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Bridgend County Borough Council



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

*Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.
Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich
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Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Mark Anthony Galvin

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Wednesday, 11 December 2019

Dear Councillor,

CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held in the Committee Rooms 1/2/3, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB, on **Tuesday, 17 December 2019 at 14:30.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive 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.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 26
To receive for approval the Minutes of 13/11/19 and 19/11/19
4. Empty Property Strategy 27 - 92
5. Welsh Government Foundational Economy Challenge Fund 93 - 98
6. Outcome of the Consultation 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 99 - 144
7. Additional Learning Needs Grant 145 - 148
8. Licensing Act 2003, Statement of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessment 149 - 180
9. Forward Work Programme 181 - 194
10. Information Reports for Noting 195 - 200

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11. Urgent Items

To consider any items of business that by reason of special circumstances the chairperson is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with paragraph 2.4 (e) of the Cabinet Procedure Rules within the Constitution.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Head of Legal and Regulatory Services

Councillors:

HJ David

CE Smith

Councillors

PJ White

HM Williams

Councillors

D Patel

RE Young

CABINET - WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2019

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

CE Smith

PJ White

HM Williams

RE Young

Apologies for Absence

D Patel, CA Green

Officers:

Tracy Watson

Scrutiny Officer

Kelly Watson

Head of Legal & Regulatory Services

Mark Shephard

Chief Executive

Mark Galvin

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Zak Shell

Head of Neighbourhood Services

Guy Smith

Community Asset Transfer Officer

429. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

430. CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION: PLAYING FIELDS, OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND PARKS PAVILIONS

The Monitoring Officer opened the proceedings by outlining the procedure to be followed at today's meeting, and explained that in the absence of the Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee who had called-in a previous decision of Cabinet made at its meeting on 22 October 2019 (called-in by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 November 2019), with regards to a decision it had made in respect to the Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks Pavilions, the Member that initiated the call-in, Councillor T Thomas, would present the report.

Cabinet would then have an opportunity to consider the comments and recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any clarifications from Councillor Thomas, following which it would then either confirm or revise the decision made at its meeting on the 22 October 2019.

Councillor Thomas advised that in accordance with a provision of the Council's Constitution, seven Members of the above Overview and Scrutiny Committee had called-in the previous decision of Cabinet (Minute 423 refers), for the reasons detailed in paragraph 4.3 to 4.8 of the report.

Councillor Thomas then outlined these reasons for the benefit of those present.

He felt that the proposed increase in hire fees for the use of playing fields and pavilions had been a very emotive decision and this had been borne out by the fact, that no less than 20 public speakers given an opportunity to voice their concerns had provided reasons why this decision should not be taken, at the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Most of the speakers were representatives of Sports Clubs and Associations located within the County Borough, representing rugby, football, cricket and bowls.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had resolved following some considerable debate, to refer the matter back to Cabinet so that the Executive could re-consider its previous decision.

Councillor Thomas appreciated that Clubs had been encouraged to take up the opportunity of continued funding from the Council through the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) programme, however, both he and a number of other fellow Members, felt that the CAT process was very complex and under resourced, coupled with the fact that a lot of Clubs and Associations were volunteer led.

The Leader following Cllr Thomas' submission, asked Cabinet Members if they had any questions to pose to Councillor Thomas in respect of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees decision to call-in the earlier decision of Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member – Communities acknowledged that certain Members had raised some concerns over CAT, but wondered whether this was in respect of the revised CAT process, which had been reviewed in July 2019 and was more streamlined and easier to understand, or the old process. Cllr. Young asked if the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee had acknowledged this, prior to recommending that Cabinet reconsider its previous decision.

Councillor Thomas replied that to his recollection, this had not been discussed at the above Call-in meeting. He made the point however, that as far as he was aware, there had only been one successful CAT application completed to date. Notwithstanding this, he felt that CAT was under resourced from an Officer perspective, as there was currently only one Officer in the Authority that supported the CAT process, which was not enough to deal with the possible increased volume of future CAT applications.

The Cabinet Member – Communities, advised that he would be happy to meet with any Members regarding the changes made to the CAT process, in order that they be more familiar with the revised process and the changes that had been made. He added that at the meeting of Cabinet where the decision had been taken in respect of the facilities subject of the report, Members had made certain commitments, in that a fund would be established to support mini, junior and youth teams and underrepresented groups. There was also the recognition by Cabinet Members/Officers, that some organisations would have difficulty with the process and therefore, these would be mitigated as far as they practicably could be. He added, that the Council were also keen to work in collaboration with Town/Community Councils regarding taking over certain assets and they could increase their precept in order to assist in this.

The Cabinet Member – Communities added that he had a meeting with the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) tomorrow, where the future operation of the assets referred to in the report would be subject to further discussion.

Councillor Thomas confirmed that he would be happy to discuss the change in the parameters of CAT. He wished for the new process to be fully explained to him and was sure other Members would benefit from that too.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help, advised that the Cabinet shared some of the concerns raised by the Members who had called-in the decision. The issue was, however, that the Authority like others, had to make a balanced budget. BCBC needed to find £36m in savings over the next 4 years and this was a significant sum in addition to the level of savings already made since austerity. He emphasised the point, that any Member could approach Cabinet to discuss elements of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). He noted that there had been no alternative

suggestion put forward by Members at the call-in meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where the savings earmarked for Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks Pavilions could come from elsewhere. However, this level of savings needed to be made so he welcomed alternative suggestions from Members where this could be made instead. There had been sustained budget pressures since the recession had taken place in the service areas of Adult Social Care and Childrens Services and these were areas where the local authority had a statutory responsibility to both the elderly and the young as areas of risk. When more resources than anticipated are required to maintain adequate levels of support in these areas, then the money to do this invariably came from non-statutory services, as these were less risk averse. The Council were also obliged for reasons of safety to the public, to ensure that the Highways Network was adequately funded, i.e. through filling in potholes in roads, etc. It was not incumbent upon local authorities, however, to subsidise Sports Clubs and Associations in costs to hire out Sports Pavilions and Playing Fields, etc. and though it had been custom and practice to do this in the past, there were insufficient finances available to continue to do this in the future.

Councillor Thomas commended a fellow Member from the Brackla Ward for alternative proposals he had submitted to the Authority with regards to the future maintenance and hire of the above facilities and whilst his proposals could not be considered at today's meeting, he felt that these could be examined by Cabinet in the immediate future as part of wider budget proposals.

The Leader asked the Chief Executive if he had received any alternative proposals from Members, where the level of savings required in the area of Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Playing Fields could be made elsewhere instead, to which the Chief Executive replied that he had not. The Leader also added, that savings in this service area had been agreed by all Members at the meeting of Council where the budget included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019-20 to 2022-23 was approved in February 2019.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration asked the Community Asset Transfer Officer if, as of now, the majority of Sports Clubs and Associations within the County Borough had engaged with him regarding the possible taking over of facilities through the new CAT process.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer confirmed that only one asset – Blaengarw Cricket Playing Fields had had no engagement regarding CAT.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration, advised that for every £100 the Council used to spend, repeated cuts to its budget had now seen this reduce to £65. There had been successful ventures completed previously at Carnegie House, Bridgend and at the Old Police Station in Porthcawl and those involved in these projects prior to them being successfully completed, had been sceptical and had reservations that these would be taken over with any great success. Though these had turned out to be successful and he was sure that the same result would take place with regards to other facilities. A similar project was being progressed by Laleston Community Council in respect of a CAT with regards to Bryntirion and Laleston Community Centre and Bryntirion Playing Fields he added.

Councillor Thomas felt that every avenue had to be pursued through CAT whereby Clubs would not face 'maximum charges' when taking over any such assets. He had been in discussions with Tondy Robins AFC who had informed him that they would fold if they had to fully fund the assets they have used for many, many years, at Pandy Park, Aberkenfig.

He felt that more information needed to be shared with Sports Clubs with regards to indemnity issues/costs and security and maintenance of facilities.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration advised that issues such as these could be discussed and subsequently resolved through Sports Clubs and Associations and Town/Community Councils engaging with BCBC. If they could enter into for example partnership arrangements in terms of joint users of Playing Fields and Sports Pavilions then elements of cost would not materialise. They needed to take up fully the opportunities presented by CAT he added.

The Deputy Leader advised that the Council had historically been successful through partnership arrangements. Examples of this were V2C and the housing stock, Halo with its Sports Facilities and Awen Trust through its Libraries. The Council had around 900 assets, with a maintenance backlog of approximately £50m and therefore it was faced with little choice other than to make some significant changes moving forward in order to continue meeting its corporate and wellbeing objectives. It was his wish to assist Sports Clubs in continuing to provide sport within the County Borough for all to become involved in, together with facilities of a good standard to support their participation in this for the young and old and for both genders. A few Sports Pavilions had closed and he did not wish to see this trend continuing. Changes had to be made, however, in order to prevent this from taking place. There were also avenues of grant funding that could be sourced from external bodies and organisations, that was not available to BCBC. Bryncethin RFC had made a state of the art facility and had accessed £500k in grant funding in order to achieve this. The CAT process had first been introduced in 2010 and had evolved considerably since then, particularly since the process had been recently reviewed and streamlined. He was also unsure if the criticism received from certain Clubs was in respect of the previous process in respect of CAT, or the new refined model. Cllr. Williams stated that the new CAT process increases flexibility for Sports Clubs in terms of the way they could take over and manage facilities, including through a Licence Agreement. The new process for CAT had been agreed last July and this was a more streamlined process than the previous version, though it would take time to 'bed-in.' The new process would also support the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provisions, in that it would allow organisations more flexibility to enter into the necessary Agreements in order to take over and manage assets, ensuring their long-term sustainability.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help added that a total of 60 Sports Clubs representing different sports presently used playing fields and sports facilities throughout the County Borough, which constituted 293 associated teams. He acknowledged the fact that a considerable number of these teams were supported by unpaid volunteers and that this support was invaluable. It was also recognised that there were a number of other sports played within the County Borough, for example, Taekwondo, Judo and keep-fit classes that were more indoor than outdoor activities/sports. In terms of the financial support that the Authority committed to Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks Pavilions, which had been subsidised by around 80% of the operational costs, and stressed that the Council did have the level of resources available to continue providing this level of subsidy. Notwithstanding that, he added that the Executive did not want Sports Clubs and Associations new charges but instead to take advantage of CAT.

The Cabinet Member – Communities wished to point out, that there was a caveat to the Council's proposals in respect of the playing fields and associated facilities at Newbridge Fields, Bridgend. This was a more complicated issue due to the fact, that a number of different Sports Clubs used these playing fields, i.e. football, rugby and cricket teams. The CAT process would therefore be difficult to pursue due to this, though he felt that

Bridgend Town Council may wish to consider having a more formal involvement in the future arrangements for the site.

He also added, that the Council would be as flexible as it could be regarding organisations supporting these facilities going forward, with each CAT application being considered on its own merits. Seven Sports/Parks Pavilions within the County Borough had already closed as they did not meet Health and Safety requirements and more would follow if these were not maintained up to the required standard. He emphasised the fact that if organisations committed to the CAT process, they would not be subject to higher charges than they are facing presently. He reiterated any support that Town/Community Councils could offer support by increasing their precept and undertaking transfers so that these assets could be retained within local government.

The Leader felt that the new CAT Policy the Council had adopted, should be shared with all Councillors as part of a Member Development briefing. The Policy also he considered, needed to be shared with all Sports Clubs, Associations and other relevant organisations. He asked if the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of its decision to refer the Call-in back to Cabinet for further consideration, had looked at other authorities who had reduced its subsidy or threatened to closed facilities in order to gauge the success or otherwise of such policies.

Councillor Thomas replied that he did not recall the Committee making comparators with other authorities in respect of this matter, however, Members were aware that Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC had actually invested £2m into the future operation of sports facilities that included 4G pitches.

The Leader advised that Neath Port Talbot CBC and the Vale of Glamorgan CBC had been forced to take similar decisions which BCBC were proposing regarding their sports facilities.

The Leader then asked the Community Transfer Asset Officer to explain the CAT process and the how the changes introduced last July affected this.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer explained that to date only one CAT had been fully completed and that was in respect of the facilities at Bryncethin Playing Fields. He advised that Bryncethin RFC had been ambitious throughout the process and managed to eventually secure external funding of £550k to convert the pavilion into a community centre. He explained that the need to secure funding had been the main reason that had delayed the project and the completion of the lease but that lessons could be learnt and processes improved. In view of this, a Task and Finish Group was established comprising of members of the Cabinet and key Officers, with the aim of improving and streamlining the process. This involved conducting a benchmarking exercise with other neighbouring local authorities. Firstly, Informal Expressions of Interest were sought from organisations interested in CAT, whereby the CAT Officer visited Sports Clubs and other community groups (including Town/Community Councils) to discuss the availability of the asset and to outline the CAT process. This approach had proved successful with almost full engagement with Sports Clubs already in place. The second stage of the process was the submission of a formal written Expression of Interest, which would be considered by the CAT Steering Group, in order to determine if the asset qualified for transfer, i.e. through a long-term lease, short-term tenancy or a Licence,. The Council would also look at assistance that community groups required to progress a transfer and a Business Adviser, would be assigned from our partners -the Wales Co-operative Centre or Coalfields Regeneration Trust – under the CAT Business Support contract. This would include a business diagnostic assessment [due diligence] to ensure the relevant community group had the required capabilities and capacity to manage and sustain the asset to be transferred.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer stressed that any organisations taking over assets would have assistance from the Authority to become a legal entity that had limited liability such as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) or a Company Limited by Guarantee with associated costs being funded under the CAT Business Support contract. There would also be training opportunities to ensure that community groups were aware of their respective duties and responsibilities as directors / trustees.

He explained that under the revised CAT policy a Fast Track process had been introduced that ensured the majority of community groups would no longer be required to submit a detailed business plan but a 5 year financial forecast instead with greater emphasis being placed on due diligence under the business diagnostic assessment. The Council would make community groups aware of ongoing liabilities by providing copies of independent condition surveys, asbestos refurbishment survey and breakdown of current utility costs. Both the Council and its Business Advisor would provide support he added, in order that the organisation are brought fully up to speed with regards to managing assets it took over the responsibility for. The CAT Steering Group would also play its part by examining the sustainability of the Sports Clubs/Associations who become involved in this process, on a case by case basis. There were different methods with regards to the way assets could be released as was alluded to earlier in proceedings, which would be outlined in Heads of Terms before the lease, tenancy or licence were agreed. The CAT Officer confirmed that there leases for 8 CATs presently being finalised.

A £1 million CAT Fund had been established by the Council to fund repairs to buildings following completion of transfers with funding applications up to £50k being approved by the CAT Steering Group with any higher financial commitments from the Authority having to be approved by the Cabinet.

The Head of Operations – Community Services added that the original CAT process was more complicated, but this had been introduced by BCBC based on ‘best practice’ guidance issued by the Welsh Government in respect of safeguarding any assets that were taken over from the local authority.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help, confirmed that there were 3 Clubs in the Maesteg location, one of which was Maesteg Harlequins RFC, that were involved in CAT through a lease arrangement. He asked what sort of completion time was there in terms of a takeover of assets through this type of agreement.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer advised that the Clubs the Member referred to, were in the final stages of the process and that standard type Heads of Terms Leases would be introduced for this in the form of a standard type of document. These would be considered by the CAT Steering Group. This had been the methods by which assets had been taken over by both Bryncethin RFC and Caerau FC. As more CAT projects were completed the processes by which to do so, would become more consistent he felt.

The Leader queried the progress being made to develop a separate strategy for Newbridge Fields.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer, confirmed that he was due to meet with representatives of the Wales Co-operative Centre and Coalfields Regeneration Trust to look at engaging consultants to undertake an Options Appraisal to determine the best way forward at Newbridge Fields in view of multiple teams using these facilities and a similar appraisal would be pursued in respect of Maesteg Welfare Park and Aberfields in Ogmores Vale (“the Planka”) both of which were not dissimilar to the set-up at Newbridge Fields. From this Options Appraisal the Council together with its advisors, would meet

with the users of these areas and other stakeholders such as Town and Community Councils and the Sports governing bodies in order to establish how these assets can be managed more effectively in the future.

The Leader sought clarification, that if any Sports Club or community group committed to the CAT process and this was delayed, then they would not incur any increase in charges due to the withdrawal of the Council's subsidy? If this was the case, then they should also be informed of this in writing.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council had agreed that any organisation that is fully committed to progressing a Community Asset Transfer and are unable to complete a lease or licence of the playing fields and sports pavilions by the deadline of September 2020, through no fault of their own, will have their hire fees frozen at the current levels, other than the regular inflation adjustment, until any outstanding issues are resolved.

The Head of Operations – Community Services referred Members to paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7 of the report, where it stated that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee who called-in the decision of Cabinet, had expressed some concerns that there was insufficient information contained within the Cabinet report on Parks, Sports Pavilions and Playing Fields etc, regarding the number of sporting clubs teams affected by the changes to an increase in hire fees and how many games are played on the various pitches. Concerns had also been expressed that there was insufficient information provided in the report in respect of charges, i.e. that an annual charge had been listed, but not any breakdown to a fee per use.

He reminded Members of the purpose of the Cabinet report, which was to provide detailed feedback to Cabinet on the public consultation undertaken between 17 April and 10 July 2019 on proposals to make the Council's provision of playing fields, outdoor sports pitches and parks pavilions more financially sustainable moving forward. In addition, the report puts forward recommendations to support a financially sustainable future provision of facilities and provides an update concerning current Community Asset Transfer (CAT) progress.

He confirmed that the main thrust of this report, was to inform the public that the Council was financially unable to continue providing the level of subsidy it was currently and had provided in previous years, to Clubs and other Organisations for the future operation of these facilities. This was due to austerity and the fact that since then, the Council had faced significant budget cuts year on year.

Savings in this area under the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had to be made amounting to £435k over the next 2 years and the Council simply could not sustain the level of subsidy it had given previously.

Other neighbouring local authorities had introduced similar policies to promote asset transfer by raising hire fees and had been benchmarked with what BCBC were proposing. The changes had successfully been achieved in Neath Port Talbot CBC for example, where sports teams were still in existence and supporting the assets outlined in the report, without financial assistance from that local authority.

The Council's strategy was that no club would pay the increased charges but instead Sports Clubs would be signposted to CAT and supported in a flexible way to achieve a transfer of responsibility. The costs included at Appendix E in the previous Cabinet report were for illustrative purposes only and a guide to possible future annual charges but would only apply to any clubs who were unwilling or unable to commit to CAT.

The Chief Executive advised that an annual fund would be set aside, circa £75k per year, over an initial 2 year period and bids could be made by Sports Clubs, with a simple application process similar to how bids are made by Town/Community Councils to the Town and Community Council Capital Grant Scheme. The fund would be in the main provided to assist mini/junior/youth teams to cover expenditure such as kit/travel. This would likely be in the form of a transitional fund and details would be finalised shortly with a future report to Cabinet .

The Leader sought further clarification from Officers, that neighbouring authorities who have removed the subsidy or announced closures to progress CAT arrangements, had not had a negative impact upon Sports Clubs and Associations and the use by them of sports facilities where they played their competitive sport.

The Head of Operations – Community Services advised that whilst Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC had given a financial commitment to the future support of Sports Clubs and Associations in the continued use of such facilities, many other Authorities had or were in the process of going down the same route as Neath Port Talbot CBC, whereby they were either enforcing an increase of hire fees and charges / closing facilities or adopting CAT. Neither of these measures had seen a reduction in the number of Sports Clubs or facilities to the best of his knowledge.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer added that Carmarthen had announced the closure of all sports facilities with 80% of all assets being transferred to Town and Community Councils with existing users continuing to hire facilities from them. The remaining 20% of assets being transferred directly to Sports Clubs.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help, asked the Chief Executive if the 2 year transitional fund could support other groups other than young people looking to continue participating in sport and recreation.

The Chief Executive confirmed that this fund could be extended to support other minority groups such as the older generation and a report would be submitted to Cabinet in the immediate future giving the finer detail regarding this and for Cabinet to make a decision on its specific purpose.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer added that there were other avenues of external funding that were available to outside organisations but not to the local authority. The Council did also have the Town and Community Council Capital Grant Scheme which prioritised CAT projects, with £50k being provided annually.

The Leader added, there was also Capital funding that could be made available for any major repairs of maintenance to facilities that may be required relating to a CAT transfer.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the CAT Fund was available and it was for £1m in total, from which to date only around £245k had been awarded.

It was intended to be utilised for CAT projects to improve buildings for their long term sustainability. This fund would be replenished back to £1m if required, as and when demand for CAT projects required it, the Chief Executive added.

The Leader was aware that there had been Expressions of Interests from Clubs and Associations thus far in respect of 48 of the Council's sports related assets.

The Community Asset Transfer Officer advised that this was the case and he gave a resume for the benefit of those present of the names of these Clubs and Organisations.

He reiterated that the only Club within the BCB who had not made contact with the Council in respect of the above, were Blaengarw Cricket Club.

The Leader then asked Members if they had any closing comments.

The Cabinet Member – Communities advised that the decision of Cabinet in respect of this matter at its meeting on 22 October 2019 had been a very difficult one to reach. The Communities Directorate had faced some significant cuts to its non-statutory services over what was now a considerable number of years. The Council however had to set a balanced budget. The Cabinet had taken on board the responses to the consultation process carried out regarding the future of the assets referred to in the report. The Council he added were not walking away from assisting Clubs and Associations in the future operation of facilities. Nor was the Council looking to close Sport Facilities and Parks Pavilions etc. It did wish however, to implement a Strategy that would ensure the future support of such facilities by keeping these fit for purpose and open. He conceded that the Council could have communicated better and in a more proactive way than it did over its future proposals and strategy with outside organisations and Sports Clubs etc. That said, he commended the work of Officers who had contributed to an improved process with regards to CAT, particularly the Community Asset Transfer Officer. There was little alternative than that which was proposed, in order to obtain the level of savings required in this service area, though he was aware one of the Members of the Council now wished to discuss with him an alternative proposal and he assured members that this would be looked at by Cabinet and lead Officers when they had the detail, but the proposals would need to make the same level of saving in the Directorate and provide a long term sustainable solution. The Cabinet were still very much committed to making sport thrive in the future throughout the County Borough, he added.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration made the point that the CAT process had evolved and was now more straightforward than had previously been the case. The Council had a proven track record in transferring of its assets to other organisations as these had been successful. The proposals previously agreed by Cabinet allowed for the opportunity of partnerships and collaboration, in order to keep assets not only up and running, but the opportunity for them also to be improved in terms of their condition. A further report however would need to be considered by Cabinet in terms of the future operation of assets at Newbridge Fields and a few other areas of the County Borough as referred to earlier.

The Leader reminded those present, that the Council had to find £35m in savings over the next 4 years that would include the loss of jobs, including professional roles such as teaching staff. Austerity continuing was making it increasingly hard to balance the Council's budget. Therefore, hard decisions had been made to date and would have to continue to be made in the future until it ended.

He concluded by advising that the budget cut aligned to the service area subject of the report, had previously been reported and agreed by Members, when full Council set the budget and prior to this, when it was discussed by Overview and Scrutiny and the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel.

Members therefore unanimously agreed the following:

RESOLVED: That Cabinet re-affirmed its previous decision made at the meeting dated 22 October 2019 in respect of the above item. (Minute No. 423 refers)

The meeting closed at 16:00

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 14:30

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

CE Smith

PJ White

HM Williams

D Patel

Apologies for Absence

Cllr R Young

Officers:

Gill Lewis	Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Kelly Watson	Head of Legal & Regulatory Services
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Martin Morgans	Head of Performance and Partnership Services
Zak Shell	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Will Lane	Operational Manager Shared Regulatory Services

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared a personal interest in Agenda item 10 for the reasons shown below:-

Councillor D Patel – As a School Governor at Coleg Cymunedol y Dderwen Comprehensive

Councillor CE Smith – As a School Governor at Bridgend College

Councillor PJ White – As a School Governor at Maesteg Comprehensive

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet dated 22 October 2019, be approved as a true and accurate record.

4. SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

The Operational Manager, Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) presented a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Cabinet with the Shared Regulatory Services Annual Report 2018-19 for noting.

The report commenced with some background information, following which, the Operational Manager SRS outlined some key aspects of operational performance across the region arising from the Annual Report, particularly insofar as it related to Bridgend.

He confirmed that sickness levels for 2018/19 were 7.55 days per FTE person. This was below the Council's average of 11.90 days FTE, but was an increase on the previous year where absence records were recorded as 6.89 per FTE person. There were mitigating factors for this however, with several Officers undergoing planned medical

interventions. There were no discernible trends in either the short or long term absence figures.

He proceeded by advising that the Gross Revenue Budget position for 2018/19 for the SRS was an under spend of £496k against the gross revenue budget of £8.504m. For Bridgend County Borough Council, this resulted in a net underspend of £129k against a net budget of £1.328m. The Authority Specific Services for Bridgend County Borough Council underspent by £57k, which was partially the result of a £29k underspend within the Licensing Section and a £28k underspend within Kennelling and Vets, where activity is below budget.

The SRS had also consolidated service delivery, in accord with agreed standards and delivered the requisite financial savings. However, the report indicated that more demands were being placed upon the service at a time of reduced resources. Targets and actions identified in the 2018/19 Plan were achieved for the most part.

The Operational Manager, SRS was pleased to advise Cabinet, that the Service had been active in the Courts and Appendix 2 of the Annual Report, set out the successful interventions undertaken in the 2018/19 period.

Paragraph 4.2 of the report, then outlined key operational implications for BCBC and the Operational Manager SRS gave an overview of these for the benefit of Members.

With it acknowledged that the SRS Business Plan is also aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan, the next section of the report reflected upon some of the notable activities for the Borough during the above mentioned period.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing confirmed that she was pleased to note that food hygiene standards in establishments within Bridgend had improved in Bridgend for 2018/19 and that there had been some successful prosecutions against businesses that had fallen foul of food hygiene requirements and the like.

The Deputy Leader acknowledged the significant levels of improvements made within the SRS since 2014, but made the point that there were challenges going forward, particularly in respect of staff recruitment and retention moving forward.

The Operational Manager, SRS agreed with this, stating that resources had shrunk over the last few years and that there was an issue regarding the recruitment and retaining of certain professionals, for example, Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers. This was being mitigated to a degree, by looking to use some underspend in the Service to recruit students and apprentices, before these were recruited by the private sector.

The Leader added that he was pleased to note that two businesses in Bridgend and Barry, had been prosecuted in relation to food allergens following test purchases and hoped that further such testing would continue in the future, in order to remind businesses of the ultimate consequences that could happen, if a member of the public had an extreme adverse reaction as a result of consuming a food product they were highly allergic to.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the Shared Regulatory Services Annual Report for 2018/19.

5. **AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS - RENTING HOMES (FEES ETC.) (WALES) ACT 2019**

The Operational Manager SRS presented a report, in order to inform Cabinet of new legislation, namely the above and to seek to amend the Scheme of Delegations of Functions to accord with this.

He confirmed that the Renting Homes (Fees etc) (Wales) Act 2019 came into force on 5 May 2019. Since the 1 September 2019, letting agents and landlords who manage their own properties are prevented from charging any fees before, during or after a tenancy, unless they were specifically exempt under the provisions of the Act. Such a banned payment is called a 'prohibited payment'. He added that Letting Agents and Self-Managing Landlords are also banned from requiring a tenant to take out a loan or entering into a contract for services.

Enforcement of such new requirements can be undertaken by the Council and Rent Smart Wales (as the Single Licensing Authority). They will contribute to a fairer and more transparent experience for tenants relying on the private rented sector.

The Operational Manager SRS added, that Welsh Government believe that any costs associated with renting in the private sector should be reasonable, affordable and transparent.

Paragraph 3.5 of the report, defined the different methods by which payment can be required by letting agents and self-managing landlords, whilst the next section of the report highlighted other issues regarding payments, including those that are banned and prohibited.

He proceeded further, by confirming that offences were committed where landlords and/or agents failed to comply with the Act and that local authorities were responsible for enforcing this legislation, in partnership with Rent Smart Wales (RSW).

He further added, that local authorities are primarily responsible for enforcing the requirements of the Act and have a duty to inform the Rent Smart Wales if they take enforcement action. Rent Smart Wales will also have a duty to inform Local Authorities, if they serve a fixed penalty notice or prosecute under the new Act. There were two formal enforcement options as described in paragraph 4.3 of the report, whilst paragraph 4.4 outlined the proposed new provision to be inserted in Scheme B2 of the Scheme of Delegation of Functions.

He finalised his submission by confirming that the Joint Working Agreement for the Shared Regulatory Services will also need to be varied, due to there being an extension of delegations to the Service.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing, advised that this was a good news report, it prevented tenants in the future from being exploited by landlords, etc.

The Deputy Leader referred to paragraph 3.5 of the report in respect of permitted payments. He advised that when he was a member of the V2c Board there was an issue regarding disaggregating rent charges from certain other associated tenant costs, such as for example, grass cutting or issues such as charging for installing sound proof insulation between rented properties under any Management Agreement that may be in place. He asked how matters such as this would be considered under the new Act and permitted payments, as these were extra payments over and above rent.

The Operational Manager SRS, advised that the main purpose of the new legislation, was to avert tenants having ability to unfairly charge tenants significant costs over and above the standard rent for the letting of a property. However, this was also dependent

upon other contractual arrangements that were in place between the landlord and tenant he added. He confirmed that he would look into this point and come back to the Deputy Leader outside of the meeting.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing added, that further charges such as for those referred to above, were probably classed as utilities and other services as part of any tenancy agreement.

The Leader referred to paragraph 4.3 of the report and reinforced the importance of the enforcement options available, should landlords not fully comply with the permitted payments scheme, which included the issuing of a fixed penalty notice (FPN) of £1,000, the payment of which would avoid prosecution proceedings.

He also encouraged effective promotion of the proposals through as many avenues as possible, including on-line, as well as directly reminding landlords of their responsibilities under the new legislation.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1) Approved the amendment to the Scheme of Delegation of Functions as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report.
- 2) Approved that the Monitoring Officer have delegated authority so as to authorise relevant officers to exercise as and when may be required, the carrying out of those statutory enforcement powers;
- 3) Delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to approve and finalise and execute the terms of the Deed of Variation as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

6. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2018 - 2022

The Head of Performance and Partnership Services presented a report, to seek Cabinet approval to adopt and submit to Welsh Government the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2018 – 2022, which has taken into consideration consultation responses.

The background of the report confirmed that Part 2 of The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 places a duty on the Council to carry out a Homelessness Review for its area and adopt a Homelessness Strategy, based on the results of that review. The strategy should look to :

- The prevention of homelessness;
- That suitable accommodation is and will be available for people who are or may become homeless;
- That satisfactory support is available for people who are or may become homeless.

He advised Members, that co-production was a key principle of developing the Strategy, during which, the views of service users in addition to the professionals involved in providing services and support for homeless people were collated. An independent consultant was also commissioned to undertake the Homelessness Review, he added.

A total of 76 questionnaires from service users were completed, which provided key information that ultimately informed the objectives and actions adopted by the Strategy. Service user interaction provided an opportunity

for discussion with individuals, which allowed them to voice their key priorities for action, as well as highlighting their experiences. This included reasons for homeless presentations, outcomes achieved and desired, and background demographics. Other activities participated in to gather information included:

- A half day workshop was held with Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) Supporting People and Housing Solutions Teams to explore their views on local provision and their performance in line with the Housing (Wales) Act 2014;
- A half day workshop was held with BCBC Statutory Services; Registered Social Landlords and Providers;
- Consultation with Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board.

Professional consultees as part of the process included:

Statutory:

- BCBC – Housing Solutions
- BCBC – Supporting People Team
- BCBC – Social Services
- BCBC – Environmental Health
- BCBC – Local Member with Wellbeing Portfolio
- South Wales Police
- Swansea Bay University and Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Boards

Providers:

- The Wallich
- Pobl Care & Support
- Llamau
- Calan DVS
- Shelter Cymru

Registered Social Landlords (RSL's):

- Hafod Housing
- Linc Cymru
- United Welsh
- Valleys to Coast

The Head of Performance and Partnership Services, reminded that a public consultation outlining the Strategy was undertaken over a six week period, following the presentation of the Strategy to Cabinet on 22 January 2019.

