. Short term Licence or lease up to 2-3 years may suffice.

Rent – a concessionary or peppercorn rent depending on the property and applicant's financial circumstances see Guidance above.

Repairs – the tenant will usually be responsible for all repairs and health and safety. Variations to this will be considered on their merits.

Running costs - the TSO will be responsible for all running costs of the asset.

Assignment – will not be permitted in view of any concessionary terms granted. The right to hire space will be given provided no exclusive rights are given to users.

Insurance – for long term leases, the tenant is to insure the building. For short term arrangements, the Council will insure and recharge the premium to the tenant. All tenants should insure for contents and public liability.

Use – use of the premises will be restricted in line with the community aims of the TSO.

Application of income – all income must be reinvested in the running of the facility. The Council reserves the right to review the rent if income is not applied in this way.

Insolvency – if the event that the tenant becomes insolvent, the council will have the right to determine the lease or buy back the lease at £1.

Professional costs – each party to bear their own costs incurred in the lease process.

Other – as required by the Council's solicitor.

APPENDIX 7 LIST OF RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

The links below provide useful information, advice, resources and case studies on owning, managing and developing community assets.

CAT Resources

Community Asset Transfers in Wales – A Best Practice Guide - Welsh Government
<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/communities/community-asset-transfer/best-practice-guide/>

Development Trust Association Wales – Asset Development Portal
<http://assetsportal.dtawales.org.uk/resources/>

Community Matters
<http://www.communitymatters.org.uk/>

Locality
<http://locality.org.uk/>

Ethical Property Company
www.ethicalproperty.org.uk

Planning Aid Wales
<http://www.planningaidwales.org.uk/>

My Community Space
<http://www.mycommunityspace.org.uk/>

Support Organisations

Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO)
<http://www.bavo.org.uk/>
Tel: 01656 810400
Email: bavo@bavo.org.uk

Wales Council for Voluntary Action
<http://www.wcva.org.uk/home>

The Wales Co-operative Centre
www.walescooperative.org
Contact: Glenn Bowen
02920 807103
glenn.bowen@walescooperative.org

Communities First Bridgend
<http://www.commfirstbridgend.com/About-Communities-First>
Tel: 01656 643514
Email: communitiesfirst@bridgend.gov.uk

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

CHARTER BETWEEN BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL AND TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCILS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Town and Community Council Forum of the current Charter as attached at **Appendix 1**, between Bridgend County Borough Council and the Town and Community Council of Bridgend County Borough.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 Effective partnership arrangements between organisations supports the achievement of all Corporate Priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2007 the Welsh Government published a Local Government Policy Statement “A Shared Responsibility” which set out the expectations of Local Authorities and the support that the Welsh Government aimed to provide. It focused on:

- ensuring that public services are centered on the needs and experiences of citizens
- encouraging specialisation and economies of scale to be achieved through cross boundary collaboration
- encouraging integration and responsiveness to the diverse needs of citizens to be achieved through cross sector collaboration.

- 3.2 This strategy for achieving much improved service delivery and citizen experience of services considered three key areas of development:

- the creation of conditions to help develop a new approach to local governance for public service delivery in the form of Local Service Boards and Local Service Agreements
- the commensurate development of a vibrant and effective, cross-sector model of scrutiny, blending participatory and representative democratic approaches
- finally the generation of excellent local and national information on citizen satisfaction and local authority performance.

- 3.3 In response to this policy statement a joint guidance document “A Shared Community - Relationship Building and Charters for Unitary Authorities and

Community and Town Councils” was released by the Welsh Local Government Association, One Voice Wales and the Welsh Government in 2008.

