

*Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.
Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich
dewis iaith.*

*We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please
let us know if your language choice is Welsh.*

**Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddiol / Legal
and Regulatory Services**

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643 147
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Andrew Rees

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

Dyddiad/Date: 30 March 2016

Dear Councillor,

PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Partnerships and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held in the Committee Rooms 2/3, Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Tuesday, 5 April 2016 at 2.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive for apologies for absence from Members.
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 1 September 2008 (including Whipping Declarations)
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 8
To receive for approval, the minutes of the meeting of the Partnerships and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 14 January 2016
4. Forward Work Programme Update 9 - 12
5. Public Engagement with Scrutiny 13 - 22
Invitees:

Councillor C E Smith - Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Economic Development
Andrew Jolley - Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services
Gary Jones - Head of Democratic Services
Emma Blandon - Marketing and Engagement Manager
Andrew Harries – Consultation and Engagement Officer
6. Nomination to Standing BREP 23 - 26
7. Urgent Items

To consider any items 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:

N Clarke
E Dodd
EM Hughes
M Jones

Councillors

JR McCarthy
HE Morgan
AD Owen
D Patel

Councillors

M Thomas
RL Thomas
KJ Watts
C Westwood

Agenda Item 3

PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2016

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2016 AT 2.00 PM

Present

Councillor N Clarke – Chairperson

E Dodd	EM Hughes	M Jones	JR McCarthy
HE Morgan	AD Owen	D Patel	M Thomas
RL Thomas	KJ Watts	C Westwood	

Officers:

Kym Barker	Scrutiny Officer
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Invitees:

Councillor CE Smith	Cabinet Member Economic Development & Regeneration
Andrew Jolley	Assistant Chief Executive Legal & Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer
Arron Norman	Finance Manager – Social Services, Wellbeing, Resources & Legal & Regulatory Services

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

32. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 2 December 2015 be approved as a true and accurate record, subject to the following amendments:-

Councillor M Thomas being added to the list of attendees at the meeting.

The Chairperson also referred to page 7 (5) of the Minutes, second paragraph, 6th line, the period referred to 18 months to 8 years, should read 18 months to 4 years.
Councillor M Tomas

33. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to

- (a) Present the items due to be considered at the Committee's meeting to be held on 5 April 2016, and
- (b) Present a list of further potential items for prioritisation by the Committee

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the topics to be considered at the Committee meeting on 5 April 2016 and considered the list of future potential items for the Committee's Forward Work Programme.

- The Committee requested that the following items be added to the Forward Work Programme:
 - The Cultural Trust
 - County Borough Supplies
 - The Armed Forces Covenant

34. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 TO 2019-20

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the purpose of the report, was to present the Scrutiny Committee with the draft MTFS 2016-17 to 2019-20, which included a financial forecast for 2016-20, and a detailed draft Revenue Budget for 2016-17.

The Chairperson then welcomed the Invitees to the meeting to respond to questions from Members.

A Member referred to page 17 of the report and paragraph 3.10 which related to the Regional Collaboration Fund (RCF)/Intermediate Care Fund (ICF). He noted that it stated that in line with previous announcements, Welsh Government had ceased the RCF in 2016-17. Bridgend had historically benefitted from the RCF to help establish collaborations, such as Western Bay and the Regulatory Services collaboration. He asked how this would affect the Regulatory Services collaboration.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services confirmed that the Regulatory Services collaboration had worked well and benefitted enormously since it had been in being. The RCF funding had allowed largely for the collaboration to be introduced. However, in terms of legal services collaboration Bridgend had not received the same funding as partners. BCBC had relied more on savings it had made within the Legal Department by not having to recruit further lawyers or outsource, due to this work being absorbed through the collaboration arrangements. However, as this funding was ceasing to be, this may pose a problem for the other Authorities within the collaboration. . A meeting was soon to take place in order to plan the way forward with regard to the Legal Services collaboration continuing in the absence of this funding. Lawyers were employed from the joint team to undertake work as part of the service, which would otherwise require to be outsourced, which was often expensive, so it was important he said to endeavour to continue with the collaboration arrangements, as in essence it saved the Department money. The collaboration had initially employed a Project Manager on a full time basis to establish a framework for the collaboration. However, this post had now been reduced to a part time role. The RCF had only been introduced to assist in setting up the Regulatory Services collaboration until such time it became self-financing/funded. The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services confirmed that he had received extra funding than initially anticipated for the forthcoming year to support his Legal team, and this would help resource staffing.