He referred to Appendix A to the report, which included a summary of the public consultation carried out, whilst the Strategy itself was shown at Appendix B.

He then concluded the report, by stating that the aim of the Strategy was to work collaboratively on a corporate basis with external partners and service users, in both a responsive, creative and timely manner, to prevent and relieve homelessness throughout the County Borough. This would ensure that people can access suitable accommodation, with the appropriate support required to meet their needs.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing advised that it was sad to note from page 75 of the Strategy, that the greatest reason for homelessness was loss of rented or tied accommodation, followed by parent no longer able or willing to accommodate and other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate. She added that there was a significant reliance on the private rental sector to assist in supporting the homeless.

She also referred to page 83 of the Strategy and looking forward, how it would develop further through different methods, such as the Housing Solutions Team appointing a Gateway Development Officer, whose responsibility it will be to develop and manage a Gateway for support services, to include supported accommodation. New and more innovative ways of working would also be pursued she added.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing also pointed out that with the projected change in demographics, this was likely to lead to an increase in people over 55's finding themselves homeless.

The Leader advised that he was pleased to note that Housing Services had launched a pilot service (SCART) the aim of which was to better support the homeless who also had mental health problems, as well as putting in place improved mechanisms to support those individuals who sleep rough, ie during the daytime.

The Head of Performance and Partnership Services, confirmed that the Council had been working with the likes of Pobl Care and Support and The Wallich (Wales' leading homelessness charity), to support rough sleepers in the daytime at Nolton Church, Bridgend on a Wednesday and a Thursday. A similar type provision was also being provided at Ty Ogwr, he added.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help, advised that he was encouraged to note paragraph 4.2 of the report, where the Authority were concentrating upon learning the views of service users and listening to professionals who provide services and support for homeless people through consultation. This had been/was very important, as feedback from this, had informed objectives and actions subsequently adopted by the Strategy.

The Leader further added, that there was a need to provide more Social Housing and Affordable Homes within the County Borough, in order to cater for not just the homeless but also families in overcrowded and unsuitable properties. More action was also being taken against empty properties he stressed, in order that they could be brought back into occupational use, as there were far too many of these presently in the County Borough.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Cabinet adopted the Homelessness Strategy attached as Appendix B to the report for submission to Welsh Government.
- (2) That Cabinet receives a further progress report in due course.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report, that sought Cabinet approval for the adoption of the revised Enforcement Policy for the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices for Environmental Offences.

The Head of Operations – Community Services advised that on 16 April 2019, Cabinet approved a consultation exercise to seek the views of the public, in relation to a revised Enforcement Policy. This document included the procedures for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices, the level of fines and an early payment discount.

He confirmed that a public consultation survey based on Bridgend County Borough Council's amended Enforcement Policy was conducted over a twelve week period between 17th June 2019 and the 8th September 2019. The survey was available to

complete online, on the consultation pages of the Council's website and residents could also request a paper copy or another alternative format by telephone or email. Comments regarding the consultation were also invited via letter, email and telephone.

In total, there were twelve questions which required a reply from respondents. All questions in the survey were optional and offered anonymity to the respondent. The Council's standard set of equalities monitoring questions were also included with the survey, as it is recommended good practice for all public facing surveys carried out by the Authority.

He explained that, in total there were 18 survey completions, representing 0.01% of the Bridgend County Borough population. This is subject to a maximum standard error of plus/minus 23.10% at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, there is 95% confidence that these responses are representative of those that would be given by the total adult population.

Full details of the public consultation and its findings were attached for Cabinet's consideration at Appendix A to the report, whilst a copy of the Enforcement Policy was attached at Appendix B.

The Head of Operations – Community Services, confirmed that it was important to recognise that issuing each Fixed Penalty Notice will be considered on its individual merits, matters of proportionality, objectivity, fairness and reasonableness. A system was in place to offer an appeal or contest to the notice and to preserve the integrity of the process. No undue external pressure should be brought, by either members of the Council or Senior Officers, which could be misconstrued to unduly influence the decisions by virtue of their position alone. This was a similar process adopted by the Car Parking Marshals when issuing fines for parking offences.

He concluded his submission, by expanding upon some salient points outlined in the Consultation Report that was attached to the covering report.

The Deputy Leader felt that there was a very fair approach that would be taken with regard to individuals. He reiterated that those who fall foul of the Policy, would be reminded of the provisions of this; given a warning, then fined if they repeated any such offending.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing, referred to the Table of Fines on page 114 of the report, and asked how the Council intended to communicate to the public about the different categories of offences, together with the level of fines for each of these.

The Head of Operations – Community Services, confirmed that a considerable amount of notification to the public of the terms of the Policy had been communicated by a number of different methods, though further promotion work would be carried out to raise people's level of awareness to the provisions of this. This would include the level of duty imposed upon householders who provide waste in the different receptacles so provided for this purpose. There would be a duty upon them to use the correct receptacle for the correct type of waste, or they could be fined.

The Leader concluded debate on the report, by adding that it would be beneficial also, if signage could be displayed throughout areas of the County Borough to deter the public from committing any Enforcement offending along the lines covered by the Policy.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved and adopted the revised Enforcement Policy for the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices for environmental offences.

8. VALLEYS TASK FORCE EMPTY HOMES GRANT

The Chief Executive submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to seek approval from Cabinet to enter into a service level agreement with Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council for the Valleys Task Force Empty Homes Grant and to delegate authority to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCT CBC) to deliver and manage Empty Homes Grants to property owners within the Valleys Task Force Area of Bridgend.

The Head of Operations – Community Services explained that the Minister for Housing and Local Government has agreed to support the Valleys taskforce by rolling out an Empty Homes Grant to all local authorities in the taskforce areas, as a pilot for the period from October 2019 to the end of March 2020. £10 million has been set aside for empty properties over the next two years within those areas.

For the pilot stage £4,500,000 has been allocated to deliver the programme. No financial contribution is expected from local authorities for this phase of the Empty Homes Grant programme. For Phase 2 Local Authorities will be expected to make a 35% contribution towards the fund. Phase 1 of the project had been fully supported financially speaking, through grant funding.

The Head of Operations – Community Services, added that this grant will furthermore support the delivery of the Council's and Welsh Government's priority of returning empty properties into use in the Valleys areas of Bridgend County Borough, in order to help regenerate communities, provide more choice and suitable accommodation for residents.

The next section of the report gave an overview of the current situation, together with the eligibility and conditions of Valleys Task Force Empty Homes Grant scheme, and the Head of Operations – Community Services, advised that RCT CBC would deliver and manage the Scheme in the Valleys Taskforce area of Bridgend, with BCBC then entering into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with this Authority to access the allocated funding.

With regards to Phase 2 of the Scheme, the Head of Operations – Community Services stressed that though this would begin in April 2020, with a proposal of the scheme presently being developed. A further report would be provided to Cabinet regarding Phase 2 should the Council be looking to enter into this.

In respect of the next steps, he confirmed that Cabinet would need to consider the proposals detailed in the report and determine whether to progress with Phase 1 of the Scheme and, should this be agreed, then the Authority would sign the SLA to administer the grant.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing, made the point that she was pleased to note that Welsh Government (WG) were tackling the issue of Empty Properties remaining empty. She also noted that the target times for both Phase One and Two (if the latter received Cabinet approval) of the Scheme seemed ambitious. She asked when Phase 1 would be completed and what areas the Scheme covered.

The Head of Operations – Community Services, advised that Phase 1 was due to be completed by 31 March 2020, though he conceded that this was a relatively short timescale within which to take full advantage of the grant.

The Chief Executive advised, that they covered as far as Pontypool to the east and Kidwelly to the west, the 3 main valley areas and certain areas north of the M4. He

Paragraph 4.6 of the report, explained that the above would be undertaken on a phased based approach for a number of reasons, including to ensure that there was minimal disruption for those affected by the change.

She went on to explain, that service providers on the Framework Agreement would not be guaranteed an award of a Local Area Service, each of which will be subject to its own tender process and evaluation. In order to mitigate risk of the impact of future business failure, no single provider will be awarded a Local Area Service(s) contract, whereby they will have a market share in excess of 50%.

Paragraph 4.11 of the report, included a table that set out the planned Stage 1 procurement timescales should approval be given to implement the Recommissioning Plan.

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing added, that as part of Stage 2 of the procurement process, it was planned that everyone who lives in a Supported Living scheme will also be able to say what is important within the service and ‘what matters’ to them.

She proceeded further by confirming that certain engagement events had been held and the main findings from these were shown in paragraph 4.14 of the report.

Paragraph 4.18 of the report (as was highlighted in paragraph 3.3) confirmed, that the Learning Disability Supported Living service is a jointly-funded service, with around 75% of costs funded via Adult Social Care core budgets for the care elements of the service, and circa 25% funded via the Welsh Government Housing Support Grant (HSG) for the housing related support elements of the service.

Currently, these funding streams are separated which causes confusion for service providers and is also a complicated process for commissioners and support teams. Moving forward, it was proposed to combine these funding streams, which will then allow for a more person-centred and outcome-focused method for delivering services, in place of the current method of capping and fixing housing related support hours.

The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing then concluded the report, by advising of its financial implications.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help commended the report, adding that the proposals contained therein, reflected that the service was listening to what users want going forward. The reports aims and objectives when realised, would also allow for more innovative and flexible approaches by which to support service users in the future.

The Leader asked if the Bridgend Parents Forum group had been involved in the re-commissioning proposals, to which the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing replied that they had.

The Cabinet Member – Social Services and Early Help added also, that the proposals had received support from Independent Advocacy groups (who were independent of the local authority)

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- Approved the recommissioning plan proposed for Supported Living services in Bridgend;

- Approved the invitation of tenders to establish a Framework Agreement; Noted that once bids to enter into the Framework Agreement are received from service providers a further report will be presented to Cabinet requesting approval to enter into the Framework Agreement and to implement the Stage 2 procurement of Local Area Service tenders.

10. REVIEW OF POST-16 PROVISION ACROSS BRIDGEND (PHASE 4 REPORT)

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support reminded Members, that in April 2019, Cabinet gave approval for work to be undertaken to prepare specific option proposals under Phase 4 of the review of post-16 provision across Bridgend.

This update report, provided Cabinet with the detail of those option proposals and seeks approval to go to public consultation on the basis of the proposals contained in Appendix 1 and supporting information in Appendices 2 to 4.

He confirmed by way of background information, that in 2016, a Strategic Review Board (SRB) was established.

The SRB in turn established a Post-16 Operational Board to review post-16 provision across Bridgend County Borough. This Board presented its report back to the SRB and then to Cabinet in October 2017. SRB recommended that six concepts be considered for the future of post-16 education and recommended two preferred options. Cabinet endorsed these recommendations and asked for more detailed work to be undertaken. This was completed and reported back to Cabinet in April 2018 where Cabinet gave approval for a public consultation on the six concepts and preferred options for post-16 provision across Bridgend County Borough.

Arising from the above and further consultations subsequently undertaken, Cabinet last April, approved the further analysis of three options from the original 6 concepts and details of these, were outlined in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

Supporting information with regards to each of these, Options was contained in the supporting information attached to the report, in the form of a series of Appendices.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support concluded his report, by advising that Cabinet approval was now being sought to take the option proposals detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, out to public consultation from 2 December 2019 to 21 February 2020, with the intention of bringing the results of the consultation back to Cabinet in April 2020. In addition feasibility studies will be prepared, particularly where there are capital implications, and be presented to Cabinet together with the outcomes of the consultation, should Cabinet give approval to go out to consultation.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration, extended his thanks to the Specialist Officer – Post 16 Education and Training for putting together such an informative report. He added that Option 3 in the report had previously been the most favourable option to pursue, though there would be further consultation following which it would be revealed if this was still the case, or whether an alternative option would be preferred.

He was fully understanding of the view of many, namely that a popular choice would be to retain a 6th form within every Comprehensive School within the County Borough, though this would come with the need for some considerable collaboration and financial resource. He welcomed the contribution from the Council's Subject Overview and Scrutiny 1 on the review of Post-16, whereby Members of this Committee had been broadly supportive of proposals moving forward.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing asked if there had been any calculation to date of the costings relating to each of the 3 Options being put forward, to include school transport costs and potential capital costs.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support confirmed that these would be fully considered as part of the next phase of the project.

The Leader stated that he was pleased to see that the next consultation would again be a comprehensive process.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet gave approval to go to consultation on the options detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, for the future of Post-16 Education across the Bridgend County Borough.

11. COMMUNITY LEARNING GRANT - EAST HUB

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support submitted a report, with the view of providing Cabinet with information regarding Welsh Government's (WG) Community Learning Grant and the East Hub project.

The background information section of the report, outlined that accommodation was secured for the North Hub in Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen and for the West Hub in Pyle Life Centre. However, there was no budget available to allow for a bespoke multi-agency hub for the east locality and as an interim measure, space was secured in Civic Offices for eight desks adjacent to the Safeguarding East Team. Since then, the Early Help Team had expanded from 14 to 23 staff, which had presented challenges for effective desk working/sharing, subsequently leading to an increase in off-site working and homeworking, which sometimes had in turn, a detrimental effect on issues such as information sharing and joint working.

He confirmed that in December 2018, Welsh Government (WG) invited local authorities across Wales to submit expressions of interest (EOI) against a £15m capital budget, to create community learning hubs. It was further recognised, that relocating the East Hub from the Civic Offices to Brynteg School, would significantly improve integrated working and funding for this purpose was subsequently approved.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support further explained, that a scheme had been developed in consultation with key stakeholders, which comprised of a new detached, single-storey building at the Brynteg school site.

Whilst there had been a problem with the tendering process in relation to proceeding with the scheme, this had now been overcome he added.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration, advised that the report exemplified effective cross curricula working between the areas of Education, Social Services and Wellbeing of Future Generations. Whilst there had been planning and access issues at the new Hub site, he was pleased to confirm that these had now been overcome, and extended his thanks to the Headteacher of Brynteg Comprehensive for assisting here to this end.

The Cabinet Member – Future Generations and Wellbeing added that notwithstanding the above, she asked for reassurance that all issues of safeguarding at the school had been resolved, given that the area in question where the Hub was being relocated, had no less than 7 points of access/egress.

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support advised that the primary concern had been to ensure that the site was made secure and this had been achieved through the erection of fencing around it at some strategic points, as well as the provision of a footpath near the Ewenny Road entrance. There had also been the provision of on-site parking for 6th form pupils and a Safeguarding Strategy would also be put in place at the school, which would include set lockdown times for the closing of the school gates and re-positioning of the Reception area to a more central area of the school.

The Leader concluded debate, by extending his thanks to WG for the extra funding they had committed to the scheme.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- 1) Noted the contents of the report.
- 2) Approved the development of the East Hub on the site of Brynteg School as indicated in the report.

12. **APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS**

The Corporate Director – Education and Family Support submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to seek approval from Cabinet, for the appointment of local authority governors to the school governing bodies listed at paragraph 4.1 of the report.

Details of the necessary appointments were outlined in this section of the report.

The Cabinet Member – Education and Regeneration referred to Appendix A to the report that listed the current (and forthcoming) list of Local Authority governor vacancies and he asked if this could be circulated to all Councillors; the media, staff within the Authority and other community minded people, in order to obtain as much interest as possible, so that hopefully these vacancies could be filled in the not too distant future.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approved the appointments listed at paragraph 4.1 of the report.

13. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 16:20

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

EMPTY PROPERTY STRATEGY

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to formally adopt the Empty Property Strategy 2019-2023 attached at Appendix 1

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priority:
- Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.

3. Background

- 3.1 Bringing empty properties back into use is a priority for the Local Authority and is a commitment for the leadership for Bridgend County Borough Council. The Strategy sets out the intention that *'Bridgend County Borough Council ("the Council") and its partners shall seek to reduce empty properties across the County Borough and help contribute towards increasing the availability of housing for sale or for rent'*.
- 3.2 In order to achieve this priority, an Empty Property Working Group has been formed, consisting of representatives from each service within the Authority that works with empty properties. The main objective of the Working Group is to deliver the strategic objectives of bringing back into use long-term empty residential properties. These are defined as private sector residential properties which are liable for council tax and have been unoccupied for a period of six months or more. This definition is taken from the national Public Accountability Measure that enables local authorities to give account of their performance to the public. Commercial properties that can be converted into residential accommodation will also be considered for action. The Working Group is co-ordinated by the Empty Property Co-ordinator.
- 3.3 One of the main actions of the Empty Property Working Group was to develop an Empty Property Strategy for the Local Authority. The purpose of the Strategy is to set out how the Local Authority and its partners shall seek to reduce empty properties across the County Borough and help contribute towards increasing the availability of housing for sale or for rent. The Working Group agreed that the focus of the strategy should be empty private sector residential properties, or properties that could be brought back into use as residential accommodation.

3.4 An Empty Property Coordinator has been in place since 1st October 2018. The Coordinator is a qualified Environmental Health Officer employed by the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) working on empty properties for 3 days per week. The postholder has been able to take a number of actions which has had a positive impact in delivering the Strategy objectives as highlighted in paragraph 4.5 below.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 On the 22nd January 2019, Cabinet approved formal public consultation on the draft Empty Properties Strategy.

4.2 The public consultation was undertaken over a twelve week period between 1st February 2019 and the 28th April 2019. A letter outlining the Strategy proposals and details of the consultation was sent to all owners of empty properties across the county borough. The consultation received 109 (107 online and 2 paper) responses from owners of empty properties and the public.

4.3 A copy of the Consultation report is attached at **Appendix 2**. The Strategy has been revised to take into consideration consultation responses referenced in paragraph 4.6 below.

4.4 Overall the Empty Property Strategy was supported by the survey respondents. A summary of the results are as follows:

- 99% of respondents stated that the strategy was written in plain language and was easy to understand;
- 97% of respondents felt that the strategy clearly explained why empty properties were a priority for the council;
- 95% of respondents said that the aims and objectives outlined within the strategy were the most relevant;
- 91% of respondents agreed with the council approach to identify and prioritise empty properties;
- 84% of respondents agreed with the council's approach for providing help and assistance to owners of empty properties;
- 90% of respondents agreed that the planned approach to ensure effective communication with owners and the public is appropriate.

4.5 The Registered Landlords Association recognises the impact empty properties can have on an area and community and welcomed the proposals, and supported the need for a robust strategy which provides clarification on the sanctions and enforcement actions available.

4.6 A number of updates have been made to the draft strategy following the consultation, with the updated strategy at **Appendix 1**. These are -

- Figures have been updated from April 2019 on the number of empty properties and location – pages, 7,8,9.
- Additional information on how the Council prioritises empty properties has been included which identifies the criteria used to prioritise – pages 13,14, and 15.

- Additional performance measures have been added to show the efforts being made to bring empty properties back into use – page 19.
- Objective 5 on page 17 highlights the intention to take enforcement action where appropriate
- Updated contact details for the Council on page 12

Progress to date

- 4.7 In addition to reporting on the national empty property Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) annually, the work resulting from the Strategy will be measured and reported on in terms of the quantity of engagement and enforcement carried out, in order to demonstrate the efforts that are being made to bring empty properties back into use. This will include recording numbers of letters distributed, responses received, and enforcement action taken. Statistics to date show –

Statistics

Number of Cases	211
Contact Made	200
Positive Progress Made*	200
Grant Information requested	83
Expressions of Interest in grant	52
1st letter sent	211
2nd letter sent	137
3rd letter sent	93
4th letter sent	52
5th letter sent	41

* examples of progress includes -

- 1 Enforced Sale completed
- 1 other Enforced sale started
- 5 work in default completed (2 more imminent)
- 5 Section 215 (of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) notices requested
- 3 Warrants obtained
- 13 other notices served and complied with

- 4.8 The impact of these activities has meant that, of the properties assessed and scored by the council using the criteria contained within the Strategy as being in the top 20 list of problem properties -

- 5 - are now in use
- 2 - are listed for auction this month
- 5 - are under discussion for possible Section 215 action
- 2 - are For Sale following extensive engagement
- 1 – is held by Planning due to Bats roosting in the property which requires Welsh Government Guidance
- 3 - grant applications submitted but refused as eligibility criteria not met
- 2 - are under discussion with legal in relation to further enforcement action to be taken

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 An initial screening Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken as part of the development of the Empty Homes Strategy. It identified that no further EIA is required.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The report contributes to the following goals within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- A prosperous Wales – by providing work to companies who can repair and improve the empty properties and by creating a rental or sale income for landlords.
- A resilient Wales – by improving the environmental consequences of empty properties such as rodent infestation, fly tipping and a poor impression of an area.
- A Wales of cohesive communities – by making an area more attractive to live and by improving the social consequences of empty properties such as reduced public confidence in the area.
- A globally responsive Wales – by contributing positively to communities and the housing needs of households in Wales.

7.2 A summary of the implications from the Well-being of Future Generations assessment, using the 5 ways working, is as follows:

- Long-term - Bringing empty properties back into use can create long-term accommodation available for households to rent or buy.
- Prevention - Tackling empty properties can prevent the consequences associated with empty properties continuing or getting worse e.g. social issues such as arson, graffiti and squatting, environmental issues such as rodent infestation and dangerous structures and economic issues such as property devaluation and deterred investment.
- Integration - Bringing empty properties back into use can deliver economic, social, environmental & cultural outcomes as outlined in the “long-term” and “prevention” ways of working above. In addition, it can improve community cohesion in an area.

- Collaboration - Collaboration is paramount when bringing empty properties back into use. Whilst a number of services within the Council have different processes, powers and policies they can use, bringing empty properties back into use is a corporate responsibility. Therefore, these services will work in a more co-ordinated way as one Council to achieve the aims and objectives of the strategy. Working closely with external partners to develop new initiatives is also a key objective of the strategy.

- Involvement - The Council and its partners seek to work cooperatively with owners of empty properties to bring their properties back into use. Therefore, regular and effective communication with the owner is paramount, to establish the most appropriate course of action to bring the empty property back into use. Consultation on the strategy with all stakeholders will ensure they are involved with achieving the well-being goals.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The Empty Property Co-ordinator is core funded which resources the “front end” of the service, but there will also be increased demand on other departments within the Authority to progress any works on empty properties, which will need to be met within existing resources.
- 8.2 On the 28th February 2018 Council agreed a capital budget of £100,000 to deal with empty property issues across the County Borough.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:–
- 9.1.1 Formally adopts the Empty Property Strategy 2019-2023.

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November 2019

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Background documents: None

Bridgend County
Borough Council
**Empty Property
Strategy
2019-2023**

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



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Introduction

Purpose of the strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to set out how Bridgend County Borough Council (“the Council”) and its partners shall seek to reduce empty properties across the County Borough and help contribute towards increasing the availability of housing for sale or for rent.

The focus of this strategy is empty private sector residential properties that could be brought back into use as residential housing. Whilst commercial properties may also be empty, they require a more specific approach to bring them back into use as economically viable commercial premises and therefore, do not form part of this strategy. However, commercial properties that can be converted into residential accommodation will be considered but are outside of the current Welsh Government definition and national performance indicators for bringing empty properties back into use.

The housing market is quite fluid and there will always be empty properties for sale or rent that do not require any intervention. These are properties that are generally empty for less than six months. Although these properties are not the main focus for the Council, they can still present a concern should they remain empty for a long period of time or their condition deteriorate.

The Council is committed to tackling the blight of empty properties and adopts a proactive approach by working with owners to bring their empty properties back into use. If however, properties continue to remain empty, are in a state of disrepair, are detrimental or a nuisance to the community, the Council will consider using its legislative powers to remedy the adverse impact on the community and bring the property back into use.

Whilst a number of services within the Council have different processes, powers and policies they can use, bringing empty properties back into use is a corporate responsibility. Therefore, these services will work in a

more co-ordinated way as one Council to achieve the aims and objectives of this strategy.

Consequences of empty properties

Empty properties are a wasted resource. Whilst they may not always be left in a state of disrepair, there are always consequences, and these can be summarised into three factors:

- **social**, such as crime including arson, graffiti, squatting, as well as reduced public confidence in the area or the Council
- **environmental**, including rodent infestation, fly tipping, dangerous structures, and a poor impression of the area
- **economic**, such as repair costs, increased burdens on councils' resources, property devaluation, deterred investment

Causes of empty properties

There are many reasons why properties become empty and these can be summarised into three factors:

- **Individual reasons**, such as unresolved ownership following a death, bankruptcy, owners entering hospital or prison, or a lack of owner knowledge.
- **Property based reasons** such as investments not realised, or repairs and renovations being too expensive.
- **Housing market reasons** such as areas of low demand, areas of over supply or properties with negative equity.

Benefits of bringing empty properties back into use

Bringing an empty property back into use can contribute to:

- Creating rental or sale income, rather than properties being wasted assets
- Increasing property values
- Reducing vandalism, arson or squatting, and the fear of crime

- Enhancing town centres' viability and vitality
- Creating an increased sense of community
- Boosting the supply of good quality affordable housing
- Supporting strong, balanced housing markets and community sustainability
- Improving the local environment
- Creating training and job opportunities
- increasing council tax revenues so the Council can provide a better service

Definition and context

National definition of an empty property

The main focus of this strategy is to bring back into use long-term empty residential properties. These are defined as **private sector residential properties which are liable for council tax and have been unoccupied for a period of six months or more**. This definition is taken from the national Public Accountability Measure that enables local authorities to give account of their performance to the public. The following properties are excluded from this definition:

- A second or holiday home
- A property owned by any of the following:
 - Registered Social Landlords (RSLs);
 - Police and Armed forces;
 - National Health Service;
 - Universities and colleges;
 - Local authorities and government;
 - Crown estate;
 - Churches and other religious bodies
- A property that is in use but for non-residential purposes
- Properties that have been un-banded by the Valuation Office Agency¹

¹ Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) 2018-19 Guidance for local authorities (PAM/013)

Information on empty properties is obtained from council tax data, where owners have notified the Council that the property is empty.

The local housing market

There are around 63,762 residential properties in Bridgend County Borough². Approximately, these are:

- 73% owner occupied
- 13% privately rented
- 14% rented from an RSL

The Council is no longer a social housing landlord as it does not own any residential properties, following the transfer of its housing stock in September 2003 to Valleys to Coast Housing Association.

The County Borough area can be identified in two parts. The southern part is a well-populated coastal belt including the towns of Bridgend and Porthcawl, together with the other urban areas close to the M4 Motorway. The northern part is a more rural, mountainous and less accessible area, with three valleys running north-south, the most westerly containing the town of Maesteg. There are major differences in house prices and economic conditions between the southern and northern areas.

There are three housing market areas in the County Borough, namely;

- Western Settlements, Ogmore, Garw & Upper Llynfi Valley (the valleys areas with the lowest house prices)
- Porthcawl and Rural (the coastal areas with the highest house prices)
- Bridgend, Pencoed & Hinterland³

² Welsh Government dwelling stock estimates by local authority and tenure 2016-17
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/Dwelling-Stock-Estimates/dwellingstockestimates-by-localauthority-tenure>

³ Bridgend County Borough Council Local Housing Market Assessment Update 2012

Approximately 60% of private sector residential properties in the County Borough are semi-detached houses or terraced houses. In addition, approximately only 6% of the private sector residential properties is smaller accommodation such as flats. The majority of private sector properties (approximately 80%) are over 40 years old⁴. These are significant factors as they suggest that a majority of empty properties are likely to be larger houses that are over 40 years old.

The number of empty properties

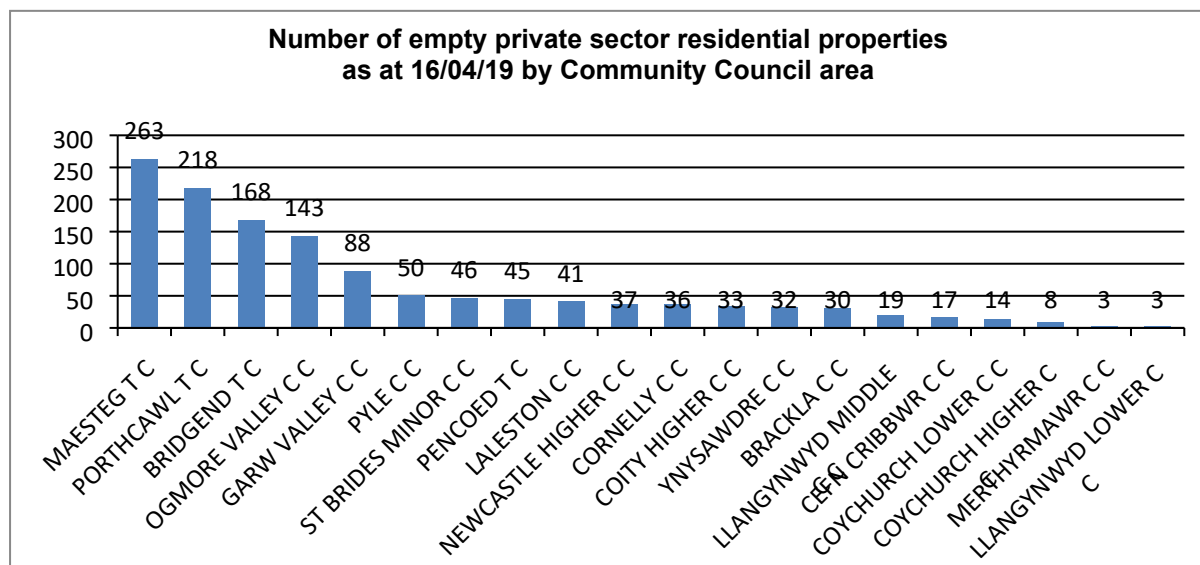
In April 2019 there were 1296 private sector residential properties empty for six months or more, which accounted for 2% of Bridgend County Borough's residential properties.

The number of empty private sector residential properties has remained relatively consistent over the past few years and therefore, this figure of 1296 will be used as the baseline on which the Council will measure performance of the strategy. Confirmation that this is an accurate figure will be addressed as an objective within this strategy going forward.

Private residential sector properties have been empty for two or more years and these properties are more likely to have negative social, environmental and economic consequences and therefore need a particular focus. This is especially so where there is no plan to bring them back into use.

⁴ Bridgend County Borough council Private Sector House Stock Condition Survey 2009

The location of empty properties



As can be seen on the above chart, most of the empty properties are in and around Maesteg, Porthcawl and Bridgend's town centres, and represent 50% of the empty properties in the County Borough. This suggests that in order to foster vibrant and viable town centres and support a successful economy, it would be beneficial to have a particular focus on these areas. Living in close proximity to town centre amenities could also help make a property more desirable to sell or to rent and the property is therefore more likely to be brought back into use. However, empty properties across the whole of the County Borough remain the overall focus of this strategy.

Whilst it is important to focus on areas that have the greatest number of empty properties and which also have a greater potential of being brought back into use because of their location, it is also important to note that there are areas that have a higher density of empty properties. This is particularly evident in the valleys areas such as the Ogmore Valley where 4.59% of private sector properties are empty and the Garw Valley where 3.23% are empty. In comparison 1.77% of private sector properties are empty in Bridgend Town; 2.95% in Porthcawl and 3.44% in the Llynfi Valley (Maesteg).

Each area of the County Borough has its own particular geographic, social and economic characteristics which will have an impact on the

housing market in those areas. For example, in July 2018 the average value of a property in the Ogmore Valley was £97,036 and in Maesteg £115,730. Both of these areas were well below the average value of a property in Wales which was £190,210. In comparison, the average value of a property in Porthcawl in July 2018⁵ was £251,851. The value of an empty property will be a factor in whether it can be brought back into use, as there may be little or no equity to obtain funding to carry out repair works on the property.

Both the Ogmore Valley and Maesteg were former mining communities and with the decline of the coal industry there is less employment opportunities in these areas. In addition, accessing central rail transport and the M4 motorway is more difficult. These factors have an impact on the housing market in these areas and will need to be taken into consideration when tackling empty properties in these locations.

Conversely, Porthcawl is a more affluent coastal area. Being a holiday resort, tourism plays a part in Porthcawl's economy offering seasonal employment opportunities. However, as house prices are much higher it can make it difficult for people to enter the housing market in this area and also results in owners holding high value properties with no capital to carry out repair works.