- 3.4 The focal point of the guidance is the emphasis on establishing formal relationships by agreeing a charter. Charters can enhance relationships within local government in a number of ways, not least because the process of agreeing a charter entails assessing the values and behaviour which underpin any interaction.
- 3.5 Joint working is always a challenge, and even more so where the number of partners is large and their nature diverse. This situation applies to relationships between unitary authorities and community and town councils since the number and nature of community and town councils differs in each unitary authority area. Consequently, although general principles and good practice will be applicable to all, a pro-active and flexible approach to developing and sustaining positive relationships will be vital.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 The existing Charter was developed by a member working group appointed by the Town and Community Council Forum which gave careful consideration to the document – ‘A Shared Community’.
- 4.2 Following the development of a draft Charter it was sent with a letter to all Town & Community Councils on 15th May 2009. They were requested to make arrangements for the Charter to be considered for adoption by their Council. They were advised that the draft Charter was expected to be adopted by the Cabinet of Bridgend County Borough Council at its meeting on 26th May 2009. They were requested to inform the Authority of their Council’s decision once that position had been determined.
- 4.3 On 26th May 2009 the Cabinet considered the draft charter and agreed that this be adopted as a basis for developing positive working relationships between Bridgend County Borough Council and Community and Town Councils within the County Borough.
- 4.4 By 24th December, 2009, all Town Councils confirmed that they had agreed to adopt the Charter.
- 4.5 In February 2015 the Welsh Government published a White Paper: [Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People](#). It recognised that Local Government in Wales is currently under severe pressure as a result of austerity policies and a rising demand for services. It proposed significant changes which would impact all Council’s in Wales and the delivery of services to their communities. It was proposed to create area boards within Local Authorities, in order to ensure the new, larger Authorities are closer to their communities. As part of this, the paper talks about raising the ambition of Community Councils so they are better placed to deliver important community services in the future. This means building their capacity and capability, as well as strengthening their governance and their engagement with other services and the third sector.
- 4.6 As part of the approach to transform Bridgend County Borough Council, the need to establish a change programme to look at building capacity in the third sector and with town and community councils has been identified.

4.7 Working with the third sector and the Town and Community Councils to deliver public services could bring many benefits:

- organisations are close to communities, especially those considered hard to reach, and have skills and experience of working with the most disadvantaged in the community.
- they are an independent voice, acting as a check or balance to the mainstream.
- they can be flexible and responsive to changing needs.
- investing in local organisations can have a multiplier effect in the local economy – local public money invested locally supports local jobs and suppliers and supports economic regeneration from within.
- it is a means of harnessing community energy and ideas to develop their own solutions and action and empowering local people to make a difference.
- the benefits can be broader than those initially conceived as outcomes and the concept of ‘social accounting’ can be used to demonstrate added value.
- organisations can deliver high quality, focused and innovative interventions based on a detailed understanding of local and individual needs and can be successful where other interventions may have failed.

4.8 The following four themes have been identified which should provide the focus for building capacity in the Third Sector and with Town & Community Councils:

- A stronger and empowered community – more people participating in local decision making
- A cohesive and resilient community – people from different backgrounds getting on well together
- A sustainable and independent third sector – building the capacity of the sector and supporting sustainable growth
- Neighbourhood partnerships consisting of local stakeholders with residents – facilitating regeneration within our communities

4.9 Within these themes a number of priorities will be considered and may form projects and work streams that sit under the programme. These may include:

- Area based regeneration
- Asset Transfer Capacity Building
- Communications
- Community Cohesion
- Community Engagement
- Corporate third sector funding
- Third Sector commissioning
- External Funding
- Social Enterprise
- Volunteering

4.10 It is acknowledged that the existing Charter between Bridgend County Borough Council and the 20 Town and Community Councils within Bridgend County Borough is considered a useful tool but has not progressed significantly since its implementation. However, it does provide a framework to take forward existing good practice, develop common priorities and to minimise the impact that the

significant budget cuts over the next few years will have on citizens within the County Borough.

4.11 It is proposed that a working group be established to:

- review the existing Town & Community Council Charter,
- identify opportunities to:
 - develop capacity within the communities of the County Borough
 - minimise the impact of budget reductions to citizens
 - extend relationships with Third Sector and other organisations

4.12 The previous working group was comprised of 12 Members; with equal representation from BCBC and the Town and Community Councils. The representatives included 3 from Town Council's, 3 from Community Council and 6 from Bridgend County Borough Council.

4.13 It is proposed that a meeting of the working group be scheduled for 2:00pm on 22 October 2015 to be held in Committee Rooms 2/3 Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend.

4.14 The Lead Officer in respect of the review of the Town and Community Council Charter and the Third Sector Review will be the Head of Regulatory Services and Partnerships.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 It is recommended that the Town and Community Council Forum:

- notes the content of the report
- approves the establishment of a working group as identified in paragraph 4.11 of the report
- appoints representatives to the working group as proposed in paragraph 4.12 of the report
- approves that the first meeting of the working group be held on 22 October 2015 at 2:00pm.