The Member also noted that by contrast (to the above), the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) had increased from £20m in 2015-16 to a proposed £50m across Wales for 2016-17 in the draft budget, which would again be allocated to the NHS to manage, albeit working in partnership with local authorities. He asked if this funding arrangement fed directly into the Council's revised Corporate Priorities.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services advised that both the above means of collaborative working linked in with the Councils Priorities, and were just two of the many partnership arrangements that the Authority were now involved with that were proving to be successful ventures in terms of delivering better services, and saving money for each of the organisations that were involved in these collaborations.

The Finance Officer added that the ICF was set to increase just as the RCF would be decreased. Bridgend's allocation of the overall ICF this year had amounted to £370k, and a further meeting would be convened with the NHS to establish what this would be increased to in the coming year.

A Member referred to paragraphs 3.5, 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12 of the report, and the fact the BCBC had a better settlement than was originally anticipated this year. She asked the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services, how this would benefit his Department.

He referred Members to page 45 of the report and to the Section entitled Budget Reduction Proposals for 2016-17 to 2019-20, which reflected positive news for his Department overall. In terms of LRS 2 and the proposal for the restructure of Legal and Democratic, Performance and Partnership Services, he confirmed that the indicative savings for 2016-17 now stood at £70k. There had been a proposal originally for this figure to be significantly higher, but as a result of the improved settlement, he had received an extra £200k to support his Legal section for the forthcoming year. This had helped him considerably when setting his budget he added.

The Member enquired if the MTFs proposals had any impact on the ongoing Public Protection collaboration arrangements.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services confirmed that the collaboration as Members were aware, consisted of three authorities, i.e. Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend County Borough Councils, and that the impact of the project was intended to reduce costs and maintain resilience. The project as was confirmed in the proposals outlined in the report was expected to provide savings over and above those originally stated, and it was important that the project provided proportionate savings to its costs, to avoid other parts of the Department taking an unacceptably high burden of cuts in one or more particular areas. Savings targeted for years 2018 on were speculative he confirmed. He further added that the Public Protection Collaboration was proving to be effective in terms of service delivery, but previously had not proved as effective from a savings perspective, which meant that he had to find further savings than predicted from other areas of his Department. This aspect of the collaboration however had improved as it had become more established, and that the delivery of both the service and savings were now improving hand in hand.

The Chairperson asked if any other budget lines had been reduced further or withdrawn due to the improved settlement.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services reiterated that the settlement had assisted LRS2, due to the fact that he had received an extra £200k to support his Lawyers. LRS1, i.e. the Public Protection Collaboration, had not been affected due to the increase he had received mentioned immediately above.

With regard to LRS3, to increase income targets through the Registrars, he confirmed that this Section were on the whole self-funding, and therefore historically any savings they had been required to make as part of the budget round had in recent years been achieved. In terms of LRS4 and staff reductions already made, this had achieved a

saving for 2016-17 of £81k, as staff had approached him quite late in last year's budget round to leave either by way of voluntary redundancy or voluntary early retirement.

A Member referred to page 23 of the report and paragraph 4.11, 2nd bullet point, and noted that there was a proposed budget reduction in terms of Looked After Children (LAC). He was under the impression however, that numbers here were either increasing or very difficult to predict.

The Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Economic Development advised that this area came under the remit of the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and not that of the Partnerships and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services confirmed that he could relate partly to this area, in that his Childcare Lawyers supported LAC services. He advised that new protocols in respect of childcare litigation had previously been introduced, that had resulted in an increase in childcare related work for his lawyers, but this had now levelled out. The budget reduction proposed in respect of the safe reduction of LAC would come from 'Making Best Use of Resources', though he did agree to an extent with the Member's comment that this was both an unpredictable and volatile area within which to accurately project savings. Officers in both LARS and Social Services, did whatever they could to support families and wherever prevent children having to be placed in care.

In relation to the stated budget reductions shown on pages 16-17 of the report, a Member asked what changes have been made in LARS to affect the savings, and how would these savings affect the performance of the Department.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services confirmed that the cuts amounted to approximately £2.4m which was on top of previous cuts made, and amounted to around 50% of the total staff in the Department longer term. These had been mitigated to an extent, through work initiatives such as the National Procurement Service that had been set-up for the purpose of establishing frameworks for common and repetitive spend for all public sector establishments in Wales, so that these bodies could achieve savings. The Modern.Gov system had also been introduced not just for the Department but to support other Directorates also, and this was a new database that had allowed the Department to achieve savings by streamlining various methods of working as well as saving on printing/postage costs and improving the Council's web site. The Department had also achieved the Lexcel Standard in Legal Services, which was a process that ensured a high level of performance was being undertaken by staff in respect of the work they undertook, and this was subject to various inspections being undertaken by external methods annually. A major inspection was due to take place in a few weeks on a new standard of Lexcel. Lexcel ensured that staff were providing and maintaining a high level of service through innovative and structured work methods. A system recognised as EDRM had also been introduced in order to achieve some administrative savings, and a new Case Management System was to be created, to support EDRM.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services reminded Members that he had no assets other than staff, and therefore any cuts he was enforced to make as part of the MTFs were almost exclusively relating to posts.