⁵ <https://www.zoopla.co.uk> › House prices › Bridgend

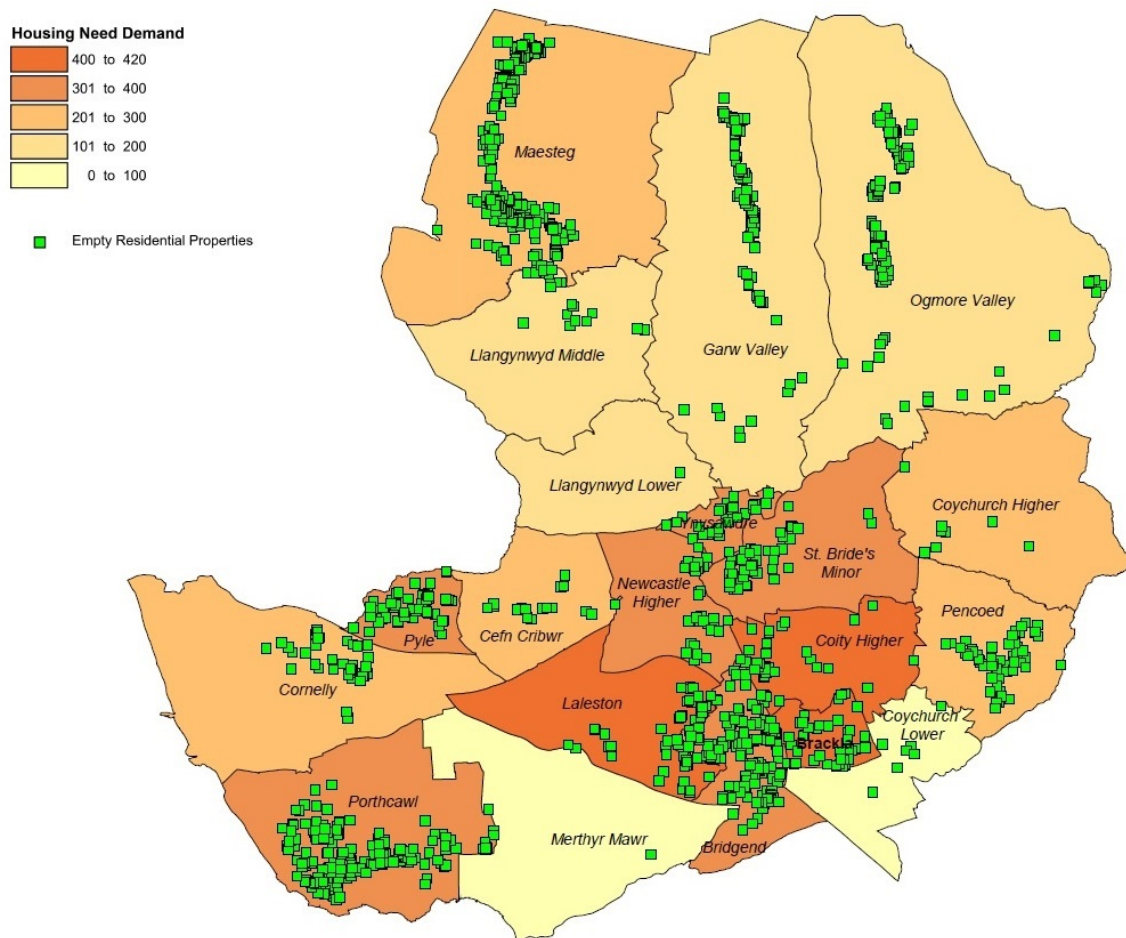
Empty properties and housing need

Bringing empty properties back into use can contribute to meeting housing need in the County Borough. There are different types of housing needs such as the need for homes to buy, the need for homes to rent in the private sector and the need for affordable homes such as social rented housing or intermediate housing (which is housing at a cost above social rented housing, but below private rented housing or housing for sale at market value. Intermediate housing can include low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent).

There is no one solution that meets all these needs and therefore, the Council and its partners will need to work innovatively with empty property owners to meet these needs. For example, bringing back into use a larger property for sale or private rent can help meet the needs of larger families, or changing the use of a larger property into shared accommodation can help boost the availability of accommodation in the private sector for single people aged under 35. The conversion of family homes into single person accommodation such as flats could help to meet the need for both single younger people and older people as they look to downsize. It is acknowledged that such conversions are often complex and have to adhere to relevant planning permission and building regulations.

One consideration is where social housing need on the Bridgend Common Housing Register could be met by bringing back into use empty properties. An analysis of information available is shown on the map below (as at May 2018). It can be seen that the greatest demand for social housing is in and around Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg's town centres and their outskirts, where there are clusters of empty properties. It can also be seen that there are a number of areas where empty properties occur but demand for social rented housing is low and therefore these areas, whilst not excluded, are unlikely to be priority areas to target.

One of the other factors to be taken into account in relation to housing need is that 64% of demand on the Bridgend Common Housing Register is for 1 bed properties. However, it is estimated that a majority of empty properties are 3 bedrooms or more, so these properties would have to be converted into single person accommodation e.g. shared housing or flats to align to the current demand on the Bridgend Common Housing Register.



The Council's approach

The Council and its partners seek to work cooperatively with owners of empty properties to bring their properties back into use. Therefore, regular and effective communication with the owner is paramount, to establish the most appropriate course of action to bring the empty property back into use.

Owners of empty properties are likely to have their own plan or purpose for their properties. They may wish to sell or rent and will make the economic decisions that best meets their circumstances. Therefore, predicting the route an owner may wish to take is difficult and the Council and its partners will need to work closely with owners to determine the best all round solution.

The Council provides owners with help and assistance to bring empty properties back into use, including empty homes grants and empty property loans. For further information about the help and assistance available to owners of empty properties, please search for "[empty properties](#)" on the Council's website. Alternatively, contact emptyproperties@bridgend.gov.uk or telephone 01656 646342.

However, where properties continue to remain empty and are in a state of disrepair, are detrimental or a nuisance to the community, the Council will consider using its legislative powers to remedy the adverse impact on the community and bring the property back into use. Appendix 1 sets out enforcement action available to the Council.

Opportunities occasionally occur to bring non-residential properties back into use as residential accommodation. This includes commercial properties, churches, chapels, and those properties which the Inland Revenue's Valuation Office Agency deletes from the Valuation List because they are uninhabitable or in disrepair. Although these properties do not form part of the national definition of empty properties, when such an opportunity arises, they will be considered on a case by case basis with performance and progress measured separately.

How the Council prioritises empty properties

The Council uses an objective scoring mechanism, initially based on desktop information held by services with the Council, to prioritise the empty properties it will focus on. The two key determinations are:

- i. the impact the property has on the community; and
- ii. the location of the property.

A total score is calculated for an empty property by considering the following criteria.

Those properties with the highest score are the highest priority. The criteria, which is in no particular order, is explained in more detail below.

- **If the property is a nuisance** – when there has been a notice served for environmental health reasons e.g. to carry out work for the removal or destruction of rats or mice on land or to secure unauthorised entry to an empty building or prevent it becoming a danger to public health.
- **If complaints have been received** – when there has been a complaint received from a member of the public such as a neighbour, the Police, a Councillor, an Assembly Member (AM), a Member of Parliament (MP), or a Council Officer.
- If the property presents an arson risk- where we have had referrals from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, or where there have been issues of unauthorized access and there is evidence of fires being started or materials present that could contribute to a fire.
- If there are incidence of antisocial behavior associated within the property- when we have received referrals from the problem solving group which is led by South Wales Police, or we have direct complaints e.g. with anti-social gatherings, drug use, graffiti and litter.

- **If the property is in an area of high housing need** – when the property is located in one of the areas on the Bridgend Common Housing Register that is in the top quarter of demand for social housing.
- **If the property is in disrepair** – when there has been a notice served because the building or structure is dangerous and as such there is an implied duty to address that danger.
- **If the property is detrimental to the local community** – when there has been a notice served because of matters of amenity and issues of aesthetics. This would normally be the removal of curtilage items from the public view or for broken windows to be boarded up and painted. Also included here is when the property is in a conservation area (an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against detrimental changes) and the issues are having a negative impact on the area.
- **If the property is in the town centre or outskirts** – where there are a high number of empty properties in a town centre or its outskirts, bringing them back into use could help foster a vibrant and viable town centre and support a successful economy. This is explained further in the section titled “The locations of empty properties” – please refer to page 10.
- **If there is debt owed to the Council** – when there is a council tax charging order on the property for council tax arrears, or when works in default have been carried out following notices that have been served, and a charge placed on the property.
- **The length of time empty** – this is based on the date of the council tax exemption.

The score is calculated as follows:

- **For complaints received**, statutory notices served and number of years empty, points are allocated on a sliding scale depending on the number.
-
- **For housing need** points are allocated on a sliding scale depending on whether need is High, Medium or Low.
- **For the criteria that require a Yes or No answer**
Anti Social Behaviour
Arson Risk
Town Centre/Regeneration Area
Debt Owed
A 10 point premium is added per Yes answer per criteria.

The priority list will be reviewed routinely and, as appropriate, properties will be added or removed. The scoring mechanism enables a blended approach to the prioritisation of the properties where some are more problematic than others.

The Council's Empty Property Working Group, which consists of representatives from each service within the Authority that work with empty properties, will determine the most appropriate actions to attempt to bring the priority properties back into use.

Aims and objectives

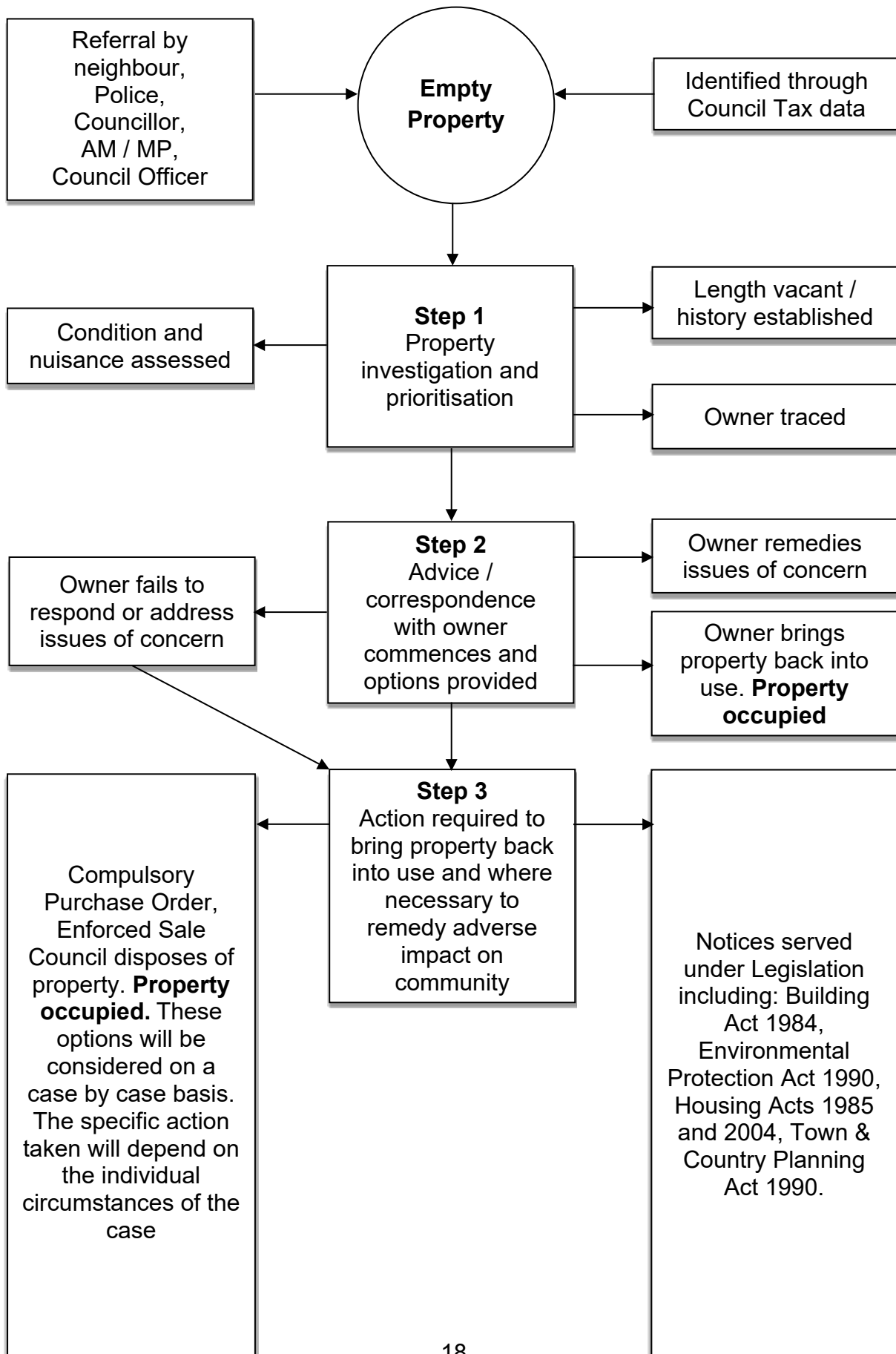
Building upon the existing approach and acknowledging the importance of working cooperatively with partners and owners, the Council has identified the following aims and objectives in order to reinforce its commitment to seek to reduce empty properties across the County Borough.

Aims	Objectives
1. Identify and prioritise empty properties.	Ensure Empty Property data is accurate and up to date.

	<p>Develop and maintain a database of empty properties using council tax data and other sources of information.</p> <p>Develop a referral mechanism for services within the Council to consistently provide information about empty properties to inform prioritisation on the empty property database.</p>
<p>2. Provide help and assistance to owners.</p>	<p>Survey owners to establish why properties are empty and to establish what help is required, to inform the strategy going forward.</p> <p>Make contact with owners of empty properties via a regular mailshot to advise them of the help and assistance available.</p> <p>Review the assistance provided via the Private Sector Renewal & Disabled Adaptations Policy e.g. grants and loans, to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.</p>
<p>3. Ensure effective communication is undertaken.</p>	<p>Develop a confidential online reporting service so people are able to report an empty property and associated issues.</p> <p>Develop an empty property web page to communicate the help and assistance available to owners e.g. grants and loans.</p> <p>Identify and share success stories via the empty property web page and via social media.</p>
<p>4. Work closely with internal and external partners.</p>	<p>Collaborate as an Empty Property Working Group to ensure a coordinated approach to tackling empty properties.</p> <p>Develop new initiatives with external partners to offer to empty property owners.</p>

	Participate in conferences and training events to share best practice and improve knowledge.
5. Take enforcement action where appropriate.	<p>Explore options for increasing the council tax premium on properties empty for two years or longer.</p> <p>Take enforcement actions open to the Council, where appropriate.</p> <p>Make use of enforced sales, Empty Dwelling Management Orders and Compulsory Purchase Orders, where appropriate.</p>

Empty property procedure following initial referral



Monitoring the strategy

The strategy will be reported on and updated annually to take into account any new information available, any legislative changes or any new aims and objectives identified.

The success in bringing empty private sector residential properties back into use will be measured using the following Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Public Accountability Measures (PAMs) and performance will be compared to other Council's in Wales:

- PAM/013 – Percentage of empty private sector properties brought back into use during the year through direct action by the local authority.
- PAM/045 – Number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use

The work resulting from the Strategy will also be measured and reported on in terms of the quantity of engagement and enforcement carried out, in order to demonstrate the efforts that are being made to bring empty properties back into use. This will include the following:

- Number of interventions by Enforcement Officers, to include both advice and informal and formal action.
- Number of properties where work in default of notices has been completed.
- Total amount of money spent on work carried out in default of notices on improving the condition of empty properties.

Contact details

If you have any queries about the strategy or would like to know more about the help and assistance available to owners of empty properties, please contact emptyproperties@bridgend.gov.uk or telephone 01656 646342.

Privacy Notice

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 regulate the processing of information relating to individuals. This includes the obtaining, holding, use or disclosure of such information.

To make sure that the Council handle personal data lawfully and appropriately it must comply with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, and in particular the Data Protection Principles.

You can view the Fair Processing Statement for the Empty Property Strategy here. Alternatively, you can request to view a copy by contacting: Legal and Regulatory Services, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB or emailing foi@bridgend.gov.uk.

Appendix 1 - Enforcement Action

Where the Council considers enforcement action to be appropriate to bring an empty property back into use or to improve the condition of the empty property so that it is no longer in a state of disrepair or is detrimental / a nuisance to the community, the Council may use one or more of the enforcement powers available to it under legislation. Those enforcement powers are set out below. The decision to use these powers will be made on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the scoring mechanism on page 13, used to prioritise empty properties.

Enforced Sale

Where the local authority has served notice on an owner to carry out works but they have failed to do so, the local authority has the power, under certain legislation, to carry out the works itself and recover the costs by placing a charge on the property.

The local authority can force the sale of a property to recover debts owed to the local authority that are registered as a charge on the property. This power will be used when all other negotiations have failed. Properties that have been prioritised using the scoring mechanism on page 12 will be tackled in the first instance.

Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)

Introduced by the Housing Act 2004, Empty Dwelling Management Orders (“EDMOs”) give the Local Authority the power to take management control of privately owned empty homes to secure occupation of them. The power resides in Sections 132 to 138 of the Housing Act 2004. Interim and Final EDMOs are made against the proprietor of the property, who may be either the owner, or a leaseholder where there are at least 7 years remaining on lease. The Authority, having exhausted all other avenues of encouraging the proprietor to bring the property back into use, can apply to a Residential Property Tribunal for an order.

Interim EDMO

An interim EDMO is defined by Section 132 of the Housing Act 2004 as “an order made to enable a local housing authority, with the consent of the relevant proprietor, to take steps for the purpose of securing that a dwelling becomes and continues to be occupied.”

To make an interim EDMO, the Council must satisfy the following conditions:

- The property is not occupied (whether lawfully or not);
- A public sector body (as defined by the legislation) does not own the property or have a lease(s) over the property with an unexpired term of 7 years or more.

The Council must apply to the Residential Property Tribunal to make an interim EDMO. Before making an application to the Residential Property Tribunal, the Council:

- must make reasonable efforts to notify the owner or the lessee (who has a lease over the property for a term of 7 years or more) that it is considering making an interim EDMO and find out what steps the owner/lessee is taking to secure occupation of the property; and
- take into account not only the rights of the owner/lessee but also the interests of the wider community.

Prior to granting authorisation of an interim EDMO, the Residential Property Tribunal must be satisfied that:

- the property has been wholly unoccupied for at least 6 months or such longer period as prescribed by legislation;
- there is no reasonable prospect of the property becoming occupied in the near future;
- if the interim EDMO is made, there is a reasonable prospect that the property will become occupied;
- that the Council has complied with its obligations under Section 133 of the Housing Act 2004 and any requirements prescribed by legislation;

- does not fall within an exemption specified by the National Assembly for Wales in legislation (for example, it is used as a holiday home, property is for sale or let).

The Residential Property Tribunal must also take into account the interests of the community and the effect the interim EDMO will have on the rights of the owner/lessee and may have on the rights of third parties.

An interim EDMO comes into force when it is made and lasts for 12 months unless the order provides for it to end earlier. Once the interim EDMO is in force the Council must take appropriate steps to secure the occupation and proper management of the property. The Council must work with the owner of the property to agree how the property shall be brought back into use.

Final EDMO

Section 132 of the Housing Act 2004 defines a final EDMO as “an order made, in succession to an interim EDMO or a previous final EDMO, for the purpose of securing that a dwelling is occupied.”

The Council may make a final EDMO to replace an interim EDMO in the following circumstances:

- where it considers that unless a final EDMO is made, the property is likely to become or remain unoccupied;
- where the property is unoccupied, it has taken all appropriate steps under the interim EDMO to secure occupation.

Under the legislation, the Council can make a new final EDMO to replace a final EDMO if the Council considers that unless a new order is made, the property is likely to become or remain unoccupied and it has taken all steps it can under the existing final EDMO to secure the occupation of the property but it remains unoccupied.

In deciding whether to make a final EDMO the Council must take into account the interest of the community and the effect the order has on the

owner/lessee and the effect it may have on the rights of third parties. The Council must also consider whether compensation should be paid to any third party due to an interference with their rights as a consequence of this order. The Council does not need to obtain the consent of the Residential Property Tribunal to make the final EDMO.

Once the final EDMO is in force the Council must take appropriate steps to secure the occupation and proper management of the property. The Council must review, from time to time, how the order operates (particularly the management scheme contained within it), if there are any appropriate steps it can take if the property is unoccupied and whether keeping the order in force is necessary to secure that the property becomes or remains occupied. If it considers that any variations are necessary to the order, it must make them. The order must be revoked if the Council considers, upon review, that there are no appropriate steps to be taken to secure occupation or it is not necessary to keep the order in force.

A final EDMO lasts for a maximum of 7 years. The Council cannot grant a lease or licence to the property unless it has obtained the consent of the owner/lessee.

The final EDMO must contain a management scheme setting out:

- how the Council shall carry out its duties;
- the Council's plan for managing the property which must include (but is not limited to):
 - details of any works to be carried out,
 - estimate the capital and expenditure incurred by the Council while the order is in force,
 - the amount of rent it would expect the property to fetch on the open market;
 - the amount of rent or other payments the Council will seek to obtain;
 - any compensation it intends to pay;
 - how the Council shall pay any surplus to the owner/lessee once deductions have been made to the monies it receives

Appeals

An owner has the right to appeal to the Residential Property Tribunal against the making of the EDMO. A relevant person (which is defined in the legislation as any person who has an estate or interest in the property other than a tenant under a lease granted under paragraphs 2(3)(c) or 10(3)(c) of Schedule 7) may appeal against:

- the decision of the Council to make a final EDMO;
- the terms of the final EDMO; or
- the terms of the interim EDMO in so far as they do not provide for one or both of the provisions of para 5(5)(a) and (b).

An appeal against the terms of the interim EDMO can be brought at any time while the order is in force. Where an appeal is made against a final EDMO, this must be made within 28 days starting with the date specified in the notice served under Schedule 6 of the Act. However, the Residential Property Tribunal may allow an appeal to be made after the end of this period if it considers there is a good reason for the failure to appeal before the end of that period. If no appeal is brought within the period allowed for final EDMOs, then the order is final and conclusive as to the matters which may have been raised on appeal.

An appeal can also be made against a decision made by the Council to vary or revoke the interim or final EDMO or a refusal of the Council not to vary or revoke the interim or final EDMO.

Any affected person may apply to the Residential Property Tribunal for an order to require the Council to manage the property in accordance with the management scheme in the final EDMO where the Council is not doing so.

Compensation

On authorising the Council to make the interim EDMO, the Residential Property Tribunal can order the Council to pay compensation to any third

party specified in the order due to any interference with the rights of the third party in consequence of the interim EDMO.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)

Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 gives the Council the power for the purposes of Part II of that Act to acquire:

- a. land to build houses;
- b. houses or buildings which may be made suitable as houses together with any occupied land;
- c. land proposed to be used for any purpose authorised by legislation (facilities to be provided in connection with housing accommodation); and
- d. land to carry out works on it for the purpose of or in connection with the alteration, enlarging, repair or improvement of an adjoining house.

This power also includes the power to acquire land in order to dispose of houses provided or to be provided on that land or to dispose of that land to a person whose intention is to provide housing accommodation on it.

The Council may acquire this land either by agreement or compulsorily by way of authorisation from the National Assembly for Wales. The Council can acquire land with the consent of the National Assembly for Wales (and subject to any conditions imposed by the National Assembly for Wales) even if it is not immediately required for the purposes of Part II of the Act. However, the National Assembly for Wales will not grant the authorisation unless it is likely that the land will be required for those purposes within 10 years from the date the CPO is confirmed.

The Council has to justify its use of the CPO to the National Assembly of Wales. Negotiations should be held with the owner of the land first. The CPO should be the last resort once negotiations with the owner have been exhausted.

Section 215 Town and Country Planning Act 1990

If it appears to the local planning authority that the amenity of a part of their area, or of an adjoining area, is adversely affected by the condition of the land in their area, they may serve on the owner and occupier of the land a notice under this section requiring steps to be taken under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The notice will specify the steps to be taken to remedy the condition of the land. If the owner or occupier does not comply with the terms of the notice within the specified period, the owner or occupier will be guilty of an offence and liable for prosecution in the Magistrates Court (liable to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale).

Section 217 of the Act provides a right of appeal against the notice under Section 215 of the Act to the person on whom the notice is served or any other person having an interest in the land to which the notice relates. The appeal can be made on the following grounds:

- that the condition of the land subject to the notice does not adversely affect the amenity of any part of the local planning authority's area or of any adjoining area;
- that the condition of the land subject to the notice "is attributable to, and such as results in the ordinary course of events from, the carrying on of operations or a use of land which is not in contravention of Part III" of the Act;
- that the requirements of the notice are in excess of what is necessary to prevent the condition of the land adversely affecting the amenity of any part of the area of the local planning authority or of any adjoining area;
- that the compliance period specified in the notice falls short of what should reasonably be allowed.

Section 219 of the Act provides that if during the compliance period specified in the notice the work is not carried out, the local authority can enter the land, carry out the works itself, and recover any costs in doing so from the person on whom the notice is served.

The Council will, where appropriate, consider serving a notice under Section 215 of the Act. If this notice is not complied with, the Council will consider commencing prosecution proceedings.

Building Act 1984

Section 76 of the Building Act 1984

Section 76 of the Building Act 1984 provides the Council with the power to serve notice where:

- Premises are in a defective state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance, and
- There would be an unreasonable delay in remedying the defective state by following the procedure set out in Section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The notice shall be served on the person on whom it would be appropriate to serve an abatement notice under the aforementioned legislation and such notice shall state that the Council intends to remedy the defective state and specify the defects it intends to remedy.

The person on whom notice is served is entitled to serve a counter-notice on the Council stating that they intend to carry out works to remedy the defects specified in the notice. If such a notice is served, the Council cannot take any action unless it appears to the Council that no action has been taken within a reasonable period of time or work is not being progressed towards completion as seems reasonable to the Council.

The Council can recover from the person on whom notice is served its expenses for carrying out the work. However, the Council must apply to the Court to recover expenses and the Court may inquire as to whether the Council was justified in its action taken (i.e. was it correct to serve the notice in the first place) and whether the expenses should be borne solely by the defendant or by some other person.

Section 77 of the Building Act 1984

If the Council considers a building or structure, or part of it, to be in a dangerous condition then, under Section 77 of the Building Act 1974, the Council can apply to the Magistrates Court requesting an order be made requiring the owner to carry out works to remove the danger or to demolish the building. If the owner fails to comply with the order within the specified time period, the Council may execute the order and recover its reasonably incurred expenses of doing so from the owner. The owner will also be liable to prosecution.

Section 78 of the Building Act 1984

If the Council considers that a building or structure, or part of it, is in a dangerous condition and immediate action is required, then the Council may take such steps as are necessary to remove the danger. Before exercising this power granted under Section 78 of the Building Act 1984, the Council shall, if reasonably practicable to do so, notify the owner and occupier of the building or the property on which the structure relates of our intention to carry out the work. The Council can recover its reasonably incurred expenses from the owner (unless the Court concludes we could have reasonably proceeded under Section 77 of the Building Act 1984).

If the owner or occupier sustains damage as a consequence of the Council exercising this power, but the owner or occupier cannot claim compensation under Section 106 (1) of this Act because they have been in default, then they may apply to a magistrates court to determine whether the Council was justified in its exercise of the powers. If the Court holds that the Council was not justified, the owner or occupier is entitled to compensation.

Section 79 of the Building Act 1984

The Council may serve notice under Section 79 of the Building Act 1984 on the owner of a building or structure which the Council considers to be seriously detrimental to the amenities of the neighbourhood because of

its ruinous or dilapidated condition. The notice may require the owner to execute repair or restoration works or, the owner may choose to demolish the building or structure or any part thereof and remove any rubbish or other materials resulting from or exposed by the demolition as necessary in the interests of amenity.

Section 99 of this Act provides the Council with the power to carry out the works itself and recover their reasonably incurred expenses. The owner will also be liable to prosecution.

The owner (who has been served with the notice) has a right of appeal in the magistrates' court on any of the following grounds:

- The notice is not justified under the legislation;
- There is an informality, defect or error in connection with the notice;
- The Council has unreasonably refused to approve the execution of alternative works or the works required by the notice are unreasonable in character or extent or the works are unnecessary;
- The time specified for the works to be completed is not reasonably sufficient;
- The notice may lawfully have been served on the occupier instead of the owner or vice versa and it would have been equitable for it to have been served that way;
- Where the works are for the common benefit of not only the property in question but other property, then some other person ought to contribute towards the expenses of executing the required works.

Section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990

If the Council is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists or is likely to occur or recur in its area, the Council can serve an abatement notice requiring all or any of the following:

- The abatement of the nuisance or prohibit or restrict its occurrence or recurrence;
- Execute works and take other steps necessary for any of those purposes.

The notice must specify the time for compliance and shall be served on the person responsible for the nuisance except if the nuisance arises from any defect of a structural character in which case the notice should be served on the owner of the premises. Where the person responsible for the nuisance cannot be found or the nuisance has not yet occurred, the notice must be served on the owner or occupier of the property.

The person on whom the abatement notice is served may appeal against the notice to a magistrates' court within 21 days of the date on which he was served with the notice.

Failure to comply with the notice can lead to prosecution.

Housing Act 2004

Under the Housing Act 2004, the Council must take the appropriate enforcement action where it considers that either a Category 1 or 2 Hazard exists on residential premises. Appropriate enforcement action can include the serving of an improvement notice or the making of a prohibition order. There are rights of appeal against the service of such a notice or the making of such an order provided for in the Act.

The Council must prepare a statement of the reasons for their decision to take the chosen course of action and this must accompany every notice or copy of an order served in accordance with the relevant parts of the legislation.

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Empty Property Strategy consultation 2018/19

Consultation report

Date of issue: 1 May 2019

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1. OVERVIEW

The Empty Property Strategy was developed to:

- Outline an approach to identify, prioritise and reduce empty private sector residential properties across the county borough and help contribute towards increasing the availability of housing for sale or for rent.
- Adopt an approach that seeks to work cooperatively with owners to bring their empty properties back into use.
- Consider the use of legislative powers where properties continue to remain empty and are in a state of disrepair, are detrimental or a nuisance to the community.

The draft strategy was available alongside the consultation document and the main aims and objectives of the strategy were detailed for consideration:

- Approach to identify and prioritise empty properties;
- Approach to provide help and assistance to owners;
- Approach to ensure effective communication is undertaken;
- Approach to Work closely with internal and external partners;
- Consider the use of enforcement action.

A public consultation outlining the strategy was undertaken over a twelve week period following the presentation of the strategy to Cabinet on 22 January 2019. A letter outlining the strategy proposals and details of the consultation was sent to all owners of empty properties across the county borough (Appendix one). This letter was sent to 1861 residents. The consultation received 109 (107 online and two paper) responses from owners of empty properties and the public. This paper details the analysis associated with the consultation.

2. INTRODUCTION

A public consultation based on Bridgend County Borough Council's Empty Property Strategy was conducted over a twelve week period between 1 February 2019 and the 28 April 2019. The survey was available to complete online on the consultation page of the council's website and residents could also request a paper copy or another alternative format by telephone or email. The survey was available in English and Welsh as standard and accessible versions.

In total, there were 12 questions which required a reply from respondents; all questions in the survey were optional. All survey responses offered the option of anonymity. The council's standard set of equalities monitoring questions were also included with the survey, as is now recommended good practice for all public facing surveys carried out by the council.

The content of the consultation remains available online in closed consultations.

Comments regarding the consultation were also invited via letter, email and phone call.

3. PROMOTIONAL TOOLS AND ENGAGEMENT METHODS

This section details the specific communications and engagement methods used to reach people and encourage them to share their views during the consultation period.

3.1 Social media and online

Facebook and Twitter have been used to promote the consultation.

Information was posted to the council's corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts throughout the consultation period to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage citizens to share their views on the proposals. The council currently has 11,302 followers on its corporate Twitter accounts and 12,148 on Facebook. During the period, the authority 'tweeted' twice and the information was seen 4,306 times. One post was made to the council's Facebook page, which reached 7,444 people.