P. A. Jolley
Assistant Chief Executive Legal & Regulatory Services
24 August 2015

Contact Officer: Gary Jones
Head of Democratic Services

Postal Address: Level 4 Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Telephones: 01656 643385

Email: Gary.Jones@Bridgend.gov.uk

Background documents: - None

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The Community and Town Councils within Bridgend County Borough have agreed to develop this Charter which sets out how the Councils aim to work together for the benefit of local communities whilst recognising our respective responsibilities as autonomous, democratically elected statutory bodies.

The charter is designed to build on existing good practice and embrace the shared principles of openness, honesty and our common priorities of putting citizens at the centre and encouraging democratic participation.

Partners to the Charter

Bridgend County Borough Council; and

Brackla Community Council
Bridgend Town Council
Cefn Cribwr Community Council
Coity Higher Community Council
Cornelly Community Council
Coychurch Higher Community Council
Coychurch Lower Community Council
Garw Valley Community Council
Laleston Community Council
Llangynwyd Lower Community Council
Llangynwyd Middle Community Council
Maesteg Town Council
Merthyr Mawr Community Council
Newcastle Higher Community Council
Ogmore Valley Community Council
Pencoed Town Council
Porthcawl Town Council
Pyle Community Council
St. Brides Community Council
Ynysawdre Community Council

Recognition

We accept the legitimacy and benefits of partnership working whilst at the same time recognising and respecting each other's roles. We aim to work together as a partnership of equals rather than tiers, and encourage public participation in local government.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
<p>Acknowledges and recognises that community and town councils are the grass roots level of local government. In their role as democratically accountable bodies, community and town councils offer a means of engaging with local people, and of revitalising local communities.</p> <p>There is potential for the sharing of responsibility for the provision of certain services subject to agreement between the authorities on the financial implications.</p>	<p>Recognise the strategic importance of the County Borough Council and the economy of scale and equitable distribution of certain services it is able to achieve.</p>
<p>Recognises and respects the diversity of community and town councils and that the extent to which they participate in partnership working varies according to their needs and size.</p>	<p>Recognise that they function within the geographical boundaries of the County Borough and share a common interest in the needs of the local population.</p>

Local Governance and Ethics

We will be clear about the expectations that we have of each other in order to facilitate a smooth working relationship. In this regard, we will define the way in which we interact with each other. We will be clear about the role of councillors at all levels in the relationship and in community leadership. Elected members of Bridgend County Borough Council and Town and Community Councils acknowledge the need to provide an ethical service to local people and for all councillors to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will hold liaison meetings with representatives of all community and town councils that wish to take part. This will be administered via meetings of the Town & Community Council Forum, to be held on a quarterly basis in the Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend. Additional meetings could be held when necessary.	Will contribute towards the agenda of the Town & Community Council Forum and contribute proactively to the attendance and discussion.
Will appoint a nominated member of staff to be a liaison officer between BCBC and community and town councils.	Will contact the nominated officer on the agreed issues and make them aware of any difficulties being encountered.
Community and town council councillors/officers (as appropriate) will be formally represented on key local partnerships and committee meetings. The unitary authority will seek to ensure that these arrangements are regarded as suitable and sufficient.	Will invite councillors/officers (as appropriate) of BCBC to meetings and will provide a space on its meeting agenda for presentations.
Will maintain the County Borough Mayor's Civic calendar on the BCBC website and ensure this is accessible to the clerks of the Town and Community Councils to help avoid diary clashes.	Will notify the BCBC Mayor's office of Civic events planned and of other significant local issues that might benefit from the Borough Mayor's attendance
Will administer the holding of community and town council elections.	Will inform the Electoral Registration Officer of vacancies as soon as practicable and ensure compliance with statutory requirements.
Will, through the appointed Monitoring Officer, support Town and Community Councils in the timely consideration and provision of advice in relation to the application of the Members Code of Conduct.	Will provide all such information as required by the Monitoring Officer to enable him/her to carry out his/her function effectively.