He also reminded Members that services and roles previously carried out by staff were having to be looked at again and in some cases reduced. An example of this was that lawyers had not for some time been attending certain Committees including Overview and Scrutiny meetings, as their work commitments were more pressing elsewhere. This

was the type of impact the recurring budget cuts were having on his Department as they were in other Directorates. Obviously, it was important for his legal staff to support and advise other Departments, as well as the public and external organisations, as this was their primary role i.e. to undertake legal transactions on behalf of the Council.

The Authority had also recognised that it is important wherever possible, to minimise cuts to some of its central services, and this was one of the reasons that the cuts in LARS for the forthcoming year in terms of staffing had been favourable to the point of minimal.

The situation would continue to change in the next few years both in his Directorate and others, as settlements were anticipated to be less favourable in the future term of the MTFS, hence the proposed cuts anticipated as shown shaded red on the traffic light boxes shown in the Budget Cuts proposed section of the report. He emphasised that Departments that worked in partnership or through collaboration were likely to benefit more due to increased savings being made through providing a service jointly, as well as being able to deliver services differently, and in most instances more effectively than if they were providing these as stand-alone organisations. Cuts of the magnitude that were being made meant that authorities had to provide these differently and in more innovative ways than previously he added.

A Member noted from page 22 of the papers and Table 4, that as part of the Risk Status of Budget Reduction Proposals for 2016-17 to 2019-20, there were Red proposals not yet developed that totalled over £19m and an overall total percentage of 52.5% savings that needed to be made over this period. If the anticipated required savings were not met in the earlier period of the MTFS then these may accumulate to an unmanageable degree in 2019-20 he stated, resulting in knee jerk decisions possibly being made to meet this cut.

The Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services, agreed that these were substantial and unprecedented cuts, but he felt that Members should note that there was no savings required and showing as Red for 2016-17. This was very positive news and would go a considerable way in providing confidence within the Authority that the savings that would be required in subsequent years of the current MTFS would be met through various ways and methods. The savings required in 2017-18 though not yet fully developed, were being presently considered in advance, but just needed some further planning before implementation. The MTFS was regularly monitored and progressed through Cabinet, Cabinet/CMB and PMB (Project Management Board) where considerable savings were being planned through providing services in the future in a different way with assistance from others external to the Council through joint, partnership or collaborative working.

As this concluded debate on this important topic, the Chairperson thanked the Invitees for attending and responding to questions, following which they retired from the meeting.

Conclusions

The Committee noted the report, which provided Members with the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17, including a financial forecast for 2016-20 and a detailed draft revenue budget for 2016-17.

- Members queried the impact on Regulatory Services of the discontinuation of the Regional Collaboration Fund and what would happen when the funding ceases. The Officer responded that, while the funding had benefitted the service, BCBC are currently still in a good position to continue collaborative working.

- Members asked about the overall picture regarding the regulatory services budget and how the changes in the department would impact on service provision and support. The Officer responded that the changes would impact on everyone, and gave examples of ways that the service will respond to the requirement for saving and work more efficiently, such as using the 'Modern Gov' system and frameworks for procurement and legal services. The Officer said that performance would be measured and monitored against Lexcel standards.
- Members asked the Officer to clarify any changes or omissions to proposals as a result of recent changes to the requirement for savings.
- Members noted the amounts allocated to proposals under consideration or not yet developed within the LARS directorate. The Officer responded that the proposals yet to be developed would be planned and managed through the Programme Management Board.
- Members acknowledged the successful use of social media and Twitter Q and A sessions during the budget consultation period.

Recommendations

- The Committee recommends that information on all BCBC services, projects and activities which involve partnership working is collated and provided to the Committee to enable them to identify areas which fall under the remit of Partnerships and Governance. This will help to inform the Forward Work Programme, increase the effectiveness and impact of the Committee and identify areas which may be suitable for partnership working in future.
- The Committee are concerned that the scrutiny function of the authority is at risk of being jeopardised due to current staffing levels and would strongly recommend that the staffing levels are maintained at 2.6 to ensure that the Authority is supported by an effective scrutiny function.