3.2 Local press

A press release entitled **Council reveals strategy for bringing empty properties back into use** was issued on 25 January 2019, and a further press release entitled **Have your say on plans for empty properties** was issued on 18 March 2019. These were covered in the local and national press as follows:

- **25 January 2019** Newsfeed Cymru
- [Bridgend Council to consult on stricter empty homes policy](#)
- **29 January 2019** Glamorgan Gem
- [Plan to end council tax relief on empty properties](#)
- **30 January 2019** Bridgend Gem
- [BCBC 'finally to tackle the blight' of empty properties](#)
- **1 February 2019** MSN website
- [There are 1,200 empty homes going to waste in Bridgend and the council says that needs to change](#)
- **6 March 2019** Wales Online / Glamorgan Gazette
- [People with empty homes in Bridgend could be forced to sell them](#)
- **30 April 2019** Oggy Bloggy Ogwr
- [1,500 empty properties: What is BCBC doing?](#)

BCBC 'finally to tackle the blight' of empty properties
Tuesday, 29 January 2019 - 12:00pm
by GEM Staff Reporter - GEM Reporter
@twitter.com/gem_news | editorial@glamorgan-gem.co.uk

THE public is being invited to comment on a new strategy aimed at bringing empty properties back into use across Bridgend County Borough.

There are around 1,200 private sector homes in the area which have been lying empty for at least six months, and more than 40 per cent of them have been empty for over two years.

The majority of empty properties can be found around the town centres in Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg, but the places with the highest percentage of empty properties are the Ogmore and Garw valleys.

While not all empty properties are in a state of disrepair, many are, which can give a poor impression of an area and deter investment. Some empty properties also attract anti-social behaviour such as graffiti, arson and fly tipping.

The council proposes to tackle the problem by working proactively with property owners to make them more aware of empty home grants and empty property loans that may be available to them. Where properties continue to remain empty and are a nuisance to the local community, the council will consider using its legislative powers such as enforced sales, empty dwelling management orders and compulsory purchase orders.

The council will also explore its options for increasing the council tax premium on properties that are empty for two years or longer.

There are many empty properties in the Garw Valley.

WalesOnline NEWS - IN YOUR AREA - WHAT'S ON - RUGBY FOOTBALL SWANSEA CARDIFF SPORT - BUSINESS - TV NEWS FUN STUFF HD

People with empty homes in Bridgend could be forced to sell them

The council is cracking down on owners who have left empty residential properties in a state of disrepair

SHARE | 11 COMMENTS | By Elizabeth Bradfield Local Democracy Reporter
14:00, 28 FEB 2019 | Updated 15:26, 28 FEB 2019

Enter your postcode for local news and info | Enter your postcode | Go | In: & Your Area

It's part of a plan to bring empty properties back into use (Image: Neil Lacey/Getty Images)

4. RESPONSE RATE

In total, there were 109 interactions, representing 0.08 per cent of the Bridgend county borough population. The response rate has been divided into several areas including: consultation survey responses, emails, letters and social media interactions:

- We received 109 survey responses in total (107 online submissions and two paper versions);
- During the consultation period, there were 12 comments on our social media channels;
- One comment was received by telephone;
- One letter was received (via email).

5. HOW EFFECTIVE WAS THE CONSULTATION?

The Empty Property Strategy consultation was conducted over an twelve week period during which a range of marketing methods were used to create awareness of the consultation and encourage members of the public to engage with the council.

The social demographic data reflects a good cross section of the county borough's population.

The data collection methods, which include the online survey, a paper survey and an accessible survey, were all developed using plain English to maximise understanding. These response methods were designed to give a consistency to the survey across multiple platforms.

6. HEADLINE FIGURES

- 98% of respondents stated that the strategy was written in plain language and was easy to understand;
- 97% of respondents felt that the strategy clearly explained why empty properties were a priority for the council;
- 95% of respondents said that the aims and objectives outlined within the strategy were the most relevant;
- 91% of respondents agreed with the council approach to identify and prioritise empty properties;
- 84% of respondents agreed with the councils approach for providing help and assistance to owners of empty properties;
- 90% of respondents agreed that the planned approach to ensure effective communication with owners and the public is appropriate;
- 94% of respondents agreed that working closely with internal and external partners is needed to deliver the strategy;
- 68% of respondents said that they agreed that the use of enforcement action was appropriate to deliver the strategy;
- 73% of respondents did not feel that there was anything missing from the strategy.

7. QUESTION AND ANALYSIS - CONSULTATION SURVEY

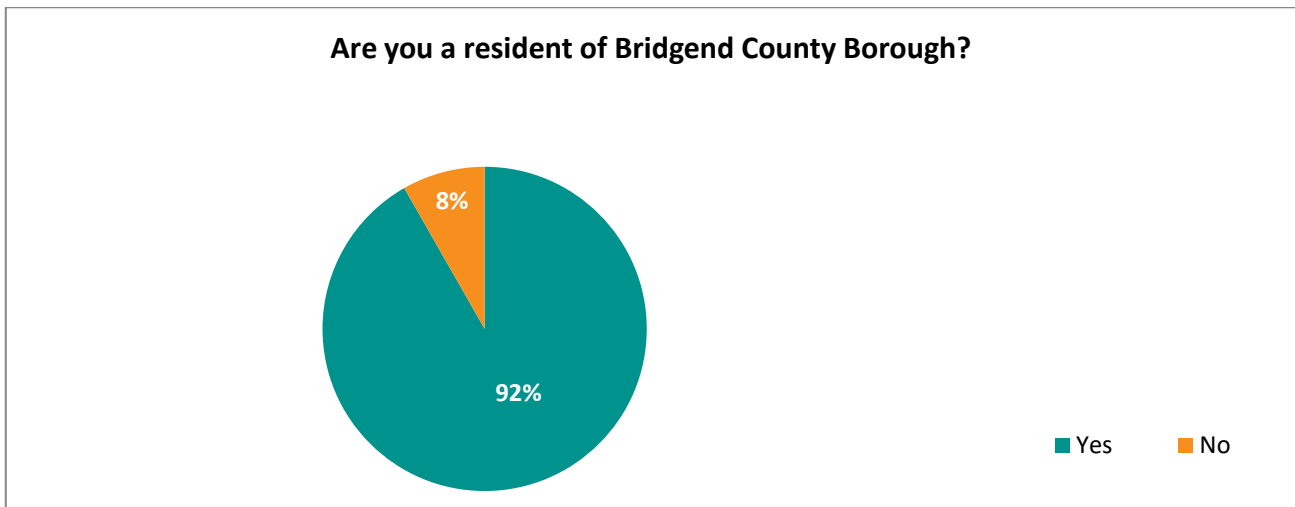
Section seven of the report looks at the questions asked in the consultation survey – with 109 respondents in total.

7.1 Please select a language to begin the survey.

Respondents to the consultation survey were initially asked in which language they would like to complete the survey. Overall, 99.1% of respondents selected English with 0.9% selecting Welsh.

Language	#	%
English	108	99.1
Welsh	01	0.9
Total	109	100.0

7.2 Are you a resident of Bridgend county borough?



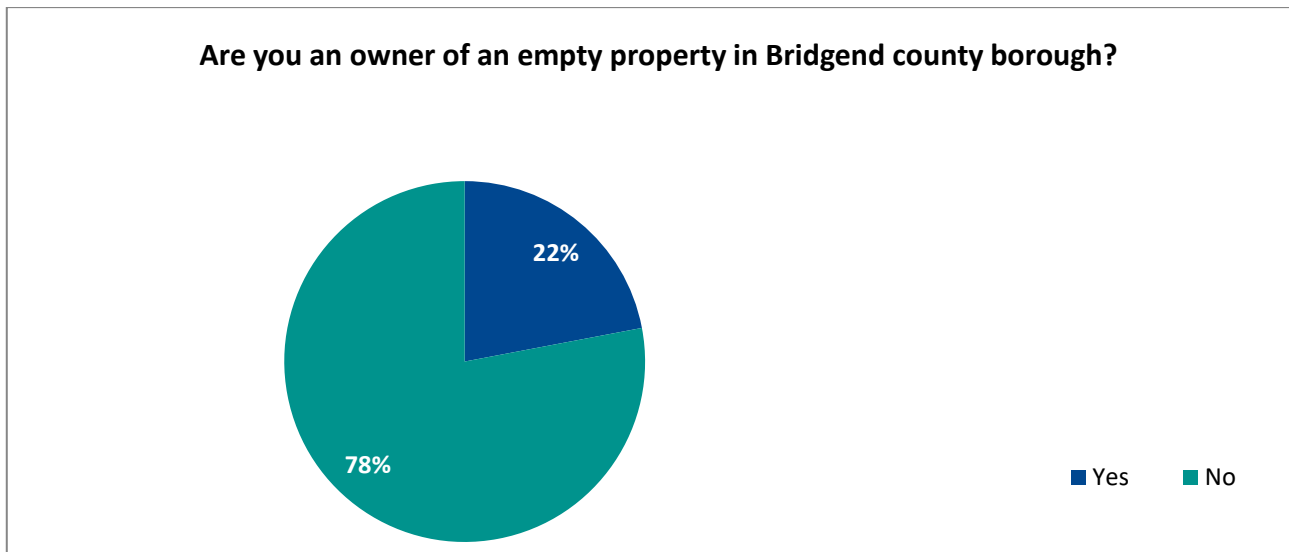
92% (100) of respondents said they were a resident of the county borough, 8% (9) of respondents said they lived outside the county borough.

7.3 If no, where do you live?

The respondents who lived outside the county borough were asked where they lived. The following responses were received:

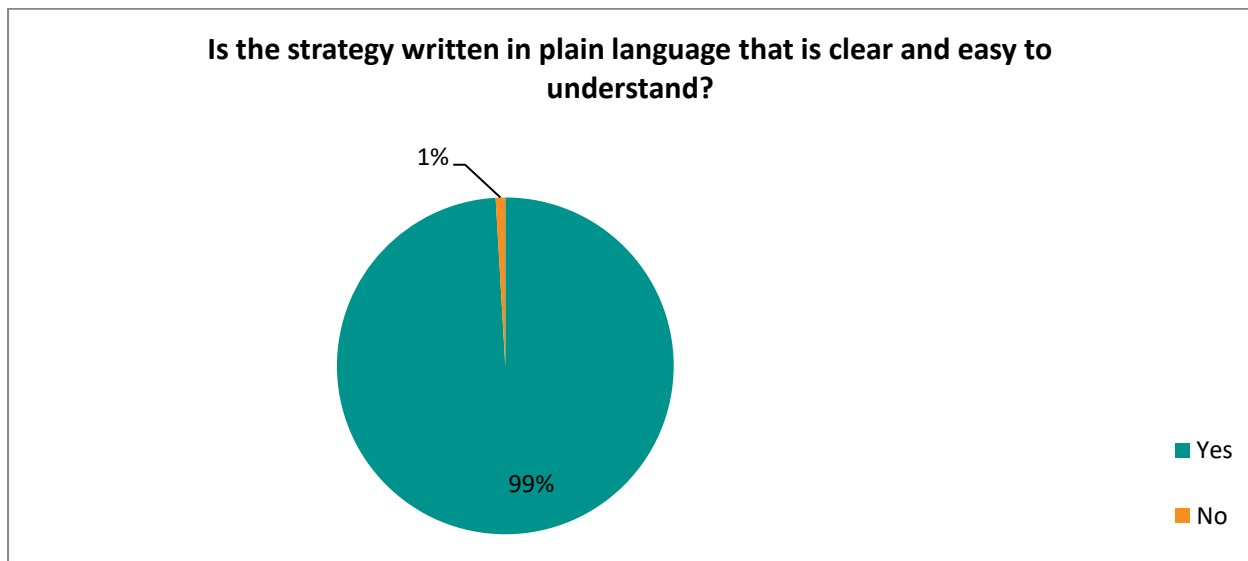
- Pembrokeshire;
- Vale of Glamorgan (2);
- Rhondda Cynon Taf (2);
- Cardiff;
- Torfaen;
- Monmouthshire.

7.4 Are you the owner of an empty property in Bridgend county borough?



22% (24) of respondents were owners of empty properties in the county borough. 78% (85) were not empty property owners.

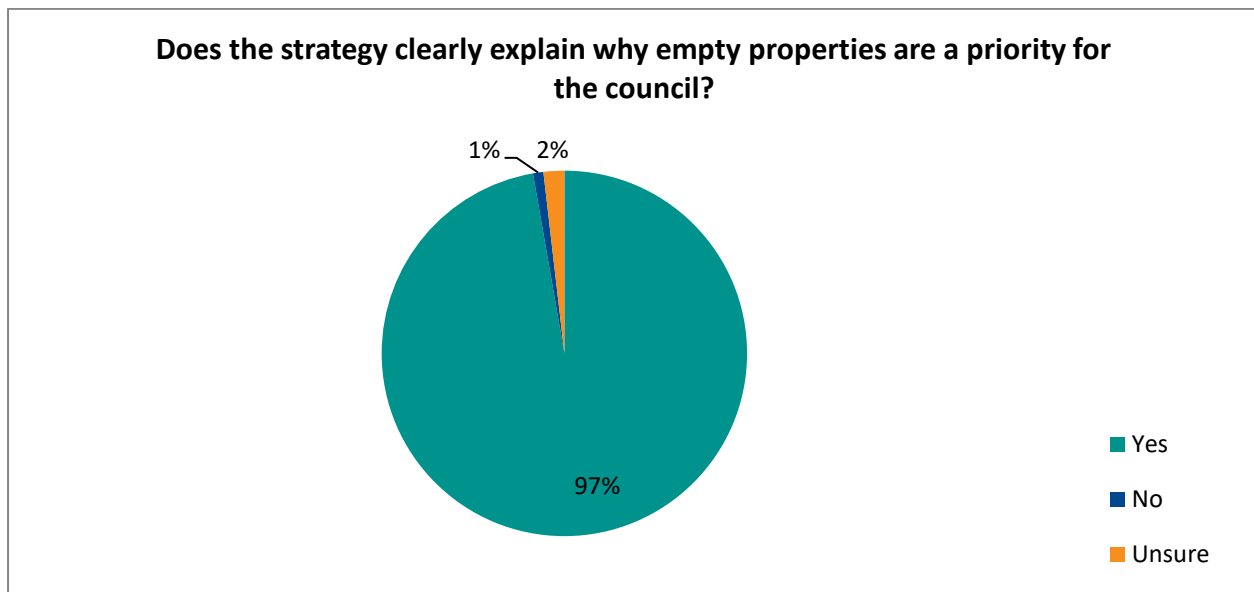
7.5 Is the strategy written in plain language that is clear and easy to understand?



99% (108) respondents stated that the strategy was written in plain language and was easy to understand. 1% (1) stated that it was not.

Respondents who replied 'no' were asked to please tell us why. The one respondent who answered no to this question did not provide any further information.

7.6 Does the strategy clearly explain why empty properties are a priority for the council?



The graph shows that 97% (106) of respondents felt the strategy clearly explained why empty properties were a priority for the council, 1% (1) said that they strategy did not explain this and 2% (2) were unsure.

Respondents who replied 'no' or 'unsure' were asked to 'please tell us why'. The three responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
Provided feedback on the consultation questions	2
More should be done to assist owners of empty properties	1

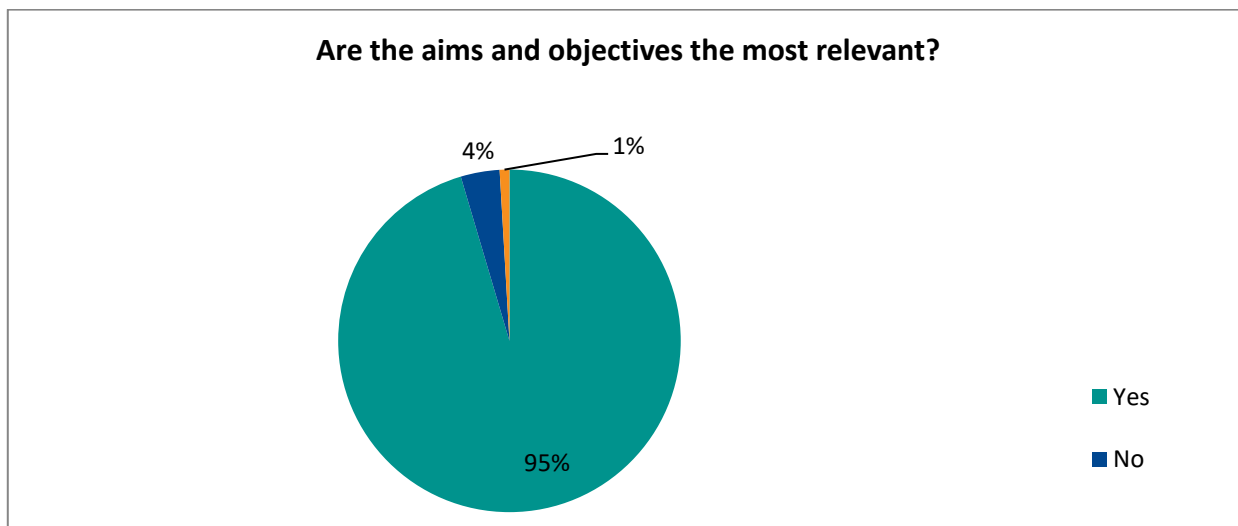
Response:

Comments noted

The Consultation Team have taken on board feedback and comments made in relation to the consultation questions

The Strategy sets out the many variable in dealing with empty properties and outlines the assessment process to determine priority properties

7.7 Are the aims and objectives the most relevant?



The graph shows that 95% (104) of respondents said the aims and objectives outlined within the strategy were the most relevant. 4% (4) of respondents said they did not feel the aims and objectives were most relevant and 1% (1) did not provide a response to this question.

Where respondents stated no, they were able to give reasons for their answer. Three responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
Concentrate on alternative areas rather than just town centre	2
Provided feedback on the consultation questions	1

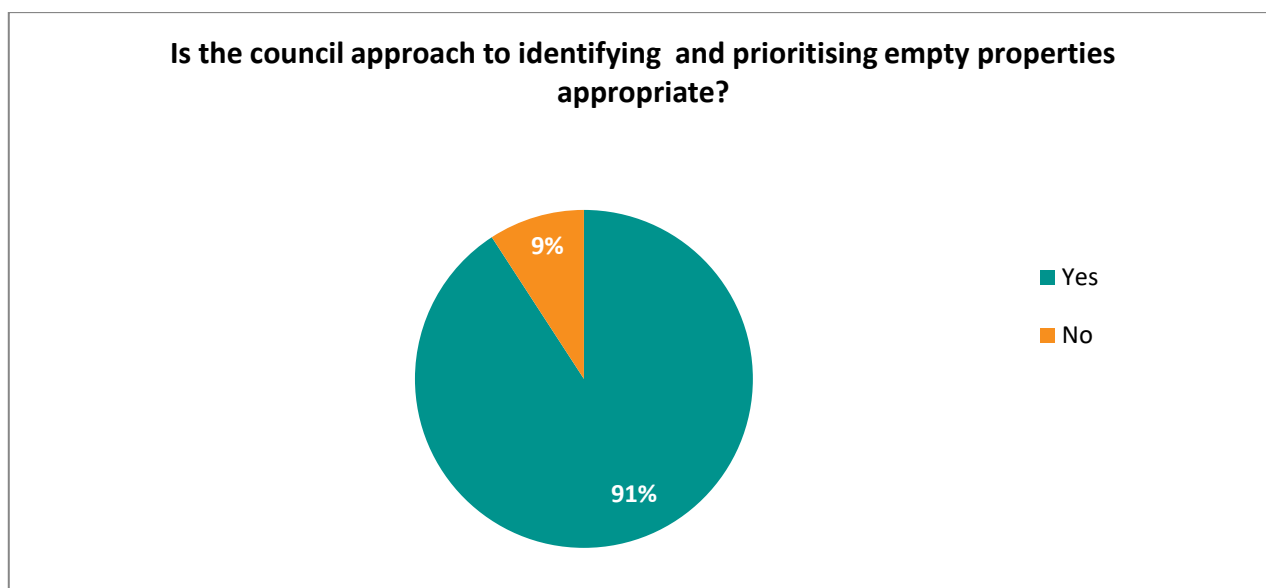
Response:

Comments noted

The Strategy sets out the many variable in dealing with empty properties and outlines the assessment process to determine priority properties and priority areas

The Consultation Team have taken on board feedback and comments made in relation to the consultation questions

7.8 Is the council approach to identify and prioritising appropriate?



The graph shows that 91% (99) of respondents agreed with the councils approach to identify and prioritise empty properties, 9% (10) of respondents did not agree with the councils approach to identify and prioritise empty properties.

Where respondents stated no, they were able to give reasons for their answer. Eight responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
Provided feedback on the consultation questions	2
Property is privately owned so the council should not have the right to get involved	2
Concentrate on alternative areas rather than just town centre	1
Consideration should be given to properties being developed to be returned to use	1
All circumstances are different and this should be considered	1
Properties are left empty for too long and the council have been too lenient	1

Response:

Comments noted.

The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what steps are taken to prioritise properties and areas.

The Consultation Team have taken on board feedback and comments made in relation to the consultation questions

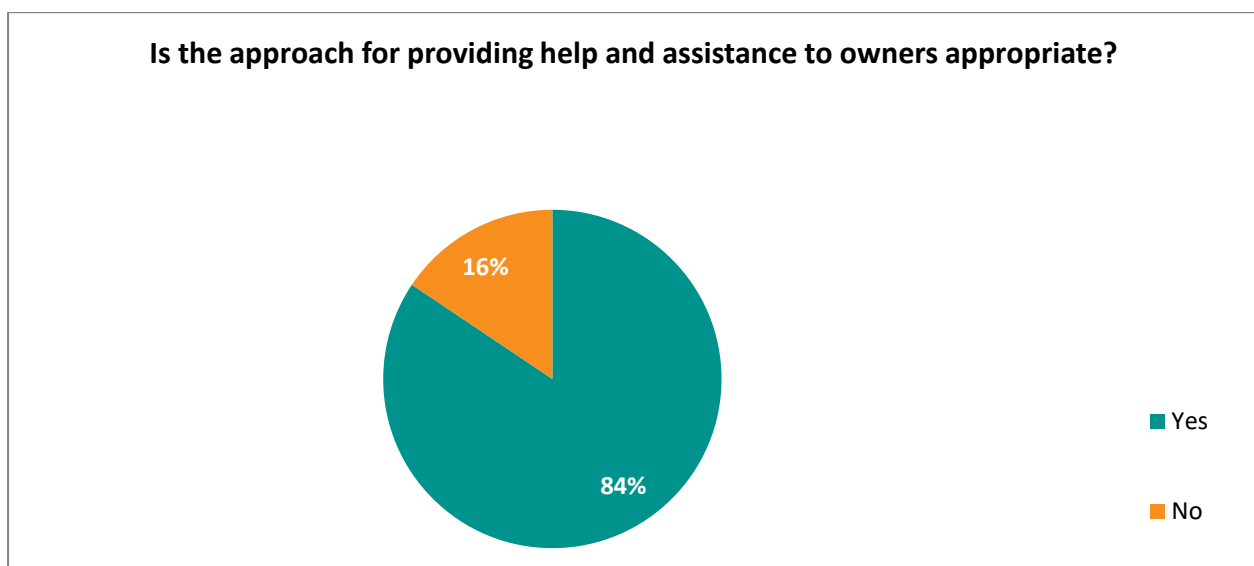
The Council has an obligation to ensure that Empty Properties are dealt with appropriately

The Strategy outlines the intention to bring properties back into use

The Strategy recognises that all circumstances are different and treats each case on a case by case basis

The Strategy is a statement of the Council's intentions to deal with empty properties currently and in the future

7.9 Is the approach for providing help and assistance to owners appropriate?



The graph shows that 84% (92) of respondents agreed with the councils approach for providing help and assistance to owners, 16% (17) of respondents did not agree with this approach.

Where respondents stated no, they were able to give reasons for their answer. 13 responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
There is a need for more financial help	5
Owners should maintain their properties and fund these themselves	3
Should be higher council tax for empty properties	2
The council should force the sale of a property after two years	1

All circumstances are different and this should be considered	1
The process takes too long	1

Response:

Comments noted.

The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what support can be made available for home owners to bring their property back into use.

Owners do have a responsibility to maintain their properties and the Strategy sets out the actions the Council will take to enforce this obligation. The Strategy also outlines the key steps taken to communicate and engage with property owners

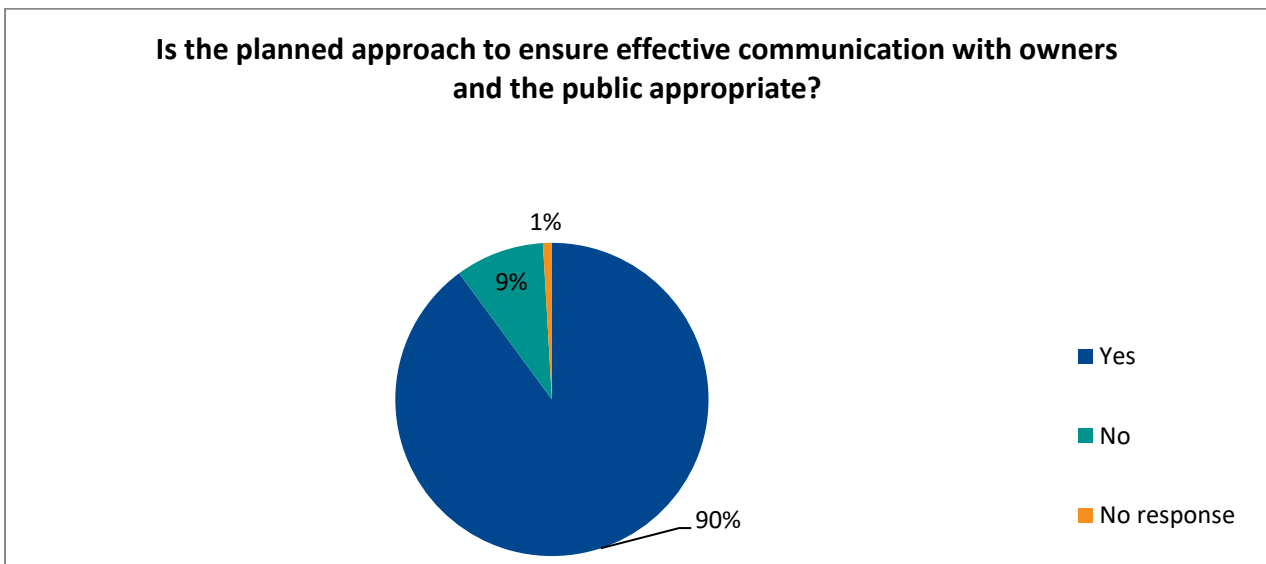
The Council has made changes to the level of council tax payable for empty properties

The Strategy sets out the enforcement options that are available to the council including enforced sale

The Strategy recognises that all circumstances are different and treats each case on a case by case basis

The Strategy sets out the different levels of actions that are undertaken by the Council

7.10 Is the planned approach to ensure effective communication with owners and the public appropriate?



The graph shows that 90% (98) of respondents agree that the planned approach to ensure effective communication with owners and the public is appropriate, 9% (10) disagreed and 1% (1) were unsure.

Where respondents stated no, they were able to give reasons for their answer. Eight responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
Better communication about empty properties is needed	6
Property is privately owned so the council should not have the right to get involved	2

Response:

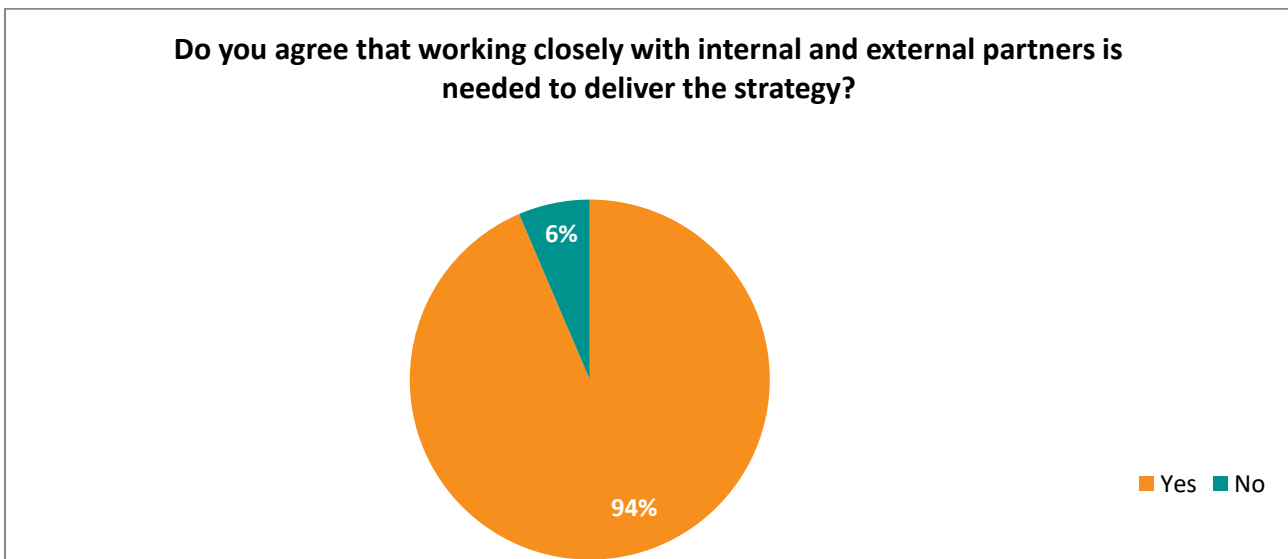
Comments noted.

The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what support can be made available for home owners to bring their property back into use.

The Strategy also outlines the key steps taken to communicate and engage with property owners

Owners do have a responsibility to maintain their properties and the Strategy sets out the actions the Council will take to enforce this obligation. The Strategy also outlines the key steps taken to communicate and engage with property owners

7.11 Do you agree that working closely with internal and external partners is needed to deliver the strategy?



The graph shows that 94% (102) of respondents agree that working closely with internal and external partners is needed to deliver the strategy, 6% (7) disagreed.

Where respondents stated no, they were able to give reasons for their answer. Seven responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
There should be less private business involvement	2

Provided feedback on the consultation questions	2
The council shouldn't end up with the costs associated with empty properties	1
Property is privately owned so the council should not have the right to get involved	1
"Internal partners are enough"	1

Response:

Comments noted.

The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what support can be made available for home owners to bring their property back into use.

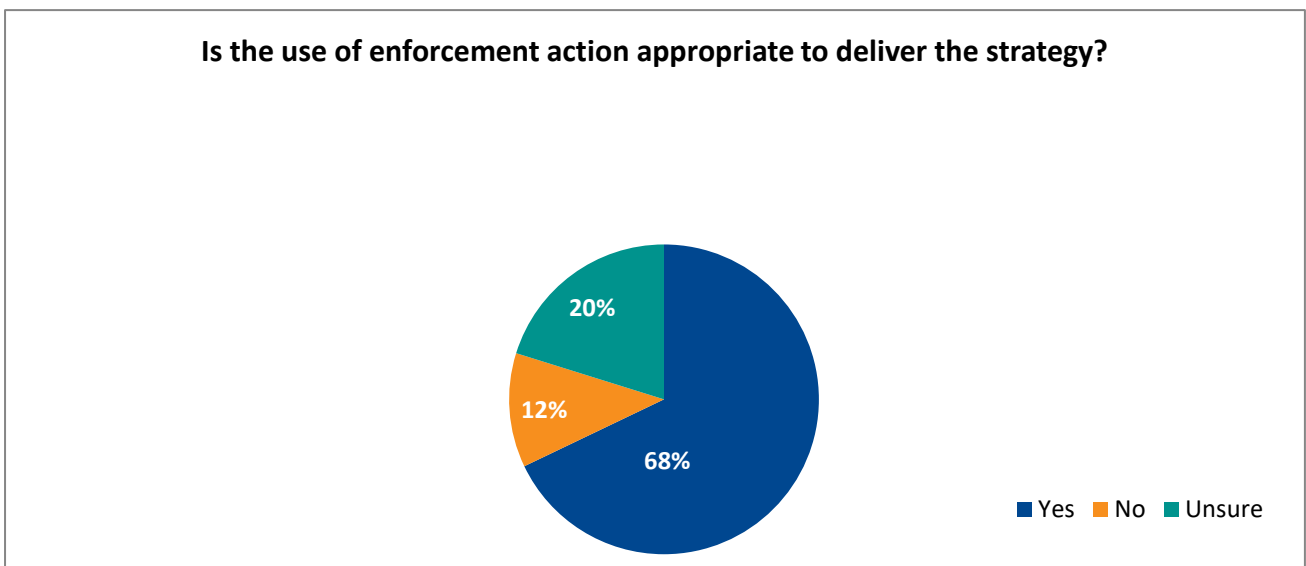
The Consultation Team have taken on board feedback and comments made in relation to the consultation questions

The Strategy outlines the need to involved internal partners as well as the home owners and partner agencies

The Strategy outlines the economic and social costs relating to empty properties. The Council has an obligation to ensure that Empty Properties are dealt with appropriately

Owners do have a responsibility to maintain their properties and the Strategy sets out the actions the Council will take to enforce this obligation. The Strategy also outlines the key steps taken to communicate and engage with property owners

7.12 Is the use of enforcement action appropriate to deliver the strategy?



The graph shows that 68% (74) of respondents said they agreed that the use of enforcement action was appropriate to deliver the strategy. 12% (13) disagreed and, 20% (22) were unsure.