Consultation

We appreciate the importance of meaningful consultation and set out a genuine commitment among all parties to consult on matters of mutual concern. We will agree clear, specific and time limited procedures and processes for consultation.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
<p>Will endeavour to give community and town councils the opportunity to comment before making a decision that affects the local community [e.g. children’s play areas.] In furtherance of this, BCBC will make available a copy of its public reports to Cabinet, panels, committees etc; will publish the dates of its public meetings; and make copies of its agendas available on the Council’s website as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Community and town councils will respond to consultation opportunities in a timely manner, addressing the key issues in the consultation document.</p> <p>Will make full use of the papers available to them to inform local decision-making.</p>
<p>Where BCBC consultation is specific to a Town and Community Council area, an undertaking is given that BCBC will endeavour to check the date of the Town or Community Council meeting beforehand.</p>	
<p>BCBC recognises the need for Town and Community Councils to have feedback on the outcome of consultation exercises to which they have contributed.</p>	
<p>Officers of BCBC will attend meetings with community and town councils (or groups of councils) at a mutually agreed time to discuss matters of common interest when requested to do so, having regard to the fact that town and community councils generally meet monthly.</p>	<p>BCBC Councillors and officers will be given an opportunity to speak at community and town council meetings on matters of mutual interest.</p>
<p>Will encourage scrutiny committees to liaise with community and town councils on relevant local issues.</p>	<p>Will respond to requests to input views to scrutiny committees.</p>

Information and Communication

We appreciate the need for timely, clear and relevant information and communication in fostering good relationships and better joint working for the benefit of local people.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will provide to community and town councils a list of named contacts, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and maintain this up to date.	Will utilise the agreed contact points and respond to communications in a timely manner.
Will provide documents for members and Clerks of community and town councils electronically where appropriate, and in hard copy on request.	Will ensure that town and community councillors have opportunity to access the appropriate documents.

Joint working and engagement

The Charter defines 'Partnership' as working together towards a common set of goals, based on equality in terms of ownership, decision-making and recognition of each party's distinctive contribution. It is recognised that an equal and effective partnership brings benefits and responsibilities to all those involved and that we must work together to engage with citizens and promote the economic, social and environmental well being of our area.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will provide opportunities for clerks of town and community councils to meet to promote good working arrangements, discuss common concerns and resolve issues.	Will offer opportunities for clerks to network, share good practice and discuss common concerns.
Should seek ways in which local information from communities might be used to enhance service delivery to better meet citizen needs	Should engage with the citizens and the voluntary sector in the communities they serve to understand better their needs and convey these needs in a constructive manner to BCBC, such that they can be taken account of in service design and delivery.
Will give due consideration to devolving services that would provide better value for money and/or enhanced services.	
Will invite bids, when budgets allow, from Community and Town Councils for joint	

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
projects/ working which meet joint objectives and the BCBC priority themes.	

Land Use Planning

Community and town councils know and understand their local area and must be able to comment effectively on planning matters. The County Borough Council is able to take an overview of the needs of the whole local area and make decisions, taking local views into account.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will uphold its statutory duty to consult community and town councils on all planning applications in their communities, preferably in electronic form, in the interests of efficiency.	Will make appropriate responses to BCBC recognising the parameters imposed by planning law and agreed planning policy within the specified consultation period.
Will allow representatives of the community and town councils to address the Development Control Committee on applications appearing on the Committee's agenda in accordance with the public speaking arrangements.	Will ensure that councillors receive appropriate training on planning issues and develop a sound understanding of how planning law works. (Two copies of Planning Aid's booklet providing advice to town/community councils on planning matters have been previously circulated to each community/town council).
Will inform a community or town council electronically (within five days of the decision being made) or in writing (within seven days) of the decision made with respect to a planning application in its area. The report on each application will explain why any decision is different from the point of view put forward by the community/town council. Individual town and community councils will therefore be provided with feedback on views that they have submitted.	Will maintain an objective and professional approach to planning matters at all times, and recognise the statutory constraints in which the Planning Committee operates.
Will give community and town councils information about relevant planning committee meetings so that they may attend as observers.	Will enable Councillors to take up the opportunity to attend planning committee meetings at the unitary authority.
Will invite a representative from a community or town council – a local ward member wherever possible - to participate in site visits relating to	Will contribute to identifying relevant planning issues for fact finding site visits.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
planning applications in its area.	
All members of the Council serving on the Development Control Committee, or if making a decision in respect of a planning application, will abide by the provisions of the Council's Planning Code of Practice.	All members of Town and Community Councils will abide by sections 1 and 4 of the BCBC Planning Code of Practice when deciding upon the appropriate consultation response to a planning application.
Will continue consulting with community and town consultees for each and every stage of the Local Development process.	Will make appropriate responses to BCBC recognising the parameters imposed by planning law and agreed planning policy within the specified consultation period.
Will consult with the community and town councils on new Supplementary Planning Guidance.	Will make appropriate responses to BCBC recognising the parameters imposed by planning law and agreed planning policy within the specified consultation period.