Further Information Requested

- There were no requests for further information following the presentation of this report.

35. URGENT ITEMS

None

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm

REPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 APRIL 2016

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the items due to be considered at the Committee's next meeting to be held 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 25 February 2015 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 24 June 2015 the Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee determined its Annual Forward Work Programme for 2015/16.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

- 4.1 In relation to the Committee's next meeting the table below lists the potential items to be considered and the invitees due to attend.

Topic	Invitees	Specific Information Requested	Research to be Undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Unit
Armed Forces Covenant	tbc	Report requested at the P&G OVSC meeting on 14 January 2016.	
County Borough Supplies	tbc	Report requested at the P&G OVSC meeting on 14 January 2016.	

Extra Items for Consideration

- 4.2 The list below contains potential items as yet to be decided for the 2016-17 forward work programme. The prioritisation and timings of these will be agreed at the Committee meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

Topic	Purpose of Report	Invitees
Regulatory Services Collaborative Project	From the CEL OVSC meeting on 8 October 2015 - Members would like this item to be added to the list of future potential items for the Committee Forward Work Programme.	

Corporate Parenting

4.3 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent' therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend.¹

4.4 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how the services within the remit of their Committee affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee can therefore assist in these areas.

4.5 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet-Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 The work of the Partnerships and Governance 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 None

7. Financial Implications

7.1 None.

8. Recommendations

¹ Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Local Government Association 'If this were my child... A councillor's guide to being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers', June 2009

The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Note the topics due be considered at the next meeting of the Committee to be scheduled at the Annual General Meeting of Council;
- (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 this meeting.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services

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CF31 4WB

Background Documents: None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

05 APRIL 2016

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH SCRUTINY

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise Members of the plans to develop public engagement with Scrutiny

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The report supports all of the corporate priorities:

1. **Supporting a successful economy** – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business and ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
2. **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.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible; and supporting the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver its vision.

3. Background

3.1 At its meeting on 29 October 2014, the Committee agreed that scrutiny officers develop steps to promote public engagement in scrutiny in order to meet its statutory obligation through the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to ensure the public engage with scrutiny by:

- establishing the extent and range of public engagement activities that are already being undertaken,
- identifying existing and new opportunities to increase public knowledge and understanding of scrutiny;
- developing suitable protocols to increase the opportunities for the public to engage with Scrutiny

3.2 Section 62 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (the Measure) places a requirement on local authorities to make arrangements that enable all persons who live or work in the area to bring to the attention of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees their views on any matter under consideration by the committee. Section 62 also provides that an overview and scrutiny committee must take into

account any views brought to its attention in accordance with arrangements under this section.

- 3.3 As such, the statutory guidance in relation to the Measure states that overview and scrutiny committees are expected to raise public awareness about their role and function. However, in common with other local authorities across Wales, engagement in scrutiny is sporadic. Public attendance at formal committee meetings is low.
- 3.4 Improving public engagement is a significant challenge faced by all local authorities. There are numerous opportunities which could be progressed to enhance public engagement. However, the resources required to implement and sustain any or all of these opportunities is likely to be limited and the most cost effective and efficient methods of engagement need to be prioritised and developed.
- 3.5 The Bridgend County Borough Council Consultation and Engagement Toolkit was issued in August 2014. The toolkit integrates Participation Cymru's National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales that have been adopted by the council. In summary the ten principles that underpin effective consultation are:
1. Ensuring consultation and engagement is effectively designed to make a difference.
 2. Encouraging and enabling everyone affected to be involved, if they choose to be.
 3. Ensuring consultation and engagement is planned and delivered in a timely and appropriate way.
 4. Working with relevant partners.
 5. Providing information that is jargon free, appropriate and understandable.
 6. Making it easier for people to take part.
 7. Enabling people to take part effectively.
 8. Giving the right resources and support to be effective.
 9. Telling people the impact of their contribution.
 10. Learning and sharing lessons to improve the process of engagement.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

4.1 The Consultation and Engagement Toolkit identifies a number of traditional methods for engaging with stakeholders and the public. These include:

4.1.1 Citizens' Panel

There are currently 1,400 members of the Citizens' Panel who receive up to three surveys per year on a range of topics such as street cleanliness, customer service and the local housing strategy. It is important that the Citizens' Panel reflects the

views of as many different groups of people as possible to ensure that the panel is representative of the people of Bridgend County Borough. Members receive updates through a newsletter 'you said, we did'. The newsletter shows panel members how responses have changed the way the council operates.