Where respondents stated no, they were able to give reasons for their answer. 27 responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
All circumstances are different and this should be considered	14
Property is privately owned so the council should not have the right to get involved	6
Empty property owners need more help financially	2
The council should be more forceful in the sale of empty properties	1
"Cost of legal action to the Council"	1
The strategy is not clear how families of deceased owners are supported	1
Owners should maintain their properties at no cost to the council	1
Unsure of enforcement actions and outcomes	1

Response:

Comments noted.

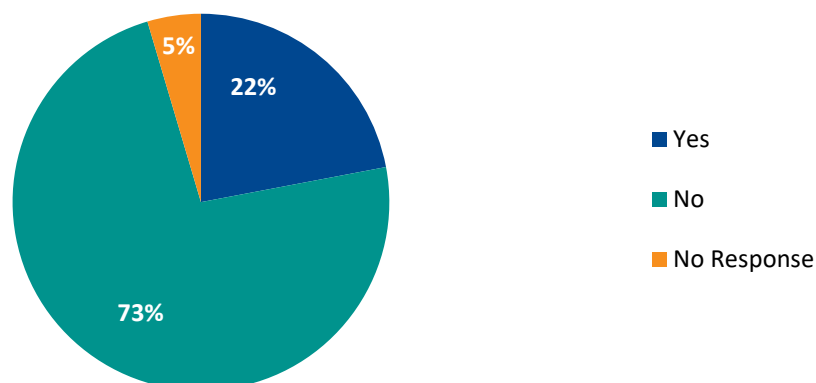
The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what support can be made available for home owners to bring their property back into use.

The Strategy already addresses the comments outlined above in relation to enforcement, support available for property owners and how each circumstance is recognised by dealing with cases on a case by case basis

The Strategy outlines the economic and social costs relating to empty properties. The Council has an obligation to ensure that Empty Properties are dealt with appropriately

7.13 Is there anything missing from the strategy that you would like to see included?

Is there anything missing from the strategy that you would like to see included?



22% (24) of respondents told us that they felt that there was something missing from the strategy that they would like to see included. 73% (80) did not feel that there was anything missing and 5% (5) did not respond to this question.

Where respondents stated yes, they were able to give details of what they thought should be included. 22 responses were received and the responses are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
There needs to be more awareness of support available	9
Commercial empty properties should be included in this strategy	3
Introduce timeframes for work to be completed around the process	3
Owners to take full responsibility of costs, with no costs to the council	2
All circumstances are different and this should be considered	2
The public need more information on how to report empty homes	1
Query around what council will do with properties following compulsory purchase	1
There is a need for better communication between owners and authority	1

Response:

Comments noted.

The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what support can be made available for home owners to bring their property back into use.

More awareness of the support available – this has already been addressed in the Information Pack and information available on-line on the Council's website

Commercial Empty Properties to be included – specific reference to our approach is made on page 12 of the Strategy which confirms that opportunities will be considered on a case by case basis

Introduce timeframes for work to be completed – this is dealt with on a case by case basis due to the different circumstances related to each property

Other generic responses on information and communication are addressed throughout the Strategy document

7.14 Please use this space to provide any further comments on this strategy.

Respondents were given the opportunity to give any further comments on the strategy.

27 comments were provided which are themed below:

Theme	Number of responses
All circumstances are different and this should be considered	8
The Scheme is a great idea	7
Commercial empty properties to be included in this policy	3
Need more information in order to make an informed decision	3
This policy would mean additional cost to the council	2
Strategy needs to be implemented urgently	2
The council should increase council tax for empty properties	1
Introduce timescales for application process	1

Response:

Comments noted.

The Strategy recognises the many variables in dealing with this issue and contains information on what support can be made available for home owners to bring their property back into use.

More awareness of the support available – this has already been addressed in the Information Pack and information available on-line on the Council's website

Commercial Empty Properties to be includes – specific reference to our approach is made on page 12 of the Strategy which confirms that opportunities will be considered on a case by case basis

Each case is dealt with on a case by case basis due to the different circumstances related to each property

Council tax changes have already been introduced

Introduce timeframes for work to be completed – this is dealt with on a case by case basis due to the different circumstances related to each property

The Strategy outlines the economic and social costs relating to empty properties. The Council has an obligation to ensure that Empty Properties are dealt with appropriately

Other generic responses on information and communication are addressed throughout the Strategy document

8. EMAILS, SOCIAL MEDIA TELEPHONE AND LETTER COMMENTS

Additional comments were invited by letter, phone call or email as well as via our corporate social media channels during the consultation period.

8.1 Email and letter comments

One letter was received during the live period from the Registered Landlords Association. The letter is included in Appendix one. The letter contained multiple themes as detailed in the table below:

Theme
There is a need for robust strategy
Empty properties can have a negative impact upon surrounding properties
There is a potential increase in crime, vandalism and antisocial behaviour where there are empty properties
There should be more engagement with private rented sector landlords
Welcome the proposed financial incentives in this policy
Provides opportunities for non-residential properties
Clarification on enforcement and sanctions is needed

Response:

Comments noted

8.2 Social media and telephone comments

We received 12 comments over social media and one comment was received via telephone during the live period, all comments have been themed and are detailed in the table below:

Theme	Number of responses
Make use of unused properties instead of building new houses	4
Lots of empty properties in the valleys	3
The look of a property shouldn't be the main priority	2
Charge owners for letting properties get into a state of disrepair	1
Damage to neighbour's properties should be taken into consideration	1
Invest in town centre is positive	1
Funding should be provided for people to move into the empty properties themselves	1

Response:

Comments noted. The Strategy is focused on making best use of empty properties and takes into account the comments made above

9. CONCLUSION

A sample of 109 survey completions is subject to a maximum standard error of +1.96% at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by the total adult population, to within $\pm 9.38\%$ of the percentages reported.

This means that if the total adult population of Bridgend had taken part in the survey and a statistic of 50% was observed, we can be 95% confident that the actual figure lies between 40.62% and 59.38%.

9.1 Equality Impact Assessment

The EIA screening informed the development of the consultation questionnaire. The EIA screening identified that there was no impact on any protected characteristic groups therefore a full EIA is not necessary for this strategy.

9.2 Empty Property Strategy consultation

Overall the Empty Property Strategy was supported by the survey respondents as follows:

- 98% of respondents stated that the strategy was written in plain language and was easy to understand
- 97% of respondents felt that the strategy clearly explained why empty properties were a priority for the council

- 95% of respondents said that the aims and objectives outlined within the strategy were the most relevant
- 91% of respondents agreed with the council approach to identify and prioritise empty properties
- 84% of respondents agreed with the councils approach for providing help and assistance to owners of empty properties
- 90% of respondents agreed that the planned approach to ensure effective communication with owners and the public is appropriate

10. APPENDIX ONE

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

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



Adfywio Tai a Chymuned/
Housing & Community Regeneration
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line: (01656) 643664
Gofynnwch am / Ask for:

Ein cyf / Our ref: Empty Property Strategy 2019-
2023 Consultation
Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 15/02/2019

Dear Sir / Madam

Empty Property Strategy Consultation:

We are writing to you as we believe you may have an interest in the below consultation exercise that is being undertaken by Bridgend County Borough Council.

The Council is committed to working with owners of empty properties so that they can be brought back into use and re-occupied.

An Empty Property Strategy has therefore been developed to:

- Outline an approach to identify, prioritise and reduce empty private sector residential properties across the County Borough and help contribute towards increasing the availability of housing for sale or for rent.
- Adopt an approach that seeks to work cooperatively with owners to bring their empty properties back into use.
- Consider the use of legislative powers where properties continue to remain empty and are in a state of disrepair, are detrimental or a nuisance to the community.

Ffôn/Tel: 01656 643643 Facs/Fax: 01656 668126 Ehost/Email: talktous@bridgend.gov.uk
 Negeseuon SMS/ SMS Messaging: 07581 157014 [Twitter@bridgendCBC](https://twitter.com/bridgendCBC) Gwefan/Website: www.bridgend.gov.uk
 Cyfnewid testun: Rhowch 18001 o flaen unrhyw un o'n rhifau ffôn ar gyfer y gwasanaeth trosglwyddo testun
 Text relay: Put 18001 before any of our phone numbers for the text relay service
 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

We would like to hear your views on the strategy. The consultation will be live between 01/02/19 and 28/04/19 and the consultation documents with the full strategy can be accessed online at:

www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/consultations/current-consultations/proposal-to-consult-on-the-empty-property-strategy-2019-to-2023/

Alternatively, you can view the consultation documents by attending the Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB, or by telephoning 01656 643664 to request them in the post.

If you have any queries regarding the consultation, please contact 01656 643664.

Please accept our apologies if you have received this letter in error. This letter has been sent to you as part of a widespread mailshot to all owners of empty properties throughout the Borough.

Yours faithfully

Housing Strategy Team|

11. APPENDIX TWO



6th of March 2019

Bridgend County Borough Council
Consultation and Engagement Team
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Dear Sir/Madam,

Bridgend County Borough Council Empty Property Strategy 2019-2023

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Bridgend County Borough Council's Empty Property Strategy 2019-2023. We broadly support the proposal and we would be delighted to collaborate with Bridgend County Borough Council in promoting the scheme.

The Residential Landlords Association (RLA) represents over 50,000 private sector residential landlords in England and Wales. The RLA provides support and advice to members and seek to raise standards in the Private Rented Sector through our code of conduct, training, accreditation and the provision of guidance and updates on legislation affecting the sector.

Why we have responded to this consultation.

According to the Welsh Government, the latest figures suggest there are in addition of 23,000 empty properties in Wales. Some of these properties could provide homes to people who need them such as vulnerable people and people on housing waiting lists to prevent homelessness. According to your strategy, as of June 2018, 1,225 private sector residential properties within Bridgend County had been left empty for six months or more, which is strong evidence that a clear and robust strategy is required to bring these properties back into use.

The RLA fully recognises the priority for Welsh local authorities in bringing empty properties back into use as houses rather than leaving them empty. Not only is providing more housing important, but where homes are left empty for significant periods of time, the impact can cause deterioration for the surrounding community. Accordingly, empty homes not only reduce the value of the house in question but have an impact on surrounding properties. Empty properties can also become targets for vandalism, crime and anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping.

Council Tax reduction for empty properties

While not a matter specifically related to this consultation, we note that the council are considering ending the Council Tax discount for empty properties. We hope that in doing so the authority would consider exempting landlords who can prove that their property is being renovated for structural improvements or to ensure that it is fit for human capacity. There is precedent for this form of action with many local authorities in England and Wales taking this form of exception.

The Council's approach

The RLA welcomes the general approach adopted by Bridgend County Borough Council in pledging to work cooperatively with landlords who have empty properties and by ensuring regular and effective communication with landlords is maintained. Where positive dialog can be maintained, the RLA would be delighted to support Bridgend Council in communicating with local landlords.

When properties become vacant for long periods of time, there is often a sound reason why the property is empty. Vacant properties are generally undesirable for landlords who are effectively operating in a business model. Some of the main reasons why a private rental property might be vacant could be that the property requires structural improvements, or the property requires work to ensure it is fit for human capacity. Where this is the case, we welcome the opportunity for landlords to apply for empty property interest free loans and empty property grants. We particularly welcome the opportunity for landlords to receive grants to bring empty properties back into homes for rental at local housing allowance rates into use. However, we require clarification on how much funding is available and if such a grant could be used to achieve the UK Government's Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards? We would like to point out that current UK Government legislation stipulates that any new or a renewal tenancy may only lawfully be granted for a property that has an EPC rating of A to E and that by 2030 the minimum EPC will be a C. This is a major obstacle for many Welsh landlords given the age of housing stock and with many properties having single walls. If any efforts were made by the authority to improve EPC ratings, it would be our recommendation that achieving above E ratings will be most beneficial.

For the case of landlords operating within the private rented sector, it makes sound business sense for landlords to have their properties occupied with tenants rather than left empty. In this context, it should be acknowledged that PRS landlords are operating in a difficult climate in providing an important part of the solution in tackling the housing crisis with significant and growing evidence illustrating the importance of the PRS in housing local people – including the most vulnerable and needy in society. For this reason, and to maintain high standards within the local community, the RLA applaud the overall aims and objectives of the strategy providing the local authority continues to engage with PRS landlords and offers support for those that require additional help in ensuring their properties are occupied.

RESIDENTIAL LANDLORDS ASSOC.

1 Roebuck Lane, Manchester, M33 7SY T +44 (0) 3330 142 998 E info@ria.org.uk
Residential Landlords Assoc. is a trading name of Residential Landlords Association Ltd. Company No. 2869179.
www.ria.org.uk

While we welcome the proposed financial incentives, in our experience, the issuing of loans being granted on the basis of enabling charges on a property is not always effective. This we believe would be also be the case for the Houses into Homes Loan as it will not take the combined loan and current mortgage above 80% of the property value. Given the low value of stock in some areas of Bridgend County, particularly in parts of the Ogmore and Llynfi Valley, it might be the case that some of the houses completed are not worth more than £50,000, which doesn't take into consideration conditions and the extent to the cost in getting stock up to standard.

We also welcome the Council drawing attention to possible VAT discounts for energy saving materials and building and construction for landlords that bring empty properties back into use that have not been lived in for two or more years through VAT Notice 708 and VAT Notice 708/6. We applaud the cooperative approach of the council in supplying landlords with the necessary official documentation which can be forwarded to the Inland Revenue as evidence of eligibility for these notices.

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www.ria.org.uk



Another reason why properties might remain unoccupied could be that the property has poor access. For example, access to the dwelling could be from a commercial premise including a shop. Alternatively, the dwelling could be in an area that is not highly sought after or an area of low rental demand. We believe that any financial support should be used to add additionality to properties that are hard to rent. This could include improving access or adding additional benefits and improvements to the property to make them more appealing to the market. However, we would also welcome additional support from the local authority, to enhance its relationship with the PRS in providing support for marketing hard to rent properties. For PRS properties that have been vacant for long periods of time that are suitable for the rental market in terms of condition and legalities, we would welcome additional support from the council in finding suitable tenants from their housing waiting lists.

We also welcome opportunities for non-residential properties, such as commercial properties, churches and chapels and those properties that the Inland Revenue's Valuation Office Agency has deleted from the Valuation List, to be brought back into residential properties. We would, however, like clarification on how the authority will engage with PRS landlords in how they can purchase such properties when they are suitable for the rental market?

Former commercial properties would inevitably require substantial improvements in order to be suitable for residential purposes. We believe the conversion work is a good opportunity for small builders and traders to get access to work. We would welcome clarification on how small traders could gain access to this work and whether the local authority will prioritise local small traders to carry out this work? Likewise, we note that the authority recognises that some larger empty properties could be converted into smaller units or converted into specialist housing, which could house vulnerable groups such as the low waged or those dependent on welfare. We believe that this type of conversion work would also be most desirable for small traders and builders and would welcome clarification on how such traders will be engaged in the process?

We believe that the scoring criteria used to prioritise which empty homes to tackle is relatively sound in that a series of areas are considered including if the property is a nuisance, if there have been complaints from elected members or if the property is detrimental to the local community etc. We also welcome additional scoring for areas of high need in housing.

While there is a lot to commend the strategy in terms of support outlined, we appreciate that on a small number of occasions, enforcement activity and sanctions will be necessary including enforced sales as well as more serious sanctions such as Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO) and Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO.) For CPOs and EDMOs, we would hope these would be used as a very last resort and welcome clarification on the process before getting to this stage and how the authority would consider communicating with landlords. We would hope that given many landlords have multiple houses and use the services of agents, that a data sharing agreement with Rent Smart Wales would be sought after in order to make sure the correct correspondent is contacted?

We once again thank you for the opportunity to engage with the local authority on this subject and would welcome any future dialog on this or any other matters relating to the PRS.

Kind Regards,

RESIDENTIAL LANDLORDS ASSOC.

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Residential Landlords Assoc. is a trading name of Residential Landlords Association Ltd. Company No. 2809179.
www.ria.org.uk



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'D Haig', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Douglas Haig
Vice Chairman and Director of RLA Wales

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

WELSH GOVERNMENT FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY CHALLENGE FUND

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on an application for funding to the Welsh Government Foundational Economy Challenge Fund and to seek Cabinet approval to accept a funding offer and enter into agreements with delivery partners as appropriate.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1. This report supports the following corporate priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
- Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

3.1. The Welsh Government considers that the foundational economy consists of basic services and products, that people rely on these services and products and they keep the population safe, sound and civilised.

3.2. Examples of the foundational economy cited by Welsh Government are:

- Care and health services
- Food
- Housing
- Energy
- Construction
- Tourism
- Retailers on the high street

3.3. Furthermore, it is estimated that the foundational economy in Wales provides four in ten jobs and £1 in every £3 spent is in the foundational economy.

- 3.4 The Welsh Government's approach to supporting and developing the foundational economy focuses on three areas:
- A £4.5m Foundational Economy Challenge Fund: This will support a series of experimental projects that will enable the testing of approaches to support the foundational economy.
 - A renewed focus on growing the 'missing middle': A focus on increasing the number of grounded firms in Wales to establish a firm base of medium sized Welsh firms which are capable of selling outside Wales but have decision making rooted firmly in Welsh communities.
 - Spreading and scaling best practice: A focus on social value within procurement. Support will be provided to Public Service Boards to use and strengthen local supply chains. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act methods will assist with progress.
- 3.5 To support this, the Welsh Government have established the following:
- The Economic Action Plan (EAP) which has set the direction for a broader and more balanced approach to economic development with a shift towards a focus on 'place' and making communities stronger and more resilient.
 - A Ministerial Advisory Board Task and Finish Group on the Foundational Economy to provide advice to Welsh Ministers on current and future interventions and best practice; support wider engagement with stakeholders in the foundational economy; and promote a joining-up of relevant government and non-governmental initiatives.
- 3.6 The Foundational Economy Challenge Fund was launched in summer 2019 to encourage new and experimental approaches towards supporting the foundational economy across Wales. The budget for the fund was set at £4.5m, which includes £2.4m from the Valleys Taskforce budget, specifically ring-fenced for projects in the Valleys Taskforce area.
- 3.7 Following the launch of the fund, officers submitted a proposal for funding the B-Ridges project in July 2019.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

- 4.1. Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has received notification from Welsh Government that the proposal for the B-Ridges project has been approved. The B-Ridges project will have the strapline of: Bridgend County – Retail | Invest | Develop | Grow | Evolve | Sustain.
- 4.2. The B-Ridges project aims to create a support package to allow business start-ups in Bridgend and Maesteg town centres to become sustainable. These areas are targeted as they fall within the Valleys Taskforce area and are therefore eligible for the ring-fenced funding. Officers will however engage with other funders to seek opportunities to further extend the approach being undertaken by the B-Ridges project into other areas of the County Borough.

- 4.3. The project will support Bridgend and Maesteg town centres by utilising vacant premises. Based on the very successful 'Meanwhile' project in Merthyr, the B-Ridges project will ensure that entrepreneurs will be fully supported with a consistent and co-ordinated approach to business advice utilising the combined resources of the existing business networks, enhanced by harnessing the support of the private property sector. This will support the sustainability of the businesses that take part, eventually allowing them to trade independently of the project.
- 4.4 By adding value to the existing Kickstart business start-up grant delivered by BCBC and the Pop-Up business school funded by BCBC the B-Ridges project will:
- Enable new foundational economy business to start trading from the town centres
 - Support currently empty retail units to become occupied
 - Provide business advice support to start-up foundation economy businesses
 - Assist new business to create new jobs
- 4.6 The proposal for the B-Ridges project has been offered a £75,000 grant towards a total project cost of £100,000.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 There is no direct impact on the Council's policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An initial assessment has identified that there are no equality issues related to this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment Template has been completed and a summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is below:
- Long-term: The activities that form part of the scheme have been identified by a wide range of local stakeholders in response to issues facing both town centres. The ability of the project to test different ways of working will provide opportunities for new and existing businesses to learn from one another and develop long-term approaches.
 - Prevention: On their own none of the partners would be able to achieve the scale of impact that such a partnership approach offers. Therefore delivering in this way offers the opportunity to build on lessons learnt from other areas to date and prevent a deterioration of the town centres.
 - Integration: The scheme will achieve this way of working by recognising the approaches that are proposed for support are those that have been identified by partner organisations due to their synergy with local, regional and national priorities.
 - Collaboration: The proposals have been developed and will be delivered through a strong partnership between BCBC and key stakeholders in the town centres.

- Involvement: The scheme will be delivered in close partnership with a range of local stakeholders in each town. Discussions and development with neighboring Authorities has taken place through BCBC's Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability team along with the Town Centre Manager and relevant officers from neighbouring Authorities as well as representatives from a range of private and third sector partners.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Welsh Government have offered £75,000 for delivery of the project towards an overall project cost of £100,000.
- 8.2 The remaining £25,000 required as match funding will be provided by a ring-fenced contribution from the BCBC Kickstart fund, supported through the Council's Strategic Regeneration Fund (SRF).
- 8.3 The Funding relates to the period 01/11/2019 to 31/3/2021 and must be claimed in full by 21/04/2021.
- 8.4 The Section 151 Officer will ensure that the grant funding provided is used solely for the purposes outlined in the grant offer letter. Expenditure of the grant will comply with all statutory requirements for accounting and internal audit (including supporting records and all systems of internal checks and control), and will be included with any internal or external audit of the Council's funding.

9. Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 9.1 Note the approval of funding from Welsh Government for the delivery of the B-Ridges project to trial new approaches to enable new foundation economy business to start trading from the town centres; support currently empty units to become occupied; provide business advice support to start-up foundation economy businesses; assist new business to create new jobs.
- 9.2 Authorise the Head of Operations – Community Services, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal and Regulatory Services, to enter into appropriate agreements to accept the funding and deliver the project.

Mark Shephard
Chief Executive
17th December 2019

Contact Officer: Ieuan Sherwood
Group Manager: Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability

Telephone: (01656) 815334

E-mail: ieuan.Sherwood@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Bridgend County Borough Council, Communities Directorate, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Background documents:

None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF FINANCE AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION 'SHAPING BRIDGEND'S FUTURE'

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 2019 consultation which asked citizens to share their views on a number of key budget proposals being considered over the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the budget consultation activities, analysis and key findings.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priorities:-
 1. Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to 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 support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.
- 2.2 The 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 2019 consultation sought to obtain views on specific budget reduction proposals across Council directorates. The allocation of financial resources determines the Council's ability to meet its corporate objectives. As such the report links to all corporate priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 Following continuous reductions in funding from central government, all Councils across the country are continuing to change the way they work and the services they provide so that they can manage with less. Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has made reductions from its budget of £27.07

million over the last four years (2016-17 to 2019-20), with an expectation of significant further reductions required over the next four years.

- 3.2 A public consultation exercise was undertaken over an eight week period from 9 September 2019 to 3 November 2019. Respondents were asked to share their views on a range of budget proposals being considered between 2020-21 and 2023-24, including: proposed increases to council tax and considering cutbacks to services including street cleaning, CCTV, pest control, town centre events, adult learning, education support services, as well as closing one of its three community recycling centres.
- 3.3 Budget consultation exercises have been undertaken annually since 2013-14. This 'Shaping Bridgend's Future' 2019 consultation exercise has built on the knowledge gained from the previous consultations and further developed the consultation to include new ways for people to participate and engage with the Council. A wide variety of methods of communication were used including surveys, social media, community engagement stands, town and community council and community group meetings.
- 3.4 In addition, in order to gather the views of young people the consultation team attended an all-Bridgend head-teacher's event to promote the survey as well as asking individual schools to take part in interactive sessions in order to gather feedback. As a result, 1,218 young people in comprehensive schools across the county borough took part in clicker-pad sessions.
- 3.5 The budget consultation overview, document and different surveys were made available between 9 September 2019 and 3 November 2019. The surveys were available on the council's website while paper copies were also made available in community groups or engagement events, or sent directly to residents upon request.
- 3.6 The consultation aimed to reach the following key stakeholders: citizens of Bridgend County Borough, comprehensive schools, BCBC cabinet members/councillors, local businesses, council staff, town and community councils, partner organisations, community and equality groups, local interest / community groups and local media.
- 3.7 Methods of engagement included a survey (available online and paper copies at all local libraries), community meetings/ engagement stands, elected member workshops, other meetings/networking events, social media debates and comments, and a dedicated Citizens' Panel survey (available online and paper copies). A bespoke survey was also designed for youth engagement and an accessible version of the survey was also available. Survey completions and/or comments were collated as part of the different events and meetings. Feedback to the consultation was also welcome via letter, email or telephone.
- 3.8 The consultation was supported by a full communications and promotional plan. The main activities included two media releases, a BCBC budget explainer video, various press release/editorials in the media, a social

media/web campaign, poster/sign campaign, direct marketing to key target audiences e.g. businesses, schools, youth council and internal communications for staff and elected members. Links were also made to the consultation through HALO, Awen and BAVO's communication outlets.

3.9 In addition to general social media content, 3 polls were created on Twitter which generated 497 votes to key questions within the budget consultation survey.

4. Current Situation / proposal

4.1 The attached consultation report (Appendix A) sets out in detail the views expressed by those who participated.

4.2 Overall, the council has received 7,437 interactions during the consultation, covering survey completions, engagement event attendees and social media interactions. This is an increase of 2,149 (40.6%) on the 5,288 interactions from last year, of which 1,200 relates to an increase on social media comments.

4.3 The response rate, by method of interaction is set out below:

Interactions	Number
Survey completions	3,417
Events/meetings/workshops	1,987
Emails	9
Letters	0
Telephone calls	7
Webpage Feedback	8
Social Media comments	1,365
Social Media Q&A	147
Social Media Polls	497
Total interactions	7,437

- 3,417 responses to the surveys were received in total. This represents a 27% increase on last year's total of 2,677.
- Overall 1,987 people attended the various events, workshops and meetings – these figures include schools.
- A total of 2,009 interactions were received via social media. This includes 147 interactions from the live question and answer (Q&A) session, 1,365 social media comments and 497 social media poll votes.
- 24 comments were received by email, telephone and webpage feedback.

4.4 Headline figures and themes include:

Headlines from the Public Consultation	
Council Tax	
64% of respondents stated that they would be prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax (this was the lowest amount that could be chosen).	
83% of respondents were not willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax in order to protect all services for 12 months.	
The proposals to make savings that were supported by respondents were:	
Close Community Recycling Centres for one day per week each (70%).	
The council is not best placed to provide pest control services (58%).	
Remove funding for town centre events (54%).	
Remove funding for all strategic events (40%) and remove funding for Elvis Festival (32%).	
Remove funding for Bridgend Business Forum (72%).	
Reduce the funding for Adult Community Learning to save £65k (58%).	
Support for a model of localised day services through the development of Community Hubs (69%).	
Remove escorts from school transport where there are less than eight pupils (56%).	
Delegate funding to primary schools for pupils with additional learning needs (57%).	
Move to less face to face interactions within the Customer Services Contact Centre within Civic Offices (70%).	
Move to an appointment based system in the Customer Services Contact Centre (59%).	
The proposals that were not supported by respondents were:	
Move to a reactive street cleaning service (63%).	
Removal of funding for CCTV (70%).	
Removal of funding for Pop-up Business School (58%).	
Reconfiguration of the homelessness service (54%).	
Delegation of money for cognition and learning services to schools (52%).	
Generating Income	
61% of respondents agreed that the council should consider commercial ventures to fund and protect front line services.	
60% of respondents stated that the council should consider the possibility of providing energy to its residents to generate income.	
Social Media Responses – most common comments:	
Theme	No.
Don't increase council tax by 13.6%	242
We pay more council tax yet receive less services	203
Cut council staff/wages/expenses/pensions	200
Requests for more information on annual accounts and budget reductions	116
Cut councillors/wages/expenses	99
Council should challenge central government funding cuts	88
Issues with recycling and waste service	73

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 There are no proposed changes to the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Budget reduction proposals pursued will be subject to the appropriate equality impact assessment prior to implementation.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of the Budget Consultation. Officers have considered the importance of balancing short-term needs in terms of meeting savings targets, while safeguarding the ability to meet longer-term objectives and maintain sustainable services, when proposals were devised. A full Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment will be completed for the final MTFS presented to Council in February 2020.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The consultation report seeks to inform and aid cabinet members' decisions on the future direction of the Council and how to meet the challenging budget constraints in the years ahead.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the outcome of the consultation with interested parties as detailed in the attached consultation report.

Gill Lewis
Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
December 2019

Contact Officer: Deborah Exton
Interim Deputy Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

Telephone: 01656 643604

Email: deborah.exton@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Raven's Court
Brewery Lane
Bridgend
CF31 4AP

Background documents: None

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Shaping Bridgend's Future 2019

Consultation report

Date of issue: 20 November 2019

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1. Overview

A public consultation reviewing Bridgend County Borough Council’s proposed budget reductions to 2021/22 was undertaken over an eight week period from 09 September to 03 November 2019. The consultation received 7,437 interactions from a combination of survey completions, engagement at stands held across the county borough, workshops held with comprehensive pupils, engagement at various meetings with different local groups, social media engagement and via the authority’s Citizens’ Panel. This paper details the analysis associated with the consultation.

2. Introduction

The public survey was available to complete online through a link on the consultation page of the council’s website or by visiting www.bridgend.gov.uk/future. Paper copies of the consultation were also made available in community groups or engagement events or alternatively, they could be sent directly to residents upon request. Surveys were available in several formats, including easy-read, large print, standard and a youth version. All were available in English and Welsh. The content of the page remains available online.

In total, there were 31 questions (within all survey formats) that required a reply from respondents. These were made up of questions about budget reduction proposals as well as ways in which the council could generate income and long term priorities. All survey responses offered the option of anonymity. The council’s standard set of equalities monitoring questions were also included with the survey in line with recommended good practice for all public-facing surveys carried out by the council.

A programme of engagement events/sessions were held across the county borough and took the form of engagement stands in libraries, attendance at town and community council meetings, presenting to different groups, attending other group’s events, meetings and workshops and holding sessions in comprehensive schools.

Comments regarding the consultation were also invited via social media (including a dedicated social media Q&A), letter, email and phone call.

3. Promotional tools and engagement methods

Details of the consultation were promoted to/shared with the following stakeholders: general public/residents, Citizens’ Panel members, elected members, BCBC employees, Bridgend businesses, town and community councils, school governors, Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF) members, local interest/community groups, BAVO, Bridgend College, partners, secondary schools (including head teachers) and media outlets.

3.1 Promotional tools

This section details the methods used to raise the profile of the consultation and encourage participation.

3.1.1 Free prize draw

To encourage participation, respondents (aged over 13) were able to opt-in to a free prize draw for a one year Halo Leisure membership, a family of four pantomime ticket for The Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl, or two tickets to 'It's a wonderful life' at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall. Respondents were asked to select their prize of choice and provide their email address in order to opt-in.

3.1.2 Social media

In December 2017 the council committed to managing its social media accounts bilingually. In addition to introducing Welsh language corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts at that time, it started posting bilingually across the remainder of its social media channels.

Budget consultation information was posted bilingually to the council's corporate Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn channels throughout the consultation period to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage citizens to share their views on the proposals.

The council currently has 12,092 followers on its corporate Twitter accounts, 12,263 'Likes' on Facebook pages, 1,848 followers on Instagram and 3,308 followers on LinkedIn. While content is most likely to be seen by these users, it is also displayed to users who are not connected to the accounts.