Practical Support

In order to be effective, elected members and officers must be well-trained and have the support they need to carry out their roles.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
The County Borough Council will, where practical, provide community and town councils access to support services, to enable them to take advantage of facilities such as printing and purchasing at a mutually agreed price.	Will follow procedures set out to access certain BCBC support services, but also have opportunity to make own arrangements.

Expertise

We will encourage continuous development of officers and members in both BCBC and community and town councils, either in their individual groupings or together. Improved expertise leads to professionalism and more effective joint working. Access to information is also recognised as being an important issue for Town & Community Councillors.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
<p>Will offer assistance with member induction training for town and community councillors to enable them to understand the role and functions of BCBC.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to running these events during the day/evening to facilitate choice and access to such training.</p>	<p>Will provide an induction to newly elected councillors to enable them to undertake their role effectively.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to jointly developing a general information pack that will be of benefit to Members.</p>

Financial arrangements

Both the County Borough Council and Town and Community councils recognise the need for clarity and transparency in financial arrangements. All parties also recognise the benefit of being able to explore opportunities for delivering services in partnership in the future and that a number of Councils already have such arrangements. In developing and implementing financial arrangements, relevant national and local priorities will be taken into account.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
<p>BCBC in setting the level of council tax for the area, will have regard to services being delivered by community and town councils in its area, and the funding thereof.</p>	<p>Community and town councils, in setting the annual precept, shall have regard to what they perceive as being important to their community and any services provided jointly and shall notify BCBC of any proposed changes to their budgets which will impact on service delivery/ changes.</p>
<p>From time to time, BCBC will endeavour to make resources available via the Town and Community Council Fund to promote joint working arrangements.</p>	<p>Community and town councils recognise that certain community facilities have deteriorated and are in need of repair. They will endeavour to work in partnership with BCBC to address these within their own priorities.</p>

Delegating responsibility for service provision

Services should be delivered in the most appropriate manner, with regard to value for money and added value for local people. Examples of areas where arrangements for delegation of service delivery have been made include Rights of Way and street cleaning.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
BCBC will give due consideration to all cases for the delegation of service delivery to community and town councils, basing its consideration primarily on the improvement of service delivery for citizens whilst ensuring value for money is retained or enhanced.	Community and town councils should recognise that there are certain instances where it is not appropriate or desirable for BCBC to delegate service delivery.

Sustainability

We will work in ways that are sustainable, reconciling the long-term needs with those of the present; and protecting and improving the quality of life of current generations without compromising the quality of life of future generations. We will encourage our communities to live within environmental limits whilst promoting community wellbeing.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will assist town and community councils with information on sustainable practices in areas such as energy, waste, local food and transport.	Will communicate to local people within our communities to encourage sustainable behaviour.
Will look for opportunities for Town and Community Councils to get involved with existing or proposed projects that support sustainable development.	Will look for opportunities to start projects that encourage local people to get involved in sustainable activities.

Community Strategy

The Community Strategy is developed by the Bridgend Local Service Board and is the overarching strategy for the local area. It sets out the key priorities for this area and how partners will work together to address them. The LSB is made up of the most senior representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors and its aim is to deliver improved outcomes for local people by ensuring that partners work effectively together in pursuit of agreed priorities in the Community Strategy.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will ensure that town and community councils are consulted in the development of the local community strategy.	Will contribute to the development of the community strategy.
Will ensure that town and community councils are involved in the implementation of the community strategy.	Will respond actively and fully to consultation of the draft community strategy.
Will make arrangements to engage with town and community councils in the scrutiny of the Local Service Board.	Will participate in the partnership monitoring and the implementation of the community strategy.