4.1.2 Questionnaires – Postal and online

Sophisticated software used within the council allows for all postal and online response data to be held in one location. This enables the council to: analyse data more easily; use OCR readers to scan paper copies of surveys automatically and create bespoke online surveys accessible through mobiles, tablets and laptops. The method is used frequently within the council from small internal surveys to major engagement projects such as the budget consultation and the council's Citizens' Panel.

4.1.3 In-depth interviews.

The consultation and engagement team have recently received additional training as part of a Local Service Board project in engaging with the public using one-to-one interviewing techniques. The method is popular for developing initial concepts or adding qualitative input to quantitative findings. Regarding scrutiny, this method could be useful in gaining service feedback in unique cases including the potential use of audio or visual recording for feedback purposes.

4.1.4 Voting pads.

During meetings with groups where there are several set questions the council wish to have answered using voting pads allows presentations to record feedback through response cards (also referred to as voting pads or clicker pads). These handheld devices allow attendees to 'vote' on an option during presentations. All data is then collated and automated reports are created for reflection purposes. These voting pads have been used successfully as part of senior management meetings and during the budget consultation.

4.1.5 Workshops.

Typically one day events for 10-30 people, the workshop tends to explore various aspects of a specific issue rather than aiming to reach decisions. The workshop allows more qualitative based data from open-ended information. Workshops are useful to generate detailed information but would require further analysis as it is not statistically reliable. Having experts present helps to guide the attendees and allows the council to manage expectations. These have been used during Active Travel consultations.

4.1.6 Focus groups.

A meeting typically involving 8-12 people, with the intention of an in-depth discussion to gather views/ideas. The focus group itself can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. Semi-structured or unstructured focus groups give the opportunity to explore based on the conversational direction of the group. Structured focus groups ensure that questions requiring answers are all addressed to the council's requirements. The consultation team has a database of citizens who may be interested in attending focus groups.

4.1.7 Exhibitions, roadshows and public meetings.

Exhibitions and roadshows (along with open days) provide an opportunity for members of the public to see information such as plans, maps, photographs,

displays as well as ask questions on the particular subject. They can be used for exploratory or confirmatory based questions. The technique can humanize the council in their decisions and gives an excellent opportunity for two-way dialogue. They should only be undertaken when you have a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve as the process may come under scrutiny.

4.1.8 The purpose of public meetings is to share information, ideas, develop relationships etc. Attendance is open to any interested member of the public. The meeting allows two-way dialogue but may also involve scrutiny from attendees. The occasion is a good opportunity for both sides to express their views.

4.1.9 Attendance to such events is typically low due to the emergence of online communication methods. Managing the events with activities is crucial to ensure effective use of resources.

4.1.10 Alternative methods are less common but in some instances are more suitable than the traditional methods.

- Door step and street surveys.
- Forums.
- Polls, referenda and ballots.
- Action planning – event(s) where citizens work with experts on issues for community benefit.
- Community visioning – the community sets clear, realistic goals, before working backwards to achieve them.
- Vox pops – are short collated video recordings of individual responses

4.1.11 It should be noted that not all engagement has involved the consultation and engagement team but it has been supported at least 20 engagement events during the 2015-16 financial year.

4.1.12 The Communications, Marketing and Engagement team also provide assistance to Officers to select a suitable combination of promotional messages, tools and activities to reach the target audiences:

- Webpages – documents can be published on the council's, partner's and/or dedicated sites.
- Social media – the council has a corporate Twitter, Facebook and Flickr. Some service areas also have their own dedicated social media pages.
- Push strategy promotion – encourage promotional activity from: press releases; externally promote through the bi-annual County Borough Bulletin, or; in the Civic Offices using the information screens.
- Internal promotion – Reach all staff through the Bridgenders email, the Bridgenders magazine issued quarterly. Councillors can also be reached directly via the bi-monthly Bridgemembers newsletter.
- Paid advertising – through newspapers and magazines, radio stations or via the internet.
- Posters/leaflet drops – used to promote events or publicise the documents.
- Face to face – presentations, events and public meetings can all be used for two-way interaction.
- Partnerships – provides the benefits of pooled expertise and resources.

4.1.13 The council has three social media accounts currently in operation: Facebook,

Twitter and YouTube. In total there are 4,699 Facebook followers, 6,866 Twitter followers and 3,217 unique views on the council's YouTube videos.