In addition to general social media content, 3 polls were created on Twitter which generated 497 votes to key questions within the budget consultation survey.

- Would you support a move to less face to face interactions and more online interactions in order to save £130k per year? **74% yes, 23% no and 3% unsure**
- Our face to face customer service department in Civic Offices is currently run as a drop in. Do you think the council should switch to an appointment based system? **32% yes, 60% no and 8% unsure**
- We will receive £35 million less funding to run our services by 2023. In order to reduce our budget, should we stop providing a CCTV service across the borough? **24% Yes, 76% No**

Paid Facebook and Instagram advertising was used to reach a wider audience within the county borough between 23 September and 4 November and again between 29 October and 2 November. The adverts were seen 166,301 times by people living in Bridgend County Borough and generated 338 comments and 1,471 clicks through to the budget consultation website page.

During the period, the authority 'tweeted' 82 times (41 English, 41 Welsh), posted to Facebook 22 times (11 English, 11 Welsh), made eight LinkedIn updates (8 bilingual), and one Instagram post about the consultation. This content was seen 59,619, 99,675, 5,269

and 439 times respectively. In total 2679 individuals who viewed the social media content went on to click through to the budget consultation page on the local authority website.

Across all social media platforms throughout the budget consultation there were 2009 interactions, including 497 poll votes and 1512 comments.

3.1.3 Media and publicity

The screenshot shows two news articles side-by-side. The left article is from BBC News, titled "Porthcawl Elvis festival could suffer £20k council budget cut", dated 10 September 2019. It features a photo of three people in Elvis costumes. The right article is from "The Bridgend & Porthcawl GEM", titled "BCBC invites residents to aim axe for potential cuts", dated Monday, 16 September 2019. It includes a photo of several coins and text stating that BRIDGEND County Borough Council (BCBC) is considering cutbacks to services including street cleaning, CCTV, pest control, town centre events, adult learning, education support services, as well as closing one of its three recycling centres. It also mentions that during the last four years, BCBC has saved £27 million by cutting some services and reducing council staff numbers by 400, which has included making cutbacks in senior

Public views wanted on possible cutbacks in Bridgend County

Lisa Baker, Editor, Welsh Business News & News from Wales



Two media releases were issued to coincide with the start and middle of the consultation to raise awareness and encourage participation. These were issued on 9 September and 9 October.

Prior media work was carried out to prepare residents and the media for the scale of the budget challenges and encourage their participation. This work ranged from media statements and features to interviews with the Leader and Deputy Leader.

It resulted in related coverage in publications such as the Glamorgan Gazette and Wales Online on 11 August.

Further coverage took place in the BBC News on 10 September, in the Glamorgan Gazette, Wales Online and South Wales Echo on 13 September, in the Bridgend Gem and Bridge FM on 16 September, and in News from Wales on 15 October.

The media releases were included at the media centre of the council's website where they were hyperlinked with associated social media publicity.

Information was also included in Cabinet member announcements for meetings of full Council dated 18 September, and in columns for Seaside News on 1 September and 1 October.

3.1.4 Internal communications

The consultation was promoted internally with a feature at the staff intranet homepage.

It was also promoted via Bridgend's all-staff emails issued on 05 September.

3.1.5 Promotional materials

Posters, business cards and flyers promoting the consultation and engagement events were circulated to the library service for use in their branches across the county borough, to town and community councils and schools. Organisations including Bridgend Carers' café, the Stroke Association, Evergreen Hall and the Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People also received promotional materials. When attending schools all pupils were given promotional materials to take home to their parents and carers, including pencils which stated 'I helped shape Bridgend's future'

A BCBC budget explainer video was produced which went live early in the consultation period. The English video received 1.9k views on social media and 92 views on YouTube. The Welsh video received 49 views on social media and 11 views on YouTube.

A QR code was added to business cards this year to encourage people to use their smart phones to scan directly to the budget consultation landing page. The QR code generated 54 hits to the English budget consultation page and 15 hits to the Welsh budget consultation page.

An awareness campaign was run on Bridge FM for the first week of the consultation to launch the campaign and the last but one week of the consultation as a reminder/final push for the consultation. In addition to the radio advert Bridge FM placed a banner advert on their website which resulted in 28 clicks through to the consultation page and 3766 impressions.

A full page advert on the budget consultation in was placed in the November edition of the Seaside News which distributes 27,000 copies to various outlets and households in the Bridgend County Borough.

An email was sent to 1,278 businesses on Bridgend business directory.

A digital screen within Civic Offices reception displayed messages about the consultation throughout the live period.

Pop-up banners were used at events and a window display was developed for Civic Offices. Posters were also displayed in council offices.

3.1.6 Other promotional activities

The council's website was updated to promote the consultation with a link through to the survey.

Content was secured in BAVO's e-bulletins and membership circulars sent to members during September October and November.

Targeted letters and emails were sent to school governing bodies, town and community councils and BCCEF members.

Awen and Halo helped to raise the profile through their own social media channels.

3.2 Engagement methods

This section details the mechanisms available for stakeholders to engage with the council and share their views.

3.2.1 The budget survey

The survey was made available in a variety of formats to ensure inclusion across community groups. A standard survey, easy-read, large print and youth version of the survey were all made available in Welsh and English. All were available in paper format and online. The same survey was replicated for Citizens' Panel members and sent to them in the format of their choice.

3.2.2 Community meetings/events

An email about the consultation proposals and how to share views was sent to local community, equality and diversity groups. As part of this email, we offered to attend their meetings to encourage and aid participation.

The consultation and engagement team attended nine community group meetings including Bridgend Shout, Bridgend Carers Community Café, Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People and the Stroke Association to inform people about the consultation and assist attendees to complete paper surveys (where requested) or to share their views via the clicker-pad version of the survey. The consultation team engaged with a total of **213 residents** from across the County Borough in the community groups.

3.2.3 Community engagement stands

10 public engagement stands were held in libraries throughout the county borough. Event dates and times were published online at the beginning of the consultation and shared through promotional activities. Events took place in the following libraries:

- Sarn Library;
- Pencoed Library;
- Betws Library;
- Pyle Library;
- Bridgend Library;
- Maesteg Library;
- Aberkenfig Library;
- Pontycymmer Library;
- Porthcawl Library;
- Ogmere Vale Life Centre.

The Consultation Team engaged with **152 residents** from across the county borough in these events.

3.2.4 School engagement sessions

In order to gather the views of young people the consultation team attended an all-Bridgend head-teachers' event to promote the survey as well to ask individual schools to take part in interactive sessions in order to gather feedback.

As a result, comprehensive schools across the county borough took part in clicker-pad sessions. The consultation team engaged with **1218 young people** in the following comprehensive schools:

- Pencoed Comprehensive;
- Bryntirion Comprehensive;
- Porthcawl Comprehensive;
- Maesteg School;
- Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen;
- Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd;
- Cynffig Comprehensive;
- Archbishop McGrath RC Comprehensive School;

3.2.5 Elected Member's workshop

Two interactive workshops took place for elected members on 18 September 2019. A total of **20 members** attended across the two sessions. Members were given the opportunity to complete the survey using clicker-pads. The sessions were also attended by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities to feedback on any questions or comments. Comments are added to the themes in section 7.2.24.

3.2.6 Town and Community Council meetings

All Town and Community Councils were asked if the Consultation and Engagement Team could attend their regular meeting during the live period. The purpose was to inform each TCC of the consultation and enable their local residents to take part. The Consultation and Engagement team attended 19 Town and Community Council meetings and a total of **225 community councillors and members of the public** attended these events. Comments from attendees were noted and are themed in section 9.

3.2.7 Bridgend Community Cohesion and Equality Forum (BCCEF)

The quarterly meeting of BCCEF took place during the live period of the budget consultation on 14 October 2019. Members of the meeting (**11 attendees**) were invited to take part in an interactive clicker-pad session. The meeting consisted of members representing community based organisations including the police, Bridgend People First, BCDP, faith organisations and Mental Health Matters Wales. All organisations were provided with promotional materials to promote the consultation within their individual community groups.

3.2.8 Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO)

BAVO organised an event for their members to share their views on the MTFs proposals. This was advertised on their website and on social media. The event was held in the St. Johns' Centre on Minerva Street on 24 October. The event was attended by the Cabinet Member for Communities, who answered questions and queries raised by attendees. **Eight people** attended the event. Comments made during the event were recorded and are themed in section 7.2.24.

3.2.9 Citizens' Panel events

The Consultation Team invited all members of the Citizens' Panel to community events during the live period. Events took place in:

- Bridgend Civic Offices;
- Maesteg Town Hall;
- The Pavilion Porthcawl;
- Ogmore Vale Life Centre;
- Garw Valley Life Centre.

The events enabled Citizens' Panel members to give their feedback on the consultation, ask questions and interact with officers and Cabinet members. The consultation team engaged with **52 residents** from across the county borough in these events. Comments made during these events were recorded and are themed in section 7.2.24.

4. Response rate

In total, there were **7,437** interactions during the consultation. The response rate has been segregated into several areas: consultation survey responses, engagement event attendees and social media interactions.

Interactions	Number
Survey completions	3417
Events/meetings/workshops	1987
Emails	9
Letters	0
Telephone calls	7
Webpage feedback	8
Social media comments	1365
Social media Q&A	147

Social media polls	497
Total interactions	7437

We received **3417** survey responses in total (1,982 online submissions, 1153 clicker-pad submissions and 282 paper versions).

Survey type	Online English	Online Welsh	Paper English	Paper Welsh	Clicker-pad	Total
Standard	1423	4	50	0	42	1519
Easy read	118	1	65	0	0	184
Large print	12	0	21	0	0	33
Citizens' Panel	350	1	139	4	0	494
Youth	71	2	3	0	1111	1187
Total	1974	8	278	4	1153	3417

There were **1987** attendees at the various events, meetings and workshops.

During the consultation period, there were **2009** interactions on our social media channels. This includes the social media Q&A session, where 147 interactions were recorded on Twitter and Facebook and Twitter polls where 497 votes were received.

Comments that were received by letter, email or telephone call have been themed and are included in section 7.2.24.

5. How effective was the consultation?

The budget consultation was conducted over an eight week period in which a range of marketing methods were used to create awareness of the consultation as well as reach and encourage stakeholders to engage with the council.

The data collection methods, which include the online survey, a paper survey, the Citizens' Panel and a youth survey (aimed at 11-24 year olds) were all developed using plain English to maximise understanding.

The four versions of the survey: standard; large print; easy read and youth were developed to maximise accessibility and to encourage participation with all members of the community.

6. Headline figures

- 6.1 63% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fully fund street cleaning, and not move to a reactive service;
- 6.2 70% of respondents stated that the council should keep all three recycling centres open but close each of them for one day each per week;
- 6.3 70% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund CCTV;
- 6.4 58% of respondents stated that they did not think that the council was best placed to deliver pest control services;
- 6.5 54% of respondents said that the council should remove funding for town centre events;

- 6.6 40% of respondents stated that funding should be removed from all strategic events, a further 32% stated remove funding for the Elvis Festival;
- 6.7 58% of respondents said that funding for the Pop-up Business School should continue;
- 6.8 72% of respondents said that funding for the Bridgend Business Forum should be removed;
- 6.9 54% of respondents said that the council should not reconfigure the homelessness service in order to make savings;
- 6.10 58% of respondents said that the council should reduce the funding for Adult Community Learning to save £65k per year;
- 6.11 57% of respondents felt that telecare services should be available to purchase by anyone within the county borough;
- 6.12 69% of respondents supported a model of more localised day services through the development of Community Hubs;
- 6.13 When asked if the council should make a saving of £35k by removing escorts from vehicles where there were eight pupils or less, 56% of respondents agreed with this proposal;
- 6.14 57% of respondents supported the council saving money by delegating funding for pupils with additional learning needs directly to primary schools;
- 6.15 52% of respondents disagreed with the proposal to save £61k per year by training staff in school to provide some cognition and learning services;
- 6.16 70% of respondents stated that they would support the council moving to less face to face interactions and providing more services online;
- 6.17 59% of respondents agreed with the proposal to move to an appointment based system (instead of drop in) in the Customer Services Contact Centre within Civic Offices;
- 6.18 When asked about council tax increases 64% of respondents stated that they were prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax (this was the minimum increase that respondents could choose);
- 6.19 When respondents were asked if they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax in order to protect all services 83% of respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay this additional amount;
- 6.20 When asked to prioritise the areas for capital expenditure the most popular responses were roads (25%) followed by schools (24%) and then regeneration projects (17%);

- 6.21 61% of respondents agreed that the council should consider commercial ventures to fund and protect front line services;
- 6.22 47% of respondents stated that the council should consider the possibility of hotel investments to generate income;
- 6.23 60% of respondents stated that the council should consider the possibility of providing energy to its residents to generate income;
- 6.24 When asked to give their views on prioritisation of long term budgets respondents stated that the council should make efficiencies in house (20%) followed by encourage citizens to take more responsibility (18%) and use online facilities where possible (18%).

7. Question and analysis - consultation survey

The consultation contained 31 questions related to current proposals to make savings across a range of services as well as opportunities to increase revenue. All questions were optional, so participants could chose to answer all or some of the questions.

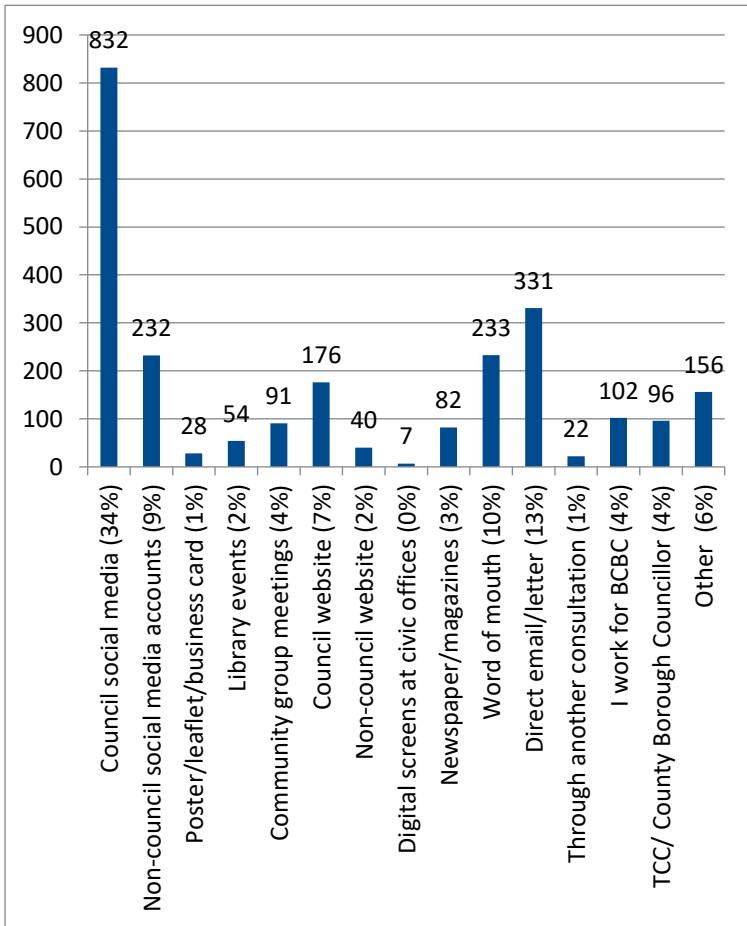
Respondents were also asked to tell us where they would prioritise capital expenditure and give their opinions on generating income.

In the final two question respondents could tell us anything they thought we had missed or ideas on what we should focus on for our long term budget make any other comments or recommendations about the budget for the coming year.

7.1 About you

The questions in this section were not available in the clicker-pad version of the survey. The easy read survey did not include the question about employment status.

Respondents were asked how they **heard about the consultation**.

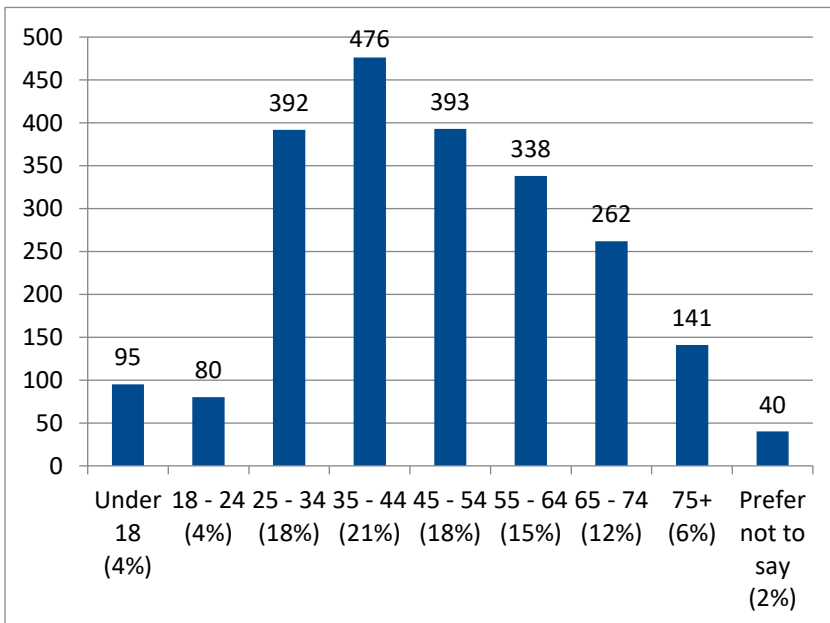


2482 respondents provided this information.

The most popular responses were:

- Council social media (34%);
- Direct email or letter (13%);
- Word of mouth (10%).

Respondents were then asked for their **age**.



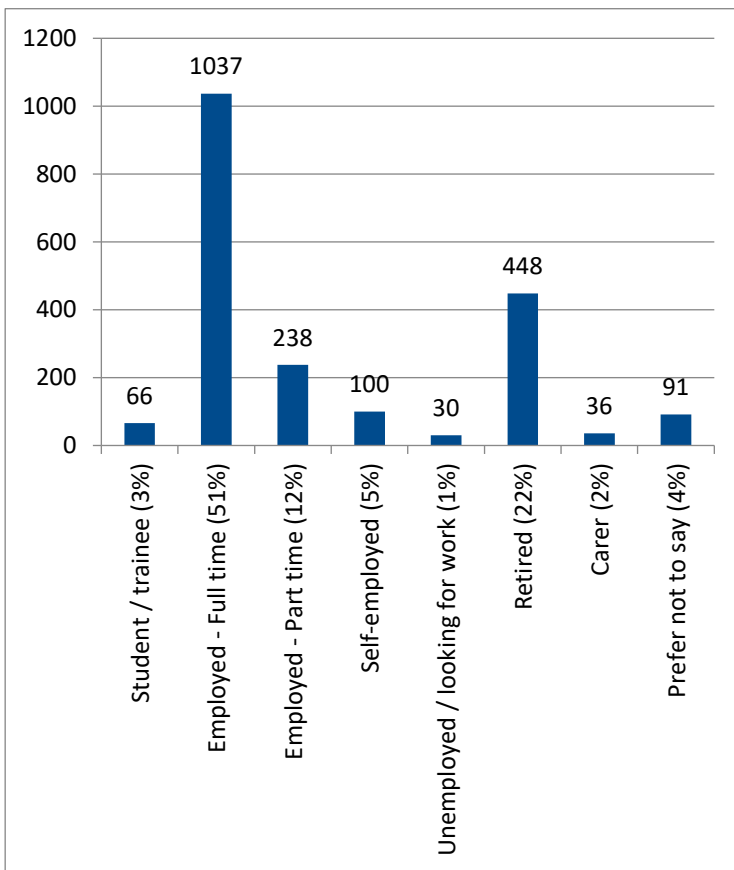
2217 respondents provided their age group:

21% of respondents were aged 35-44;

18% of respondents were aged 25-34;

18% of respondents were aged 45-54.

Respondents were then asked for their **employment status**.



2046 respondents provided their employment status;

51% of respondents informed us that they were in full time employment;

22% of respondents informed us that they were retired;

12% of respondents informed us that they were employed part time.

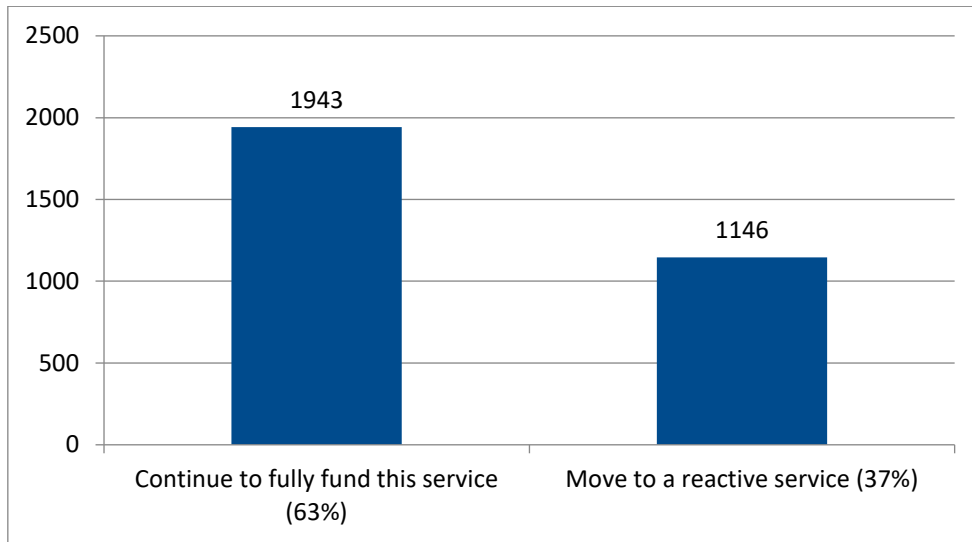
7.2 Survey questions

7.2.1 Street cleaning

Respondents were informed that street cleaning currently costs £1.3 million per year and that moving to a reactive service could save £270k per year.

Respondents were asked if the council should make this saving.

A total of 3089 people responded to this question.

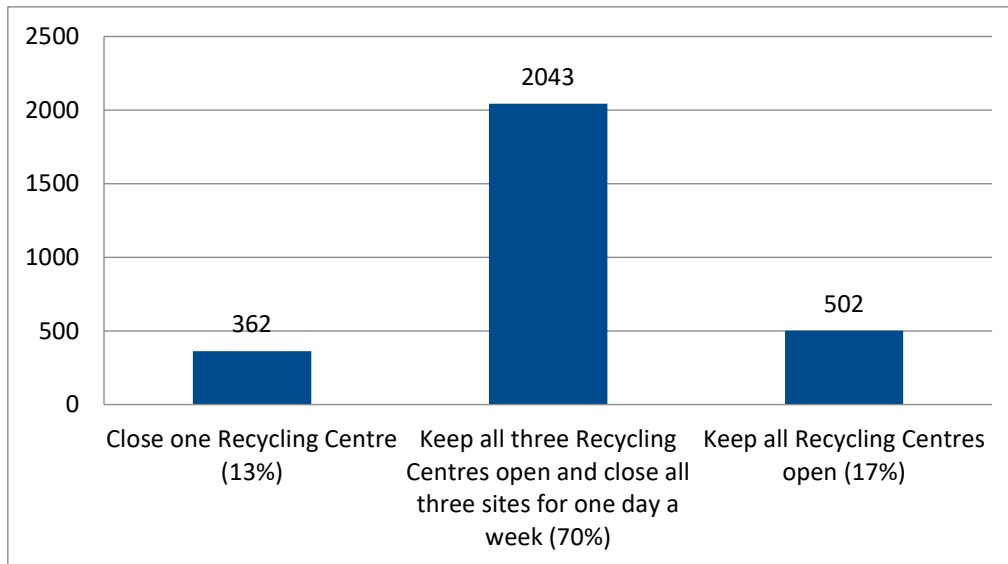


63% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fully fund this service. 37% of respondents stated that the council should move to a reactive service.

7.2.2 Community Recycling Centres

Respondents were asked to select from three options in relation to the three Community Recycling Centres across the county borough.

A total of 2907 people responded to this question.

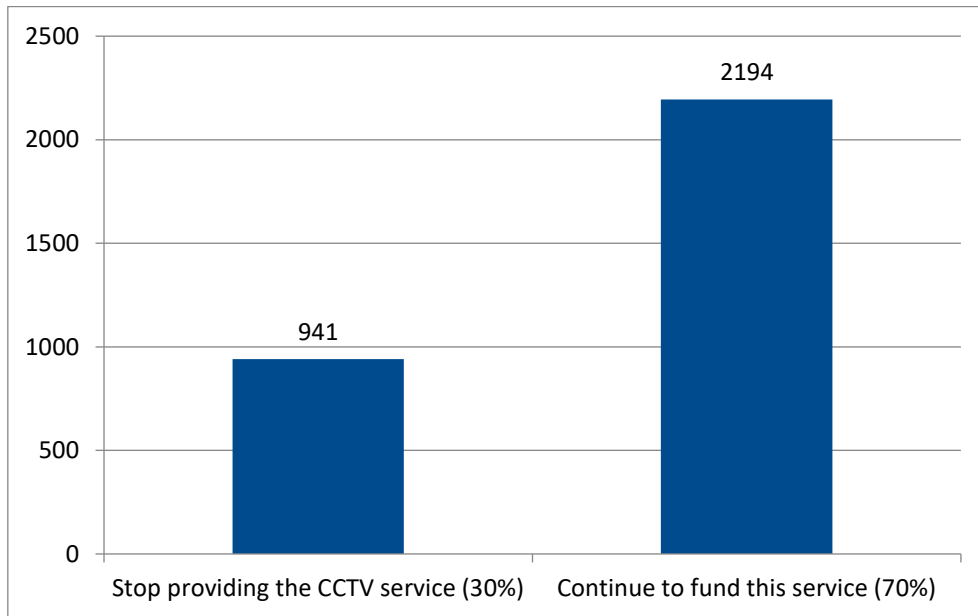


The majority of respondents (70%) selected that the council should keep all Community Recycling Centres open but close each of them for one days a week this was followed by keep all Recycling Centres open (17%) and then close one Recycling Centre (13%).

7.2.3 CCTV

Respondents were asked if the council should continue to fund CCTV across the county borough or stop providing this service which would save £327k per year.

A total of 3135 people responded to this question.

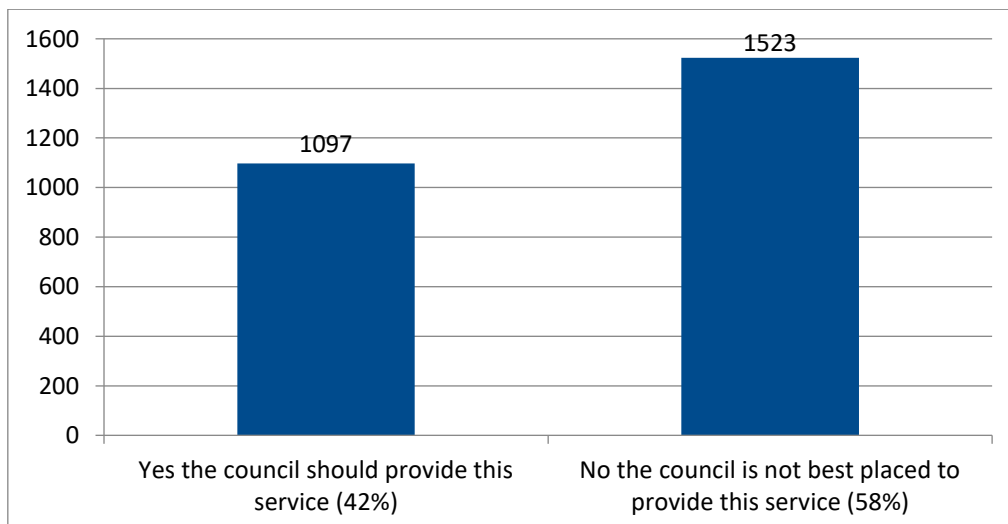


70% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund this service. 30% of respondents stated that the council should stop providing this service.

7.2.4 Pest control

Respondents were asked if they thought the council were best placed to deliver the pest control service.

2620 people responded to this question.

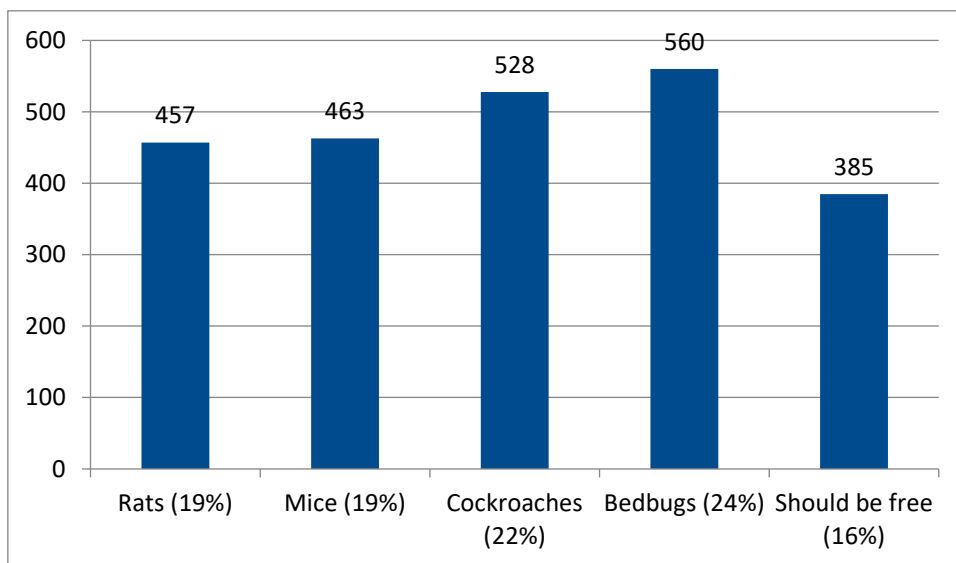


58% of respondents stated that they did not think the council were best placed to deliver pest control services. However 42% of respondents did think that the council should deliver pest control services.

Respondents were then asked a supplementary question about generating income.

Respondents were asked which of the current free services the council should consider charging for if they did continue to provide post control services.

2393 people responded to this question.
Respondents were able to select multiple 'pests'.



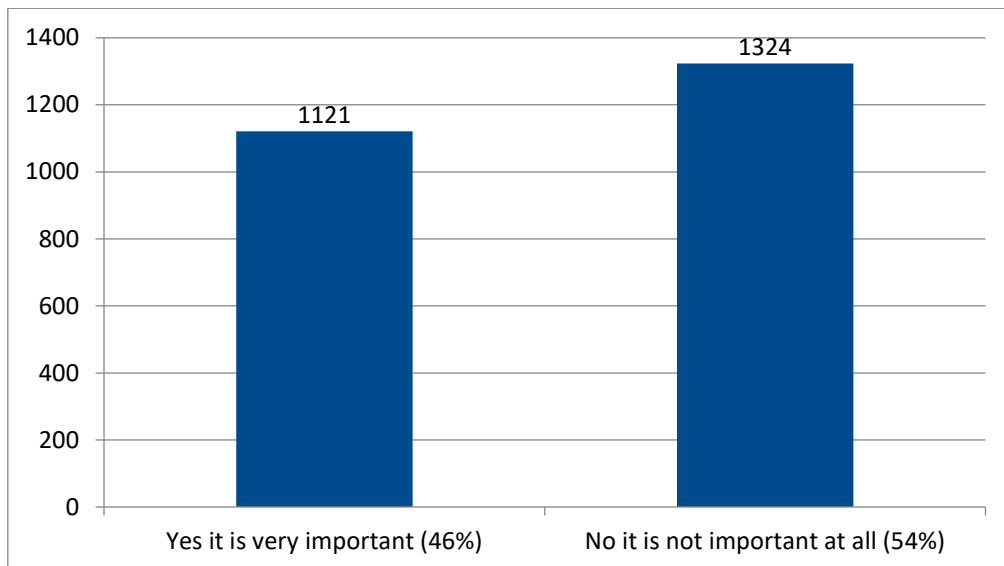
The most popular response was charge for bedbugs (24%) followed by cockroaches (22%) and the mice and rats equally (19%).

16% of those who responded to this question stated that the service should continue to be free to residents.

7.2.5 Town Centre events

Respondents were informed of the support provided for Town Centre events as part of the special regeneration fund. Respondents were asked if the council should continue to fund these events or save the money (£23k)

A total of 2445 people responded to this question.