Local Elections

Fair and open elections are the bedrock of local democracy. We will ensure that elections are freely and fairly contested, and encourage local people to become involved in local democracy.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will keep community and town councils informed regarding the local election planning process.	Will ensure wide publicity of vacancies on community and town councils to maximise community representation.
Will help to publicise forthcoming local elections on behalf of community and town councils.	Will facilitate public participation at all relevant meetings of the council and its committees to encourage community involvement.
Will brief community and town council clerks on the nomination process so that they are equipped to assist any potential candidates who come	Will inform the Electoral Registration Officer of vacancies as soon as practicable and ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
forward for local elections.	
Will run the local election legal and administrative processes and procedures, and promptly invoice Town and Community Councils for this service.	Will pay any charges incurred promptly upon receipt of invoice.

Action Plan

This Charter will be supported by the development of an annual action plan addressing each of the individual topics contained herein. The action plan will be developed on a joint basis and shall attribute responsibilities to each partner. Actions will be accompanied by a timescale and will be reported on at least quarterly during the year.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
The unitary authority will nominate a lead officer for the development and monitoring of the action plan.	Community and town councils will collectively agree priorities for inclusion in the action plan.
Responsible officers of the unitary authority will have due regard to the action plan and include relevant actions in their workplan for the year.	Community and town councils will have due regard to the action plan and the actions relevant to them during the course of the year.

Joint Monitoring and Review

We recognize the need to foster and maintain good working relationships and undertaking periodic reviews of this charter will assist us achieve this objective.

Bridgend CBC	Community and Town Councils
Will arrange for the Charter to be reviewed annually or as agreed.	Will actively contribute to the review of the Charter.
Will arrange for the development of an action plan linked to the Charter and will actively contribute to achieving the action plan.	Will actively contribute to the development and delivery of the Charter action plan.

Conclusion

The undersigned community and town councils and Bridgend CBC are committed to the principles and statements set out within the charter, for the benefit of local people.

Brackla Community Council
Bridgend Town Council
Cefn Cribwr Community Council
Coity Higher Community Council
Cornelly Community Council
Coychurch Higher Community Council
Coychurch Lower Community Council
Garw Valley Community Council
Laleston Community Council
Llangynwyd Lower Community Council
Llangynwyd Middle Community Council
Maesteg Town Council
Merthyr Mawr Community Council
Newcastle Higher Community Council
Ogmore Valley Community Council
Pencoed Town Council
Porthcawl Town Council
Pyle Community Council
St. Brides Community Council
Ynysawdre Community Council

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

21 SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

SCHEDULE OF AGENDA ITEMS

1. Purpose of Report.

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Town and Community Council Forum of the requests for items to be presented to future meetings.

2. Connection to Corporate Plan / Other Corporate Priority.

2.1 The report relates to the Corporate Priority working together to make the best use of our resources by improving the way we communicate and engage with citizens.

3. Background.

3.1 As agreed at a meeting of the Town and Community Council Forum held on 29 October 2007 an information report would be presented to subsequent meetings that would:

- indicate the items requested for inclusion by the individual Town and Community Councils; and
- Provide a schedule for the presentation of those items.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 The current list of requests and schedule of agenda items to be presented are set out in Appendix A to this report.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

5.1 There is no direct effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules, as a result of the provisions and recommendations of this report

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications attached to this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. Recommendation:

8.1 That the Town & Community Council Forum notes the contents of this report.

Mr P A Jolley
Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer
11 SEPTEMBER 2015

Contact Officer: **Mr Mark Anthony Galvin**
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Telephone: (01656) **643148**

E-mail: Mark.Galvin@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Democratic Services, Civic Offices, Angel St, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Background documents: None

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM - SCHEDULE OF AGENDA ITEMS

The following table shows the requests for agenda items scheduled to be presented to the Forum.

Topic for Consideration	Requested by Town/Community Council/Officer/Committee decision	Officer who compiles report or responds to the Town/Community Council	Date to be presented to Forum, or alternative recommended course of action
Learner Travel proposals	Maesteg Town Council	Corporate Director – Education and Transformation	Report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Town & Community Council Forum
Street Cleaning in Town Centres	Maesteg Town Council	Corporate Director - Communities	Report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Town & Community Council Forum

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