4.1.14 The Facebook and Twitter accounts have been used to host social media debates including consultations on waste collection, the MTFS budget and creating citizen-based performance indicators. These debates reach around 10 per cent of the population with no financial cost.

4.1.15 An event to enhance awareness of scrutiny and how scrutiny can benefit the Authority and the public could be developed. The session could explain the role of scrutiny and how it could be used to improve engagement with the public, partner organisations and in turn enhance the impact of scrutiny.

4.2 Webcasting

4.2.1 Democratic Services has been developing the use of webcasting to increase the openness and transparency of the decision making process.

4.2.2 Following initial technical difficulties the webcasting system was implemented in January 2016. Since then the following meetings have been broadcast and archived:

Committee	Date	Total Views	Unique Views
Development Control Committee	07-Jan-16	826	462
P&G Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14-Jan-16	447	278
CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee	21-Jan-16	402	305
CEL Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27-Jan-16	333	223
Audit Committee	28-Jan-16	369	255
CRI Overview and Scrutiny Committee	09-Feb-16	328	172
ASC Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11-Feb-16	228	166
Development Control Committee	18-Feb-16	240	136
Cabinet	01-Mar-16	243	176
Council	10-Mar-16	326	174
Total		3742	2347

4.2.2 The latest viewing figures as at 16 March 2016 show of a total of 3742 views with 2347 of these being unique. These figures are encouraging and they show a significant improvement compared with the numbers of the public attending formal meetings.

4.2.4 The initial feedback from the public is generally positive "*(The webcast) which I must admit was excellent. It certainly saved us valuable time for which we are most grateful*". However some of the feedback provided an opportunity to quickly adapt our procedures to address minor concerns. Examples of this include:

Technical

- Improving access to the webcasts from the BCBC website by adding links from a variety of logical locations on the BCBC website.
- Displaying suitable messages at the start of the broadcast before the meeting begins to inform the public of relevant information, performance and innovations. These messages have included; planning statistics, advertisement of the social

media facilities of the authority and performance data of the authority in comparison with other Local Authorities in Wales.

- Developing the information available during the webcast including links to reports and presentations and to Elected Member profiles on the BCBC webpages.

Procedural

- providing explanations of the meeting procedure during the webcast to enable the audience to have a better understanding exactly what is happening at the meeting.
- modifying the “Apologies for absence” process,

Personal

- providing a short briefings before webcasts to advise Elected Members of good practice.
- Elected Members were requested to view recordings and identify opportunities to minimise any ineffective practices and to improve the experience of the viewer in future webcasts.

4.3 Modern.gov (committee administration system)

4.3.1 The implementation of this committee administration system has provided the ability for the public to subscribe to updates and be automatically provided with information subsequently published on the topics they have identified. It also enables internal and external subscribers to be automatically sent reports for committees when they are published.

4.3.2 However, this has only led to 3 members of the public utilising this feature. Greater efforts are needed to make the public aware of this facility and its benefits.

4.4 Progressing Engagement Opportunities

4.4.1 Based on the available options and the existing resource limitations the following have been identified as the most appropriate tools to be developed and increase the opportunities for public engagement.

4.4.2 Scrutiny page(s) on the BCBC Website

4.4.3 Following discussions with the Marketing and Engagement Team it was identified that further work was needed on the webpages to encourage greater accessibility and interaction. The scrutiny page is not very easy to find without actively searching for the term ‘scrutiny’. Further work is being undertaken with the Marketing and Engagement Team to provide the scrutiny webpages with a higher profile which will enable easier access to the public.

4.4.4 The Scrutiny webpages require updating to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. This creates an opportunity to review the content of all of the scrutiny webpages. To make positive changes to the scrutiny pages, the following amendments were suggested:

- The webpage should be simple, well designed, friendly and easy to read, as there is not much text and you do not need to move the page up or down to read all of the content. A suggested layout is shown in Figure 1 below.