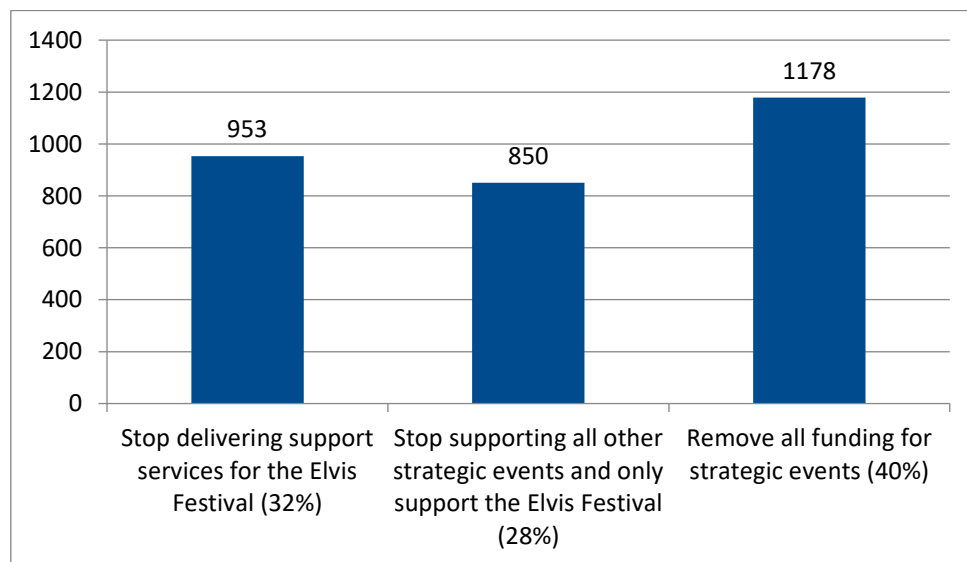


54% of respondents stated that these events are not important and should not be funded. 46% of respondents stated that the councils should continue to fund these events.

7.2.6 Strategic events

Respondents were informed of the current funding provided to support strategic events such as the Elvis Festival and Senior Open Golf Championships. Respondents were given three options to choose from in relation to these events and the potential reduction in funding of £40k.

2981 people responded to this question.

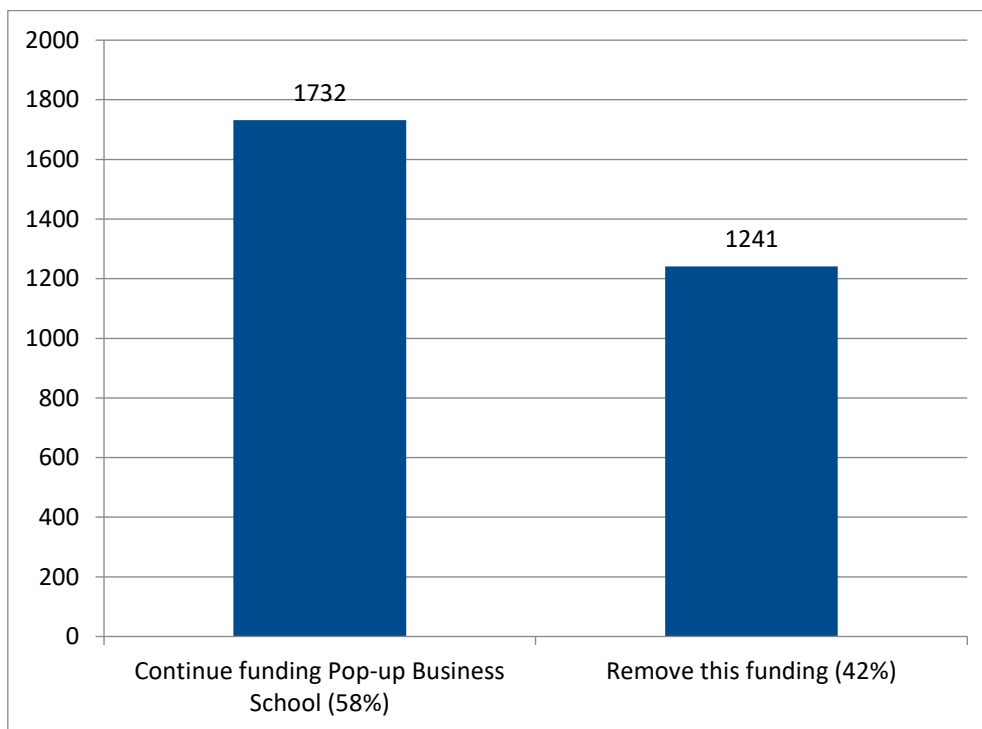


The majority of respondents (40%) stated that all funding should be removed for strategic events. 32% stated that the council should stop delivering support for the Elvis festival and 28% stated that the council should stop providing funding for all other strategic events and only fund the Elvis Festival.

7.2.7 Pop-up Business School

Respondents were informed of the current funding provided for the Pop-up Business School. Respondents were asked if the council should continue to provide this funding (£12.5k).

A total of 2973 people responded to this question.

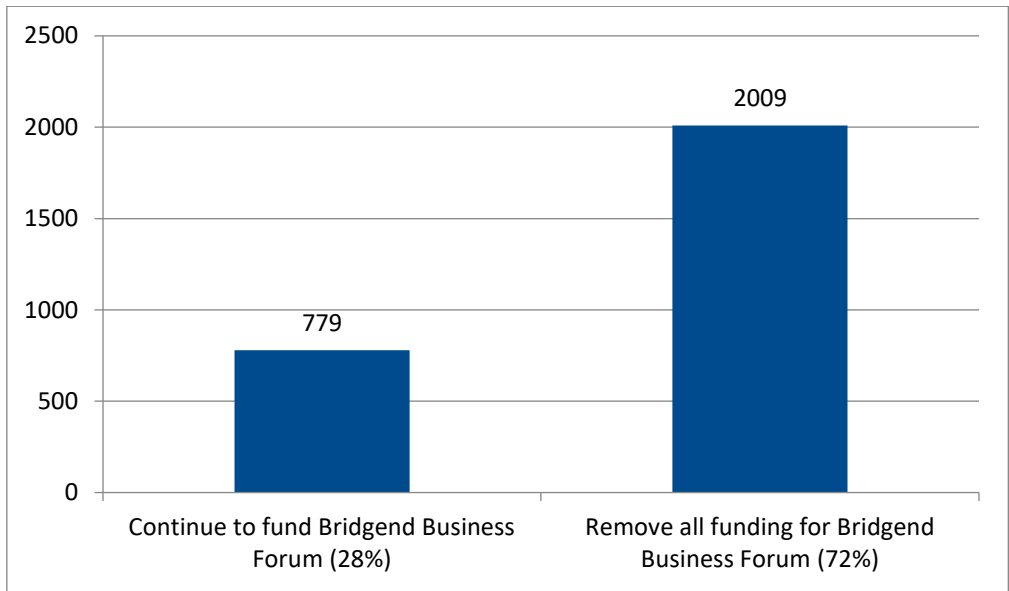


58% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund the Pop-up Business School. 42% stated that the funding should be removed.

7.2.8 Bridgend Business Forum

Respondents were given information in relation to Bridgend Business Forum and were asked if the council should continue to provide £35k per year towards BBF.

2788 people provided a response to this question.

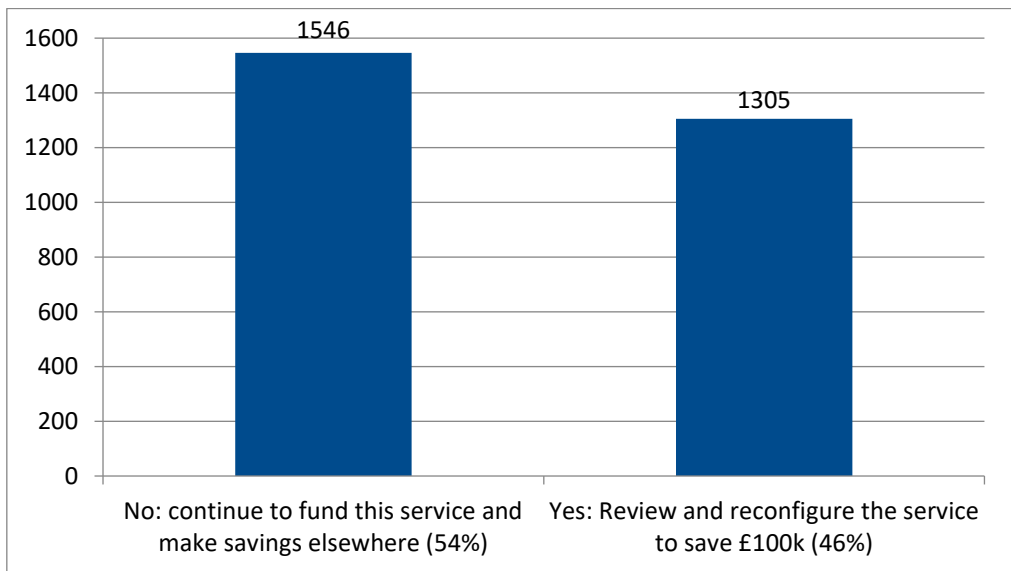


The majority of respondents (72%) stated that the council should save £35k per year by removing the funding for Bridgend Business Forum. 28% of respondents stated that this funding should continue.

7.2.9 Homelessness

Respondents were informed about the current homelessness provision in Bridgend County Borough, and were asked if, in order to make savings of £100k the service should be reconfigured.

2851 people provided a response to this question.



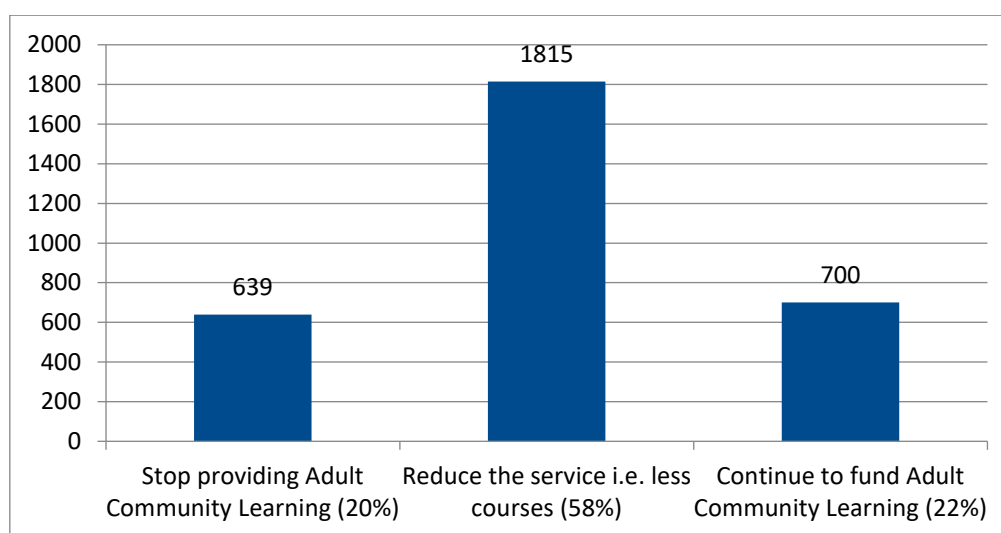
54% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund this service. 46% of respondents stated that the council should review and reconfigure this service in order to save £100k per year.

7.2.10 Adult community learning

Bridgend County Borough Council currently provide £133k per year to Adult Community Learning.

Respondents were asked to if the council should continue to provide this funding, reduce the funding to save £65k per year or remove all funding.

A total of 3154 people provided a response to this question.

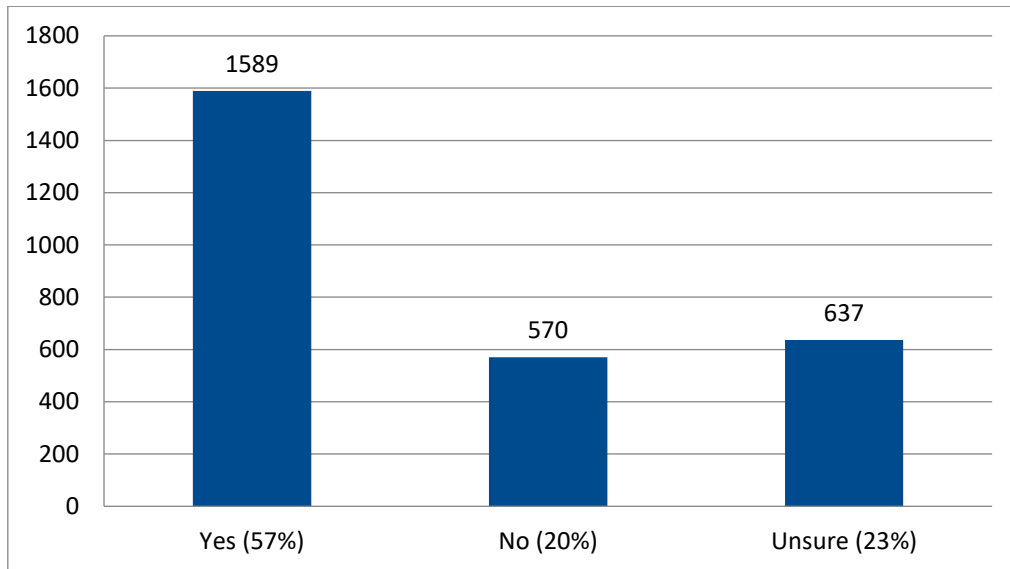


58% of respondents stated that the council should reduce the service to save £65k per year, this was followed by 22% of respondents who stated that the council should continue to fund adult community learning. 20% of respondents stated that the council should remove all funding to adult community learning.

7.2.11 Telecare and mobile response services

Respondents were given a description of telecare and mobile response services and asked if this should be available to all residents to purchase. Respondents were informed that the average monthly cost for the service would be approximately £40.

A total of 2796 people responded to this question.



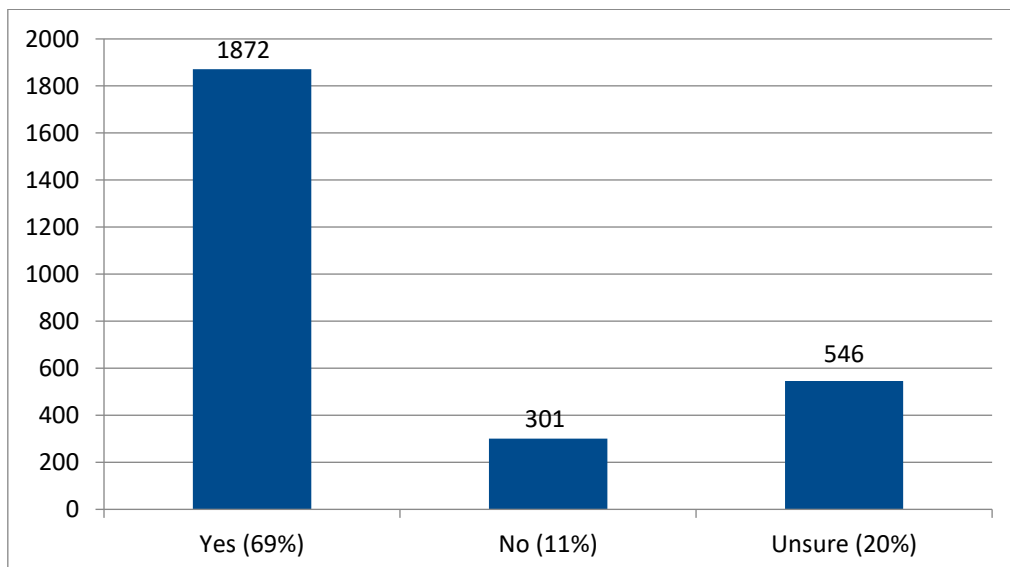
57% of respondents stated that this service should be available to purchase. 20% said no and 23% were unsure.

7.2.12 Community hubs

Respondents were provided with information about Community Hubs and the development of the day services model.

Respondents were asked if they would support the model of more localised day services through the development of Community Hubs in four areas across the county borough.

A total of 2719 people responded to this question.



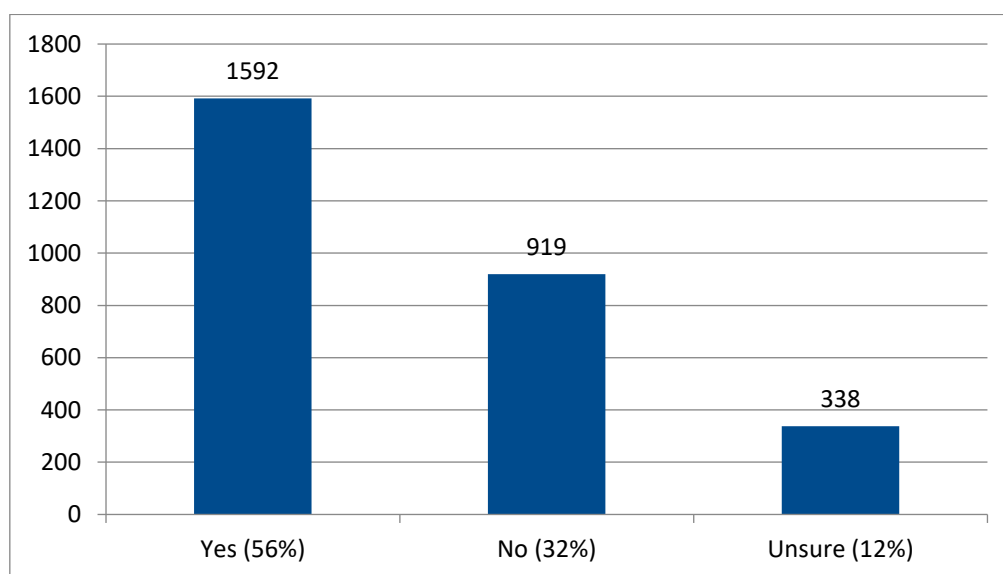
69% of respondents stated that they supported the model of more localised day services. 11% said that they did not support this and 20% were unsure.

7.2.13 Escorts on school taxis or minibuses

Respondents were informed that Bridgend County Borough Council provides school and college transport for more than 6,000 pupils and students across the borough costing £5.145 million.

Respondents were asked for their views on the provision of pupils who are taken to school in taxis and minibuses. Currently taxis and minibuses have an escort as well as the driver. Respondents were asked if they agreed with the proposal to remove the escort on vehicles where there are less than eight pupils. This would save around £35k per year.

A total of 2849 people provided a response to this question.



56% of respondents stated 'yes' the council should make this saving. 32% stated that they did not agree with the proposal and 12% were unsure.

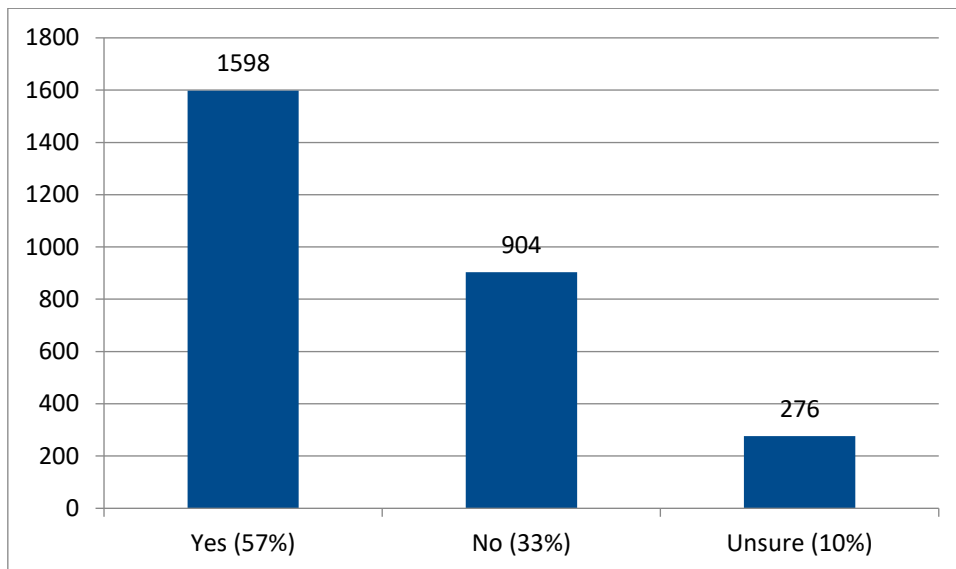
7.2.14 Pupils with additional learning needs

Respondents were given information how the council provide support to children with additional learning needs to access the curriculum.

In order to save £144k per year the council could assign the funding directly to primary schools.

Respondents were asked if the council should reduce the budget and delegate funding to primary schools to appoint their own support staff.

A total of 2778 people responded to this question.

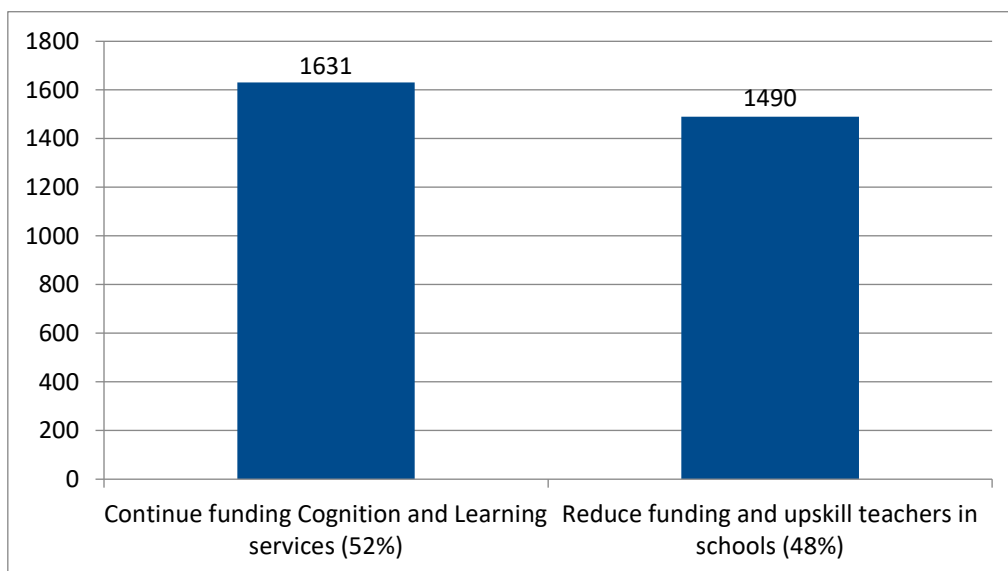


57% of respondents agrees with this proposal. 33% did not agree with the proposal and 10% stated that they were unsure.

7.2.15 Cognition and learning services

Respondents were given information on the cognition and learning services, and asked if they agreed with the proposal to review the funding and save £61k per year by training staff in schools to provide some of these services.

A total of 3121 people responded to this question.



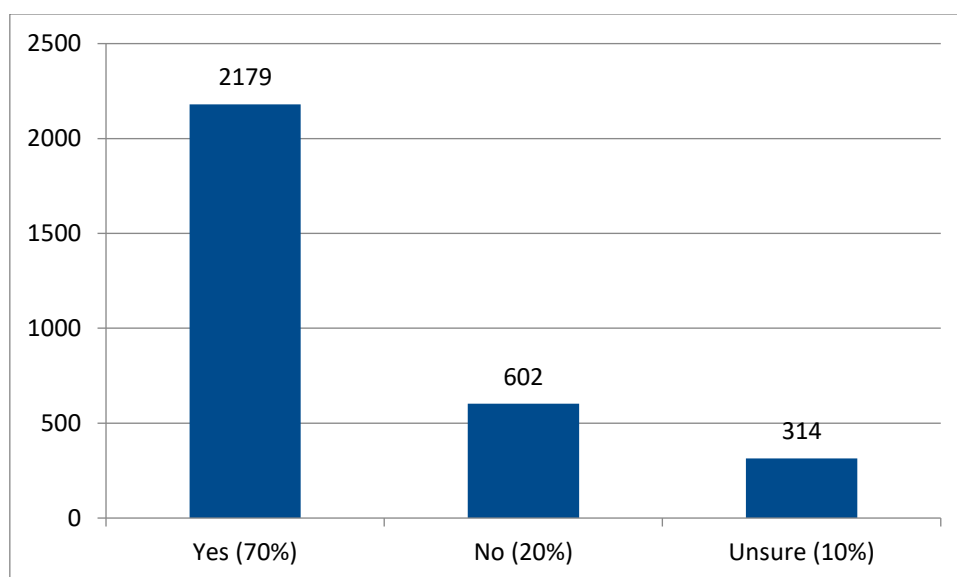
52% of respondents stated that the council should continue to fund the cognition and learning service. 48% of respondents stated that the council should save £61k per year by training staff in schools to provide some of these services.

7.2.16 Digital services / contacting the council

Respondents were given information about how the council have already saved money though digitalising some of its services. Respondents were provided with the current costs of supporting residents face to face, by telephone and online.

Respondents were asked if they would support a move to less face to face interactions and more online interactions in order to save approximately £130k per year.

A total of 3095 people responded to this question.



70% of respondents stated that in order to save £130k per year they would support a move to less face to face interactions. 20% stated that they would not and 10% were unsure.

Respondents were then asked:

To build on the success of the digitalisation of services, what services or information would you like to see available online.

564 comments were received. All comments were themed and these are detailed in the table below:

Theme	No.
As many services as possible/all services	123
Not everyone can access or understand online services	61
Waste, recycling and street cleaning to include information, contacts and online reporting for issues and complaints	54
What services are provided by the council and how the council works	41
Live online chat	36
Income/expenditure information including salaries of councillors and staff	33
Improve current online services	32
Events, community groups, community information	29

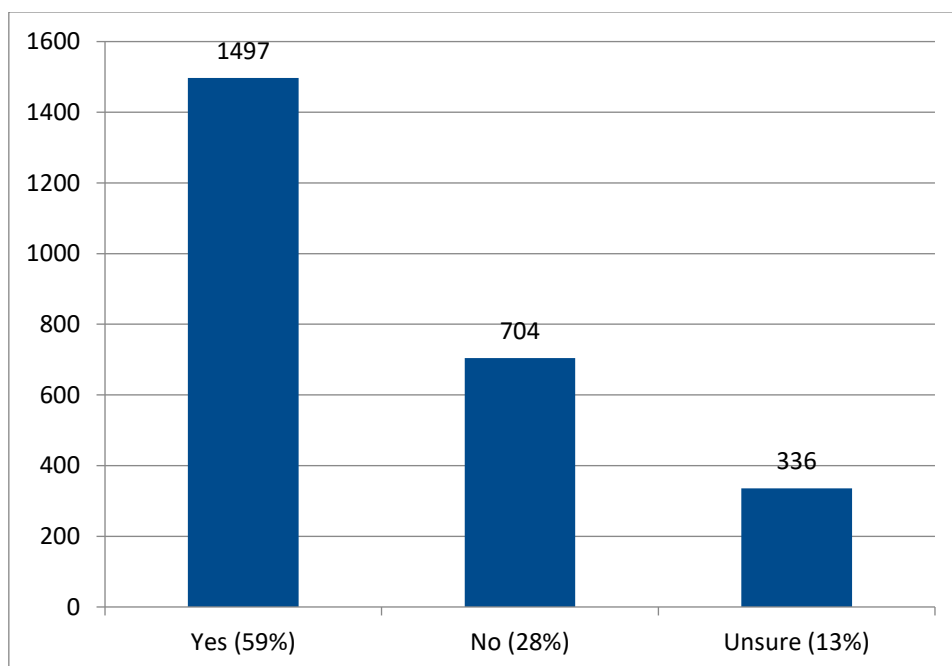
Council tax information/payments/email rather than post	25
More automated payments, online reporting tools and appointment booking	25
Housing options/information/contacts	17
Schools - contacts, admission, school meals	17
Contact details of departments/services	16
Blue badge applications/renewals	10
Better response is needed to emails and messages	9
Pest control service	8
Planning applications information/appointments/payments	8
Roads/highways information and online reporting function	7
Registry services	4
Complaints	4
Social services contacts and referral	3
Licensing information and applications	2

The most common responses were as many services as possible/all services (123) followed by not everyone can access or understand online services (61) and then waste, recycling and street cleaning to include information, contacts and online reporting for issues and complaints (54).

7.2.17 Civic Office appointments

Respondents were asked whether the Customer Services Department in Civic Offices (which is currently run as a drop in) should move to an appointment based system.

A total of 2537 people responded to this question.



59% of respondents stated that they agreed with this proposal, 28% did not agree with the proposal and 13% were unsure.

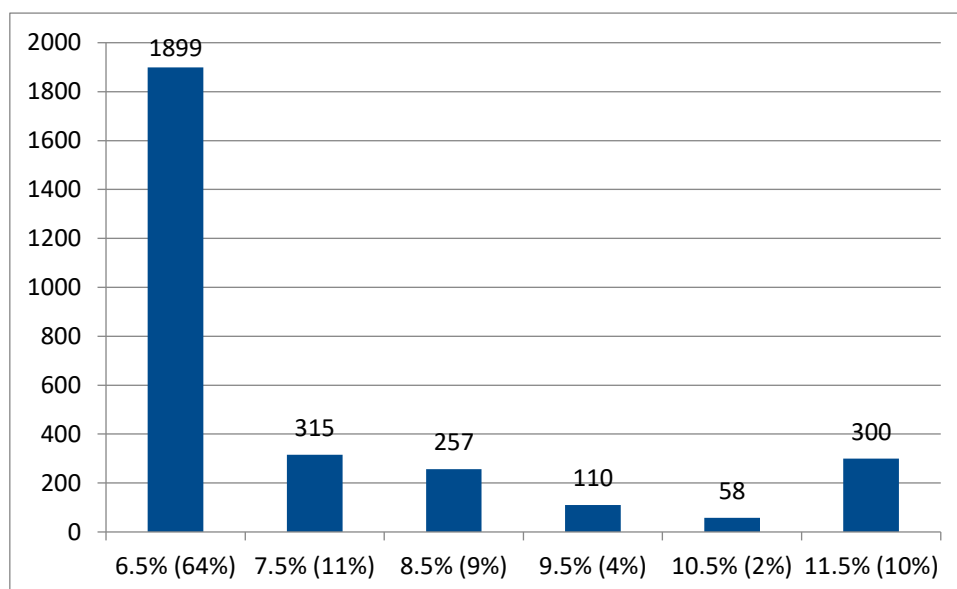
7.2.18 Council tax increases

Respondents were provided with information on the current funding generated through council tax and were asked to select the amount that they would be prepared to pay in addition to their current charge.

Respondents were asked to select from the following amounts (based on an average band D property):

- 6.5% (£1.84);
- 7.5% (£2.12);
- 8.5% (£2.40);
- 9.5% (£2.69);
- 10.5% (£2.97);
- 11.5% (£3.25).

2939 people provided a response to this question.



- 64% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax;
- 11% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 7.5% council tax;
- 9% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 8.5% council tax;
- 4% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 9.5% council tax;
- 2% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 10.5% council tax;
- 10% of respondents were prepared to pay an additional 11.5% council tax.

The responses to the question about council tax increases also have been analysed by demographic information (age and employment status).

Council tax and age

When comparing age with response to the amount of council tax a respondent was prepared to pay we found:

- All ages groups chose 6.5% as their most popular response;
- Under 18 year olds chose 6.5% and then 8.5% and 9.5% equally;
- 75+ chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then 9.5% and 11.5 equally;
- All other age groups chose 6.5%, followed by 7.5% and then 8.5%;
- There was not a significant difference in the responses to this question by age.