Scrutiny		
<p>Scrutiny Explained What is it? How does it work?</p>	<p>Scrutiny Committees Details of the scrutiny Committees</p>	<p>Scrutiny Reports View reports presented to Scrutiny Committees Subscribe to updates</p>
<p>Scrutiny Work Programmes Details of the Scrutiny work that will be undertaken this year</p>	<p>Getting Involved Can I get involved? How can I have my views heard?</p>	<p>Scrutiny Request Form A form for the public to suggest a topic to be considered by a Scrutiny Committee</p>

Figure 1

- 4.4.5 This will require the scrutiny process chart / map to be updated and simplified to reduce the volume of formally worded text, which can be intimidating or off-putting for some readers.
- 4.4.6 During research it was identified that Conwy integrate their Scrutiny webpage page within the Modern.gov system. This enables the Scrutiny Request form to be completed and submitted online. This would require further development of our Modern.gov webpages but could be implemented in due course.
- 4.4.7 With the improvements to the webpages the Scrutiny presence on the intranet and internet can be enhanced to increase awareness. Adding relevant links to other teams/ departments webpages in order to direct traffic to and from the Scrutiny webpages. One service area which may increase the awareness of Scrutiny is to integrate the role of scrutiny as part of the complaints process.
- 4.5 Enhancing webcasts
- 4.5.1 Webcasting does not afford the public the opportunity to interact as it only allows one way communication from the Authority to the public rather than providing two way engagement.
- 4.5.2 To address this issue it is intended to develop the integration of Twitter feeds into the webcast for scrutiny meetings. This will enable the public to provide their views into the meetings whilst watching the live webcast. The tweets from the public can be monitored during each meeting and responses to the tweets can be provided via the webcast. This will provide rapid turnaround of questions and provide answers to the whole webcast audience
- 4.5.3 The initial tranche of webcast meetings has been completed and a review is now being carried to assess the Forward Work Programmes of committees and likely interests of the public to optimise viewing figures and participation.
- 4.5.4 Once the webcasting programme is developed it could be promoted on the BCBC

social media accounts and on the website. The publicity would outline the meetings being webcast and how the public can have their say during some of the meetings via twitter.

4.6 Development of the Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes

4.6.1 It is acknowledged that the public will engage with the Authority on specific issues which have a direct impact on them. Previously the published Scrutiny Forward Work Programme has contained generalised topics which lacked the specific impact and outcomes which would encourage the public to participate with Scrutiny.

4.6.2 With the forward work programmes currently being developed for 2016-17 there is an opportunity to provide clear and specific descriptions of the plan items being considered as part of the scrutiny process.

4.6.5 The Scrutiny Forward Work Programme currently being developed by Elected Members would benefit from appropriate input from partner organisations or the general public.

4.7 Developing Opportunities for Engagement with Partners and other Organisations

4.7.1 There are a few established opportunities for others to participate in the scrutiny process. Current arrangements provide for Registered Representatives with the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and occasional invitees from partner organisations which have included representatives of the Registered Social Landlords of the County Borough and Community Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.7.2 The Committee may wish to consider to establish an informal pool of contacts from our partner and other organisations who could be invited to:

- attend scrutiny meetings during consideration of suitable topics to provide a specialist perspective to the debate.
- provide filmed interviews.

4.7.3 Initial discussions have been held with the Partnerships Team who are compiling a list of partner and third sector organisations. These organisations and partners could be contacted to promote the opportunities for engagement with scrutiny and to be invited to participate in the scrutiny process.

4.7.4 The Town and Community Council Charter has also recently been revised with one of the proposals being that the Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes be made available to Town and Community Councils and discussed at quarterly meetings with their Clerks. This would enhance the awareness of the topics being considered and appropriate engagement encouraged.

4.7.5 Many Elected Members are also Town and Community Councillors which could provide an opportunity for them to act as ambassadors for Scrutiny and to promote engagement with their Town or Community Council.

4.7.6 It is also hoped that the relationship with the Youth Council can be developed in order increase their awareness of scrutiny and enable them to submit their views to the Scrutiny Committees.

4.7.7 To support the engagement with these organisation the updated Scrutiny Forward Work Programme will need to be published updated regularly and utilise cost effective advertising via social media to promote engagement.

4.8 Engagement Material

4.8.1 To support and promote the engagement with the public additional material may be needed. The following opportunities could be developed:

- Flyer/posters to be placed on notice boards in Leisure and Community Centres and on the public notice boards supported by Town & Community Councils
- Scrutiny Slideshows on the display screens in the reception of the Civic Offices and other Council Buildings
- Press releases and the publication of information via the BCBC twitter, Facebook and You Tube facilities.

4.9 E-Petitions

4.9.1 The Modern.Gov functionality includes an e-petition facility. The software allows members of the public to submit a request via the internet for an e-Petition to be published on the website.

4.9.2 A number of Councils have used the e-petition process and one active example is [Lambeth Council](#) with Welsh authorities including Conwy, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire and Merthyr Tydfil keen to develop the e-petition process.

4.9.3 The experience and lessons learned of other authorities can be used to determine how the e-petition process can be developed for use in Bridgend in the future.

4.10 Modern.gov (committee administration system)

4.10.1 Following a review of the webpages to meet with the revised Welsh Language Standards, changes were made which improves the access to subscribe to updates and other information regarding the democratic processes. The use of the subscribe to updates functionality will be monitored over the next 3 months to determine whether further advertisement and action is required.

4.11 Managing Expectation

4.11.1 It was indicated that it was very difficult to stop members of the public contacting Scrutiny once their awareness was raised of the scrutiny function and invited the communication of issues. Forthcoming changes (e.g. budget cuts and merger) will naturally lead to an increase in uncertainty and frustration with residents. This will require the careful management of the scrutiny profile carefully to prevent the team being inundated with cases and disappointing the public by being unable to deal with issues in a timely and effective manner.

4.12 Achieving the desired outcomes

4.12.1 Progressing these engagement opportunities will take considerable resources and

time and therefore it is intended that the period until 31 March 2017 be used to develop those opportunities that the Committee considers viable.

- 4.12.2 The review will identify those opportunities which are considered as providing effective engagement within existing resources which can then be fully implemented and where appropriate integrated into the induction programme following the 2017 Local Government Elections.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The work of the Partnerships and Governance 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.
- 5.2 Development and implementation of the opportunities described in this report may lead to changes being required to the procedure rules listed within the Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 This report identifies engagement opportunities with the public which will have to be developed bilingually to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. There are no other direct equalities impact issues arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The report has highlighted that any decisions of the Committee will have to be developed within existing resources which are subject to the constraints of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 The Committee is requested to note the content of the report and provide their views regarding the development and implementation of a viable action plan.

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Background Documents:
The Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 APRIL 2016

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

NOMINATION TO STANDING BUDGET RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PANEL

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek nominations for the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel.

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

- 2.1 The priorities 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 The BREP was originally set up on an annual basis and focussed on examining the annual draft budget proposals to aid the scrutiny process. In contrast, the standing BREP whilst examining annual draft budget proposals, also undertakes informal consideration of proposals related to medium and longer term reviews linked with the Council's Strategic Change Management Programme. It seeks to assist management in the delivery of the plans to support change and the Medium Term Financial Strategy by fully utilising its community representational role to inform policy changes and provide challenge and the BREP will develop its terms of reference and methodology within that function.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The BREP 2015/16 agreed that the Panel should continue to consider which services will be delivered differently, which will no longer be provided directly by the local authority and which services will no longer be provided at all. This consideration should be extended to all service areas, regardless of the extent of the budget savings required of them.
- 4.2 The BREP noted the recent review of the Corporate Priorities and considered that there should be an ongoing role for the Panel to take part in a wider discussion with Cabinet and CMB about the future delivery of services.

- 4.3 The BREP requested that as part of their future work they be involved at the planning stage of any public consultation or engagement surrounding the draft budget and at key stages throughout the process such as where questions and methodology are formulated.
- 4.4 The BREP considered that the work of the Panel is a vital and important mechanism for budget setting and monitoring to ensure an objective, democratic approach from the start of the budget setting process.
- 4.6 In addition to this the Panel requested that the 2015/16 BREP undertake a review of the process following the setting of this year's budget. The purpose of this would be to evaluate the effectiveness of BREP, to identify any potential improvement, establish how recommendations are taken forward and to provide evidence of the impact and outcomes from the work of the Panel. This is due to take place in April/June 2016.

Membership and Relationship to Overview and Scrutiny Committees

- 4.7 To ensure the focus and analytical depth necessary for the Panel, total membership should be no more than ten Members, therefore the Standing BREP will consist of the Chair and one other Member nominated from each of the five Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Chair of the BREP will be nominated by the members of the BREP itself at its first meeting. A further nomination is also being proposed as a reserve, to try to alleviate any potential impact resulting from any changes to the Committee membership at the Annual General Meeting of Council.
- 4.8 The standing Panel's Forward Work Programme (FWP) should be informed by the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Strategic Change Management Programme.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The report has no direct effect but seeks to broadly support the Authority in the development of future services.

6. Equalities Impact

- 6.1 There are no implications in this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 None

8. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- Nominate the Chair and one other Member of the Committee onto the standing Budget Research & Evaluation Panel.
- Nominate a further Member as a reserve, to try to alleviate any potential impact resulting from any changes to the Committee membership at the Annual General Meeting of Council.

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Background Documents:

Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution
Part II of the Local Government Act 2000: Executive Arrangements

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