Council tax and employment status

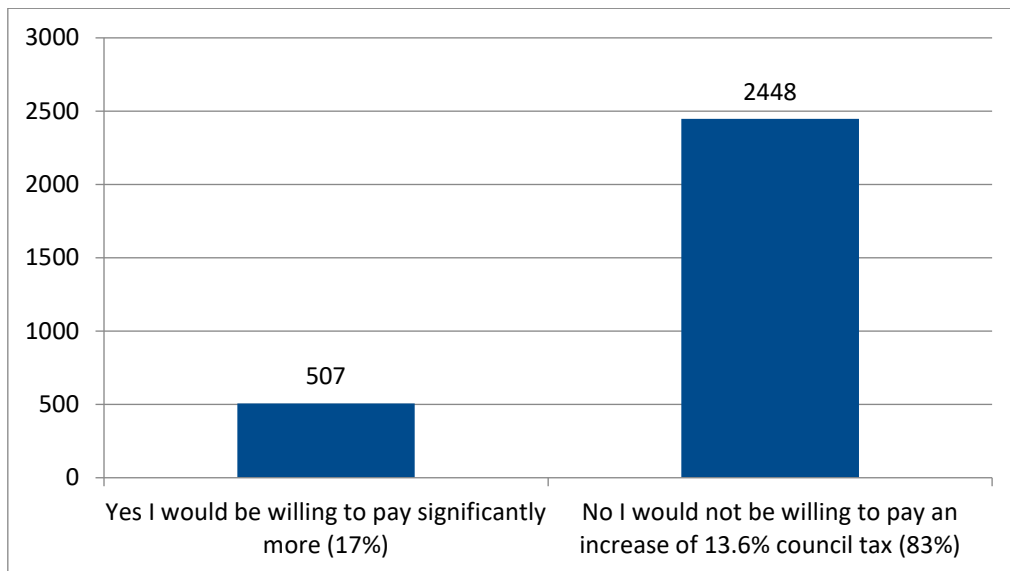
When comparing employment status with response to the amount of council tax a respondent was prepared to pay we found:

- All respondents chose 6.5% as their most popular response;
- Respondents who identified themselves as full time employed chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then 8.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as part time employed chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then £11.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as self-employed chose 6.5% followed by 8.5% and then 7.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as unemployed/looking for work chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then 8.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as full time employed chose 6.5% followed by £7.5% and then 8.5%;
- Respondents who identified themselves as a carer chose 6.5% followed by 7.5% and then £8.5%;
- There was not a significant difference in the responses to this question by employment status.

In addition to the question about council tax increases respondents were also informed that if council tax went up by an additional 13.6% council tax this would increase the council's annual budget by £10.7 million and no savings would need to be made to any council services for the next financial year.

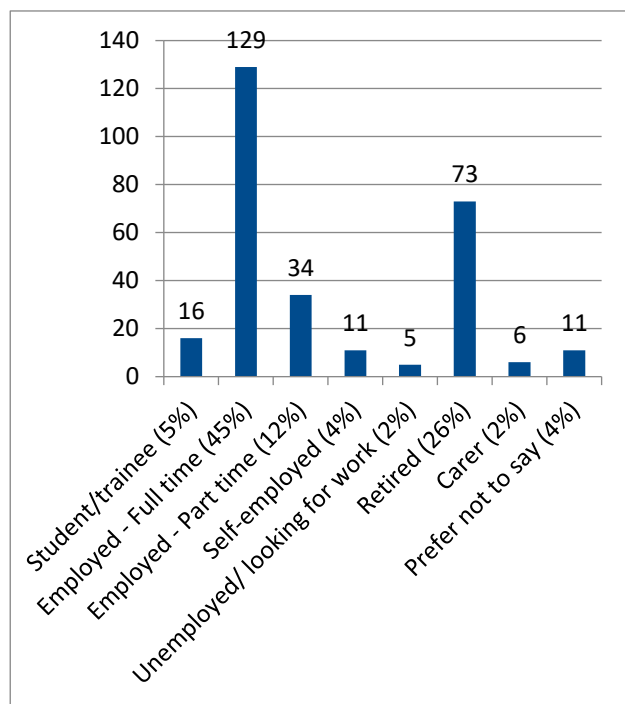
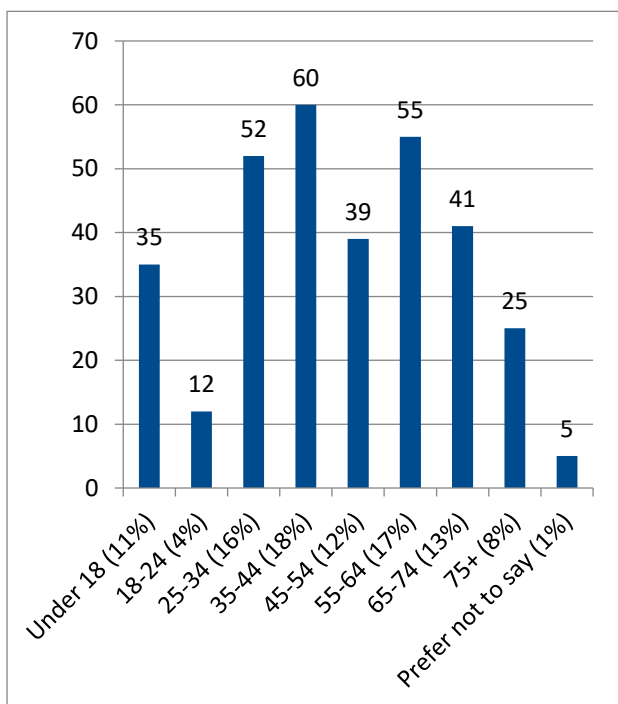
Respondents were asked if they would be willing to pay **an increase in council tax of 13.6%** so that no council services would need to be cut in 2020/21.

2955 people provided a response to this question.



17% of respondents stated that they would be willing to pay the additional council tax to protect all services. 83% of respondents stated that they would not be willing to pay the additional 13.6% council tax.

The responses to those who stated that they **would be willing** to pay an additional 13.6% council tax have been analysed by demographics information (age and employment status).



324 respondents said that they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax and gave their age.

The three most popular age groups to have said yes are 35-44, followed by 55-64 and then 25-34.

285 respondents said that they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax and gave their employment status.

The most common groups to say that they would be willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax were full time employed, followed by retired and then part time employed.

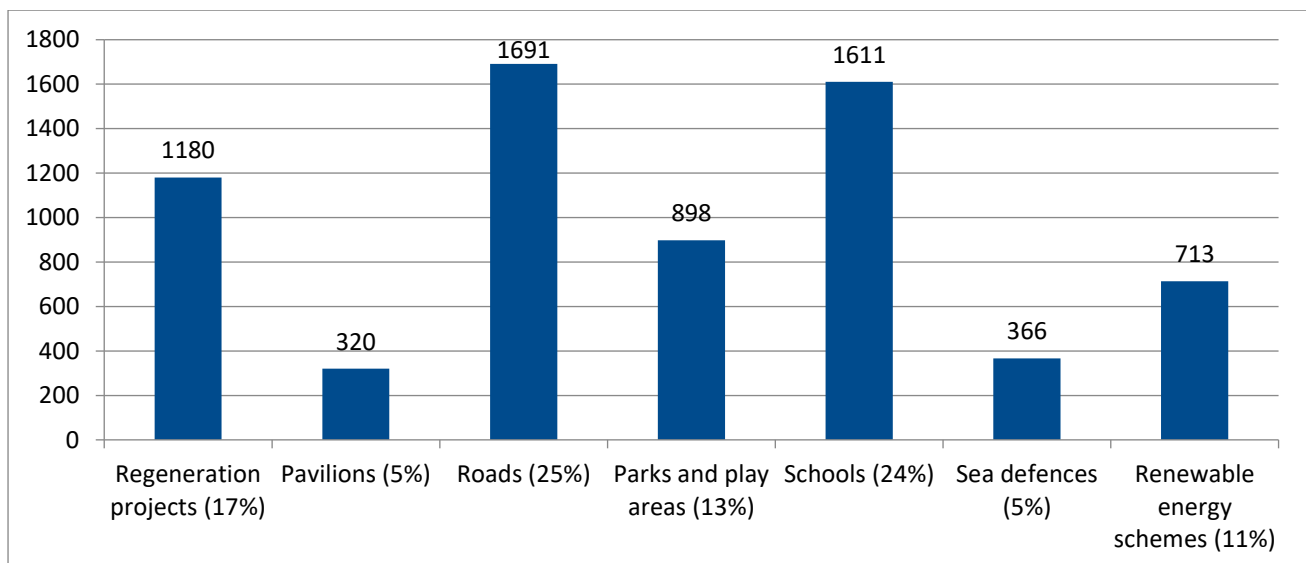
7.2.19 Capital expenditure

Respondents were informed that as part of identifying the council budget, funds are allocated for capital expenditure.

Respondents were informed that the 2019-20 capital budget is currently £54.5 million, which is made up of BCBC, Welsh Government and external grant funding.

Respondents were asked where they would choose to prioritise spending. They were able to select three from the following:

- Regeneration projects;
- Pavilions;
- Roads;
- Parks and play areas;
- Schools;
- Sea defences;
- Renewable energy schemes.



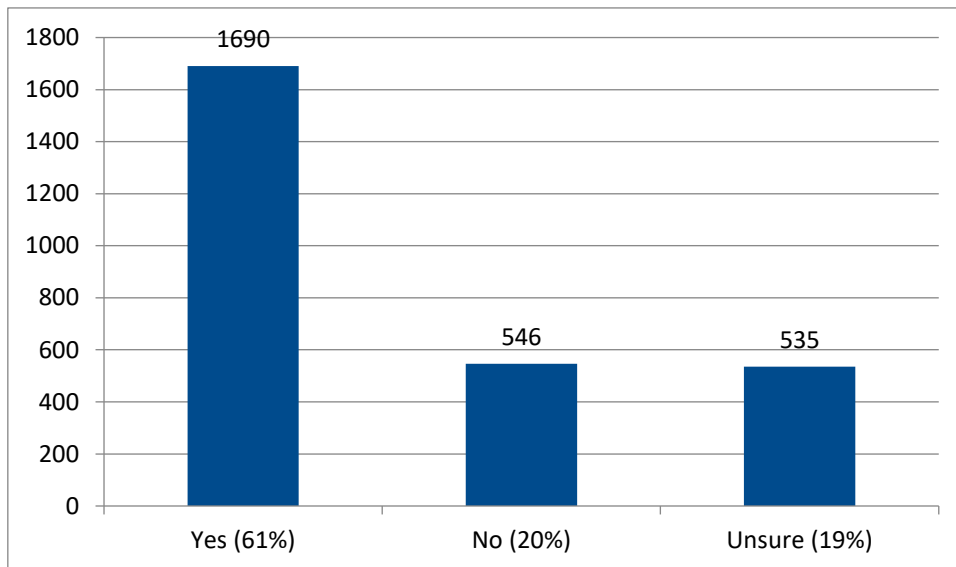
The most popular areas for capital expenditure were roads (25%) followed by schools (24%) and then regeneration projects (17%).

7.2.20 Generating income

Respondents were given details of how the council currently generate income, including charging for green waste collection, car parking and rental income.

Respondents were given details of how other local authorities have found ways to generate income and were asked if they thought commercial ventures should be considered by BCBC in order to fund and protect front line services.

2771 people provided a response to this question.



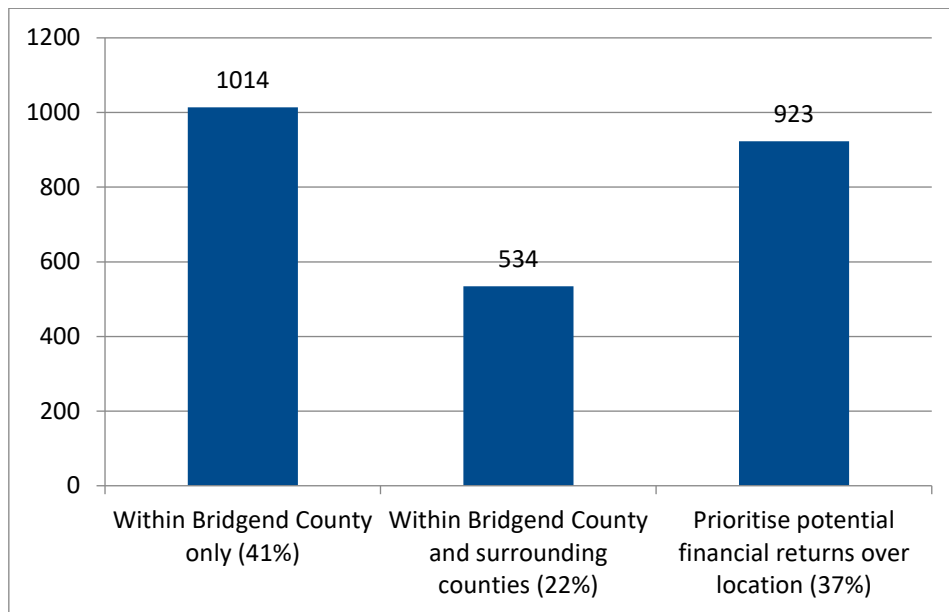
61% of respondents stated that the council should look at commercial investments to fund and protect front line services. 20% of respondents stated no to this question and 19% were unsure.

Respondents were subsequently asked:

If the council did decide to invest in commercial ventures, where do you think we should focus our investments? Respondents could choose:

- Within Bridgend County only;
- Within Bridgend County and surrounding areas;
- Prioritise potential financial returns over location.

2471 people provided a response to this question.



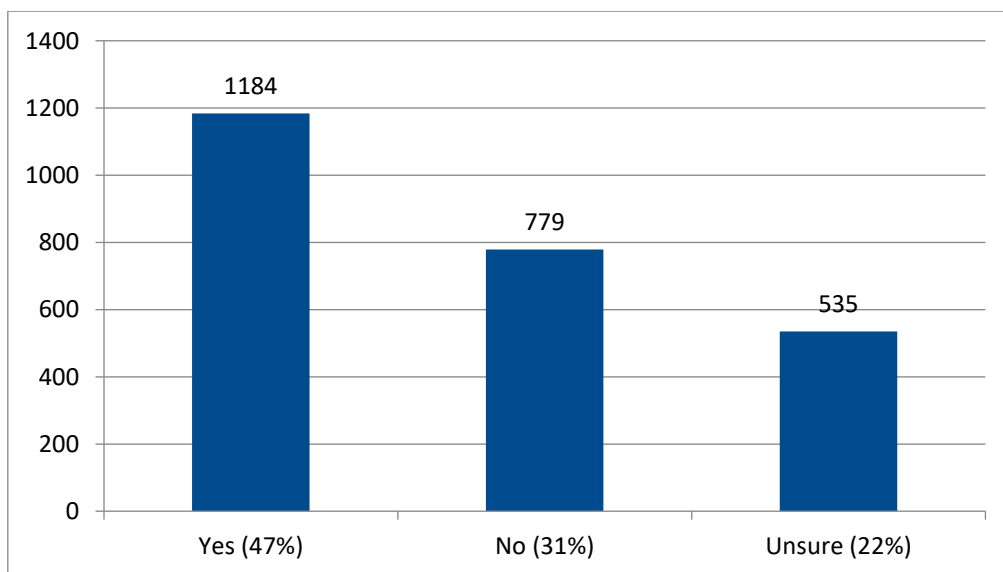
41% of respondents stated that investments should be within Bridgend County only, 37% stated that the councils should prioritise financial returns over location and 22% stated that investments should be within Bridgend County and surrounding areas.

7.2.21 Commercial investments

Information was provided on how other local authorities have started to make commercial investments.

Respondents were asked if they thought Bridgend County Borough Council should investigate the possibility of hotel investments to generate income.

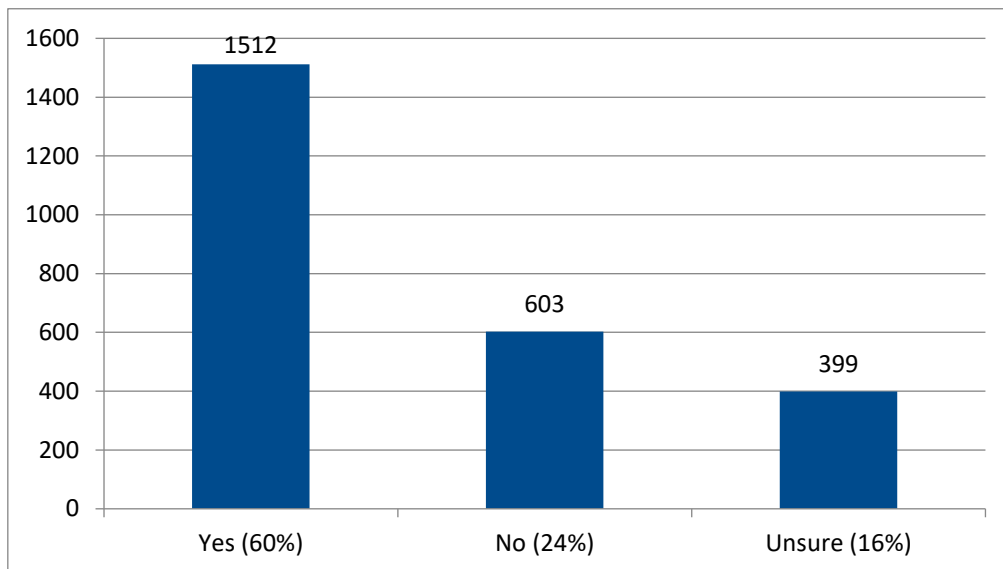
2498 people provided a response to this question.



47% of respondents stated that the council should investigate the possibility of hotel investments. 31% stated no and 22% were unsure.

Respondents were also asked if they thought Bridgend County Borough Council should investigate the possibility of generating income by providing energy to its residents.

2514 people provided a response to this question.



60% of respondents stated that the council should investigate the possibility of generating income by providing energy to its residents. 24% said no to this question and 16% were unsure.

7.2.22 Long term priorities

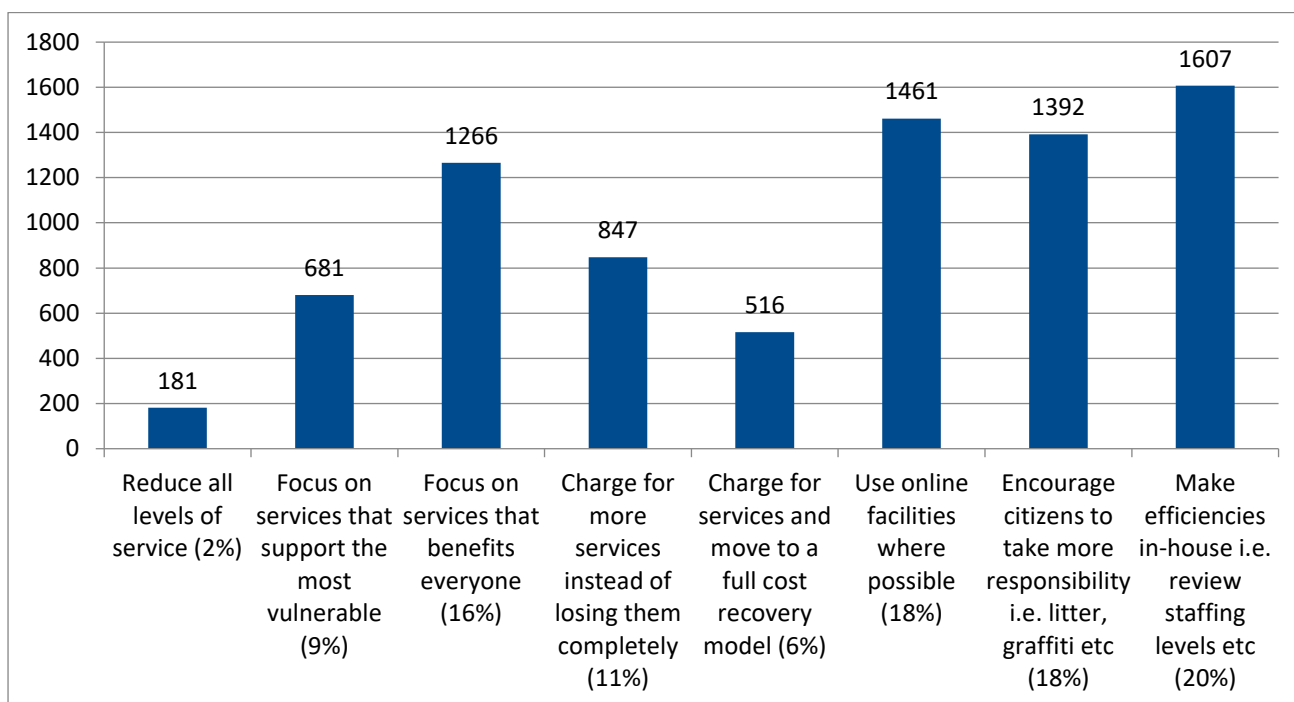
Respondents were informed that the council has experienced year and year reductions in funding while there is an increased demand on services.

Respondents were asked to give their views on when looking at the longer term at the delivery of council services and making the best use of resources how would they prioritise long term budget decisions.

Respondents were asked to select from the following options:

- Reduce all levels of service;
- Only focus on services that support the most vulnerable in communities;
- Focus on services that benefits everyone in the borough;
- Charge residents for more services instead of losing them completely;
- Wherever we are able, charge for services and move to a full cost recovery model;
- Use online facilities where possible;
- Encourage citizens to take more responsibility i.e. litter, graffiti etc.;
- Make efficiencies in-house i.e. review staffing levels, mileage allowances etc.;

They could select all that they felt were relevant.



The options most commonly selected were make efficiencies in house (20%) followed by encourage citizens to take more responsibility and use online facilities where possible (both 18%) and then focus on services that benefits everyone (16%).

7.2.23 Please tell us anything we have missed and your ideas on what we should focus on when thinking about our long-term budgets.

Respondents were asked if they felt that there was anything that had been missed and to give ideas on what the council should focus on when thinking about long term budgets.

894 comments were received. These comments were themed and are presented in the table below:

Theme	No.
Reduce councillors/staff/expenses	165
Stop increasing council tax	90
Make 'in-house' efficiencies (in services, productivity, contracts etc.)	80
Focus support on vulnerable people	59
Focus on visible services (i.e. street cleaning, grass cutting, roads)	56
Better engagement with TCCs/other authorities/communities	52
Invest in schools/ school transport	42
Invest in town centres/ support businesses	40
Generate income (i.e. sell land, increase fines, tourism)	38
Provide services that benefit everyone	35

Focus on environmental impacts	27
Stop supporting non tax payers/unemployed/homeless/prisoners	24
Charge residents for more services	24
Better communication with residents on budget/services	22
Invest in sports/Pitches/CAT transfers	19
Reduce empty properties/ new build houses	19
Support residents to take more responsibility	17
CCTV/ Community safety is important	16
Stop funding Cardiff city deal	15
Invest in play parks	12
More/better transport for residents	12
Reduce grass cutting/ Develop 'meadows'	10
Do not undertake commercial ventures	9
Ask Welsh Government for more funding	4
Invest in Welsh language services/schools	4
Undertake commercial ventures	3

The majority of the responses related to reduce councillors/staff/expenses (165) followed by stop increasing council tax (90) and then make 'in-house' efficiencies (80).

7.2.24 Do you have any further comments that you would like to make on the budget proposals for 2020/21?

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any further comments that they would like to make on the budget proposals. These comments as well as comments received in events such as the BAVO event, Citizens' Panel events and the elected member's workshop were themed. Overall 612 comments were received and are presented in the table below:

Theme	No.
Do not increase council tax/keep rates low	126
Reduce councillors/staff/expenses	81
Make 'in-house' efficiencies (in services, productivity, contracts etc)	61
Focus on visible services (i.e. street cleaning, grass cutting, roads)	47
Focus support on vulnerable people	35
Try and work differently/ creatively/ with partners	33
Better communication with residents on budget/services	32
Generate more income	28
Invest in schools	22
Consultation feedback/process (questions about)	20
Stop supporting non tax payers/unemployed/homeless/prisoners	17
Involve residents in decisions	16
Focus on statutory services	14
Ask Welsh Government for more money	12
Invest in town centres/ support businesses	12
Charge for more services	10

These are difficult decisions to make	9
Focus on environmental impacts	9
Stop the Cardiff City Deal funding	8
CCTV and community safety is important	8
Invest sports/pitches	6
Support residents to take more responsibility	6

The majority of the comments related to do not increase council tax/keep rates low (126) followed by reduce councillors/staff/expenses (81) and then make 'in-house' efficiencies (61).

8. Social media responses

During the consultation period there were 1517 interactions on our social media channels, 147 of which were in response to the social media Q&A.

The comments have been themed and are detailed in the table below, some comments contained multiple themes:

Theme	No.
Don't increase council tax by 13.6%	242
We pay more council tax yet receive less services	203
Cut council staff/wages/expenses/pensions	200
Requests for more information on annual accounts and budget reductions	116
Cut councillors/wages/expenses	99
Council should challenge central government funding cuts	88
Issues with recycling and waste service	73
Unhappy with proposals	65
Don't listen to the public /survey won't make a difference	61
Question regarding the consultation questions/ process	54
Close down / merge the council	52
Don't pay into the Cardiff City deal	48
Don't use contractors / consultants	47
Provide more funding for street cleaning	40
Make more internal efficiencies	38
Stop building new houses	36
Comments and questions about Q&A	35
Cuts could cause future problems	29
CCTV shouldn't be a priority	21
More funding for CCTV	18
Highways issues	16
Don't increase sports pitch fees	16
Make savings elsewhere / council wasting money	14
Pay homeless or get prisoners to do jobs	14
Sharing consultation with others	26
Ideas for generating money	13
Need for independent review	11

Stop maintaining council offices / bridge outside Civic	11
Blaming Brexit for cuts	10
Only increase tax of those on higher wages	10
Town council wasting money (flower watering)	9
Don't fund Waterton cycle / foot path	9
Don't have a Prize draw	8
Cost of Welsh Language Standards	7
School transport issues	6
Review staff sickness policy	5
Where does the money from business rates go?	4
Cuts mean families using Food banks	3
Praise for recent council projects	3
Provide more funding for schools	3
Agree with less funding for street cleaning	3
Don't cut grass to save money	2
Adult learning not a priority	1
CF31 Bid question	1
Will vulnerable groups be protected from funding cuts?	1

The majority of the comments related to do not increase council tax by 13.6% (242) followed by we pay more council tax yet receive less services (203) and then cut council staff/wages/expenses/pensions (200).

9. Town and Community Council meetings

The Consultation and Engagement Team attended 19 Town and Community Council meetings. Comments that were made during the meetings were noted and are detailed in the table below:

Theme	No.
Question regarding the consultation questions/ process	25
Continual rises in council tax and cuts	19
Working differently i.e. reconfiguring services, working with community volunteers etc.	18
TCC will actively share/promote consultation	18
Cuts have already had negative impact on people/communities	17
TCC face additional pressures from BCBC budget cuts	14
Bridgend town centre needs improvements	11
More information on BCBC fund/spend	10
Education and social services should be protected	8
Communities do/should fund their own events/festivals	8
Focus on quality of service not quantity	8
Community recycling centres and cleanliness of public areas is important	6
Public doesn't know difference between the role of TCCs and BCBC	5
People would prefer to pay than lose a service	2

The most common comments were about a specific question within the consultation or the consultation process (25) followed by comments about continual rises in council tax and cuts (19) and then about working differently (18).

10. Conclusion

10.1 Budget proposals – savings

The proposals to make savings that were **supported** by respondents were:

- Close Community Recycling Centres for one day per week each (70%);
- The council is not best placed to provide pest control services (58%);
- Remove funding for town centre events (54%);
- Remove funding for all strategic events (40%) and removed funding for Elvis Festival (32%);
- Remove funding for Bridgend Business Forum (72%);
- Reduce the funding for Adult Community Learning to save £65k (58%);
- Support for a model of localised day services through the development of Community Hubs (69%);
- Remove escorts from school transport where there are less than eight pupils (56%);
- Delegate funding to primary schools for pupils with additional learning needs (57%);
- Move to less face to face interactions within the Customer Services Contact Centre within Civic Offices (70%);
- Move to an appointment based system in the Customer Services Contact Centre (59%).

The proposals that were **not supported** by respondents were:

- Move to a reactive street cleaning service (63%);
- Removal of funding for CCTV (70%);
- Removal of funding for Pop-up Business School (58%);
- Reconfiguration of the homelessness service (54%);
- Delegation of money for cognition and learning services to schools (52%).

10.2 Budget proposals - increasing revenue

When asked about increasing revenue respondents supported:

- The purchase of telecare services by residents across the county borough (57%);
- The council considering commercial ventures to fund and protect front line services (61%);
- The council should consider the possibility of hotel investments to generate income (47%);
- The council should consider the possibility of providing energy to its residents to generate income (60%).

10.3 Budget proposals - council tax increases

- 64% of respondents stated that they would be prepared to pay an additional 6.5% council tax (this was the lowest amount that could be chosen);
- 83% of respondents were not willing to pay an additional 13.6% council tax in order to protect all services for 12 months.

10.4 Summary

A sample of 3,417 survey completions is robust and is subject to a maximum standard error of +1.66% at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by the total adult population, to within $\pm 1.66\%$ of the percentages reported.

This means that if the total adult population of Bridgend had taken part in the survey and a statistic of 50% was observed, we can be 95% confident that the actual figure lies between 48.34% and 51.66%.

The consultation document was available in a variety of formats: standard; easy-read; large print and youth in Welsh and English. Respondents were able to select online or paper surveys in all formats.

The response to the consultation demonstrated a significant increase on previous years, with engagement across a range of community groups, schools and organisations.

A total of 3417 survey responses were received. 1982 online surveys were received, 282 paper surveys and 1153 surveys were completed during interactive sessions. This demonstrates an 18% increase on last year's survey completions.

A particular increase can be noted in youth survey completions, where there is a 50% increase compared to last year.

The number of paper surveys received decreased by 44% (282 paper surveys in 2019 compared to 507 in 2018).

Online survey completions have increased by 32% (1982 online completions in 2019 compared to 1491 in 2018).

The consultation and engagement team attended 58 events, meetings and workshops during the live period resulting in 1987 face to face interactions with people in events.

After completion of the consultation 972 people told us that they wanted to be kept up to date with the consultation outcome.

1036 people provided their details to enter the prize draw.

In previous years we have asked respondents to provide their details if they wanted to sign up to the Citizens' Panel after completion of the survey. This year respondents were taken to the Citizens' Panel landing page on the BCBC website after completion of the survey. During the live period 94 people signed up to become a Citizens' Panel member.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out in order to assess the impact of these proposals.

This report is to be shared with Cabinet in order to inform the MTFS for 2020/21 and further into 2020-2023.

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS GRANT

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval from Cabinet to enter into an agreement with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (“RCT”), the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council regarding the Additional Learning Needs Transformation Grant 2019/20.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/other corporate priorities

1.2 The report links to the following improvement priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- **Supporting a successful economy** - we will take steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
- **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – we will take 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 its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

1.3 The Additional Learning Needs Transformation Grant 2019/20 (“ALN Grant”) is a Welsh Government grant funded scheme to support the delivery of the additional learning needs transformation programme, including the preparation for and management of the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2019 (“ALNET Act”).

3.2 RCT, acting as Lead Authority, submitted an application to Welsh Government for the ALN Grant on behalf of the council, the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council and third party providers (who are further education sector and local health boards in the regions of the councils).

- 3.3 The purpose of the ALN Grant is to support local authorities to develop and promote innovative, multi-agency and cross-sector working practices to support learners with additional learning needs (ALN) in readiness for the implementation of the ALNET Act
- 3.4 The ALN Grant must be used to support partnerships between local authorities and other agencies involved in supporting learners with ALN such as schools, further education institutes, early years providers, specialist post-16 providers, local health boards and the third sector.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The application for ALN Grant was successful and an award of funding for up to £949,656.00 was made to RCT as Lead Authority which will be allocated to each Council in accordance with the ALN Transformation Plan.
- 4.2 As Lead Authority, RCT is required to accept the terms and conditions of the ALN Grant as set out in the offer letter from Welsh Government. In order to deliver the project and ensure compliance with the terms and conditions set out in the offer letter, RCT requires the Council, along with the 3 other local authorities listed at paragraph 3.2, to enter into an agreement in relation to this ALN Grant. This agreement shall set out the roles and responsibilities of the councils and how the funding shall be allocated.
- 4.3 The Inclusion Service leads from each local authority meet on a monthly basis with the ALN Transformation Lead at the Transformation Board. During this meeting, the ALN Implementation Plan and grant spend is monitored.

5 Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no impact on the Council's policy framework or procedure rules

6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 It is considered that there will be no negative impacts from this report.

7 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

- 7.1 A Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment has been completed. A summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is as follows:

Long-term

Supports the development of training needs and preparation for the implementation of the ALNET Act.

Prevention

The focus of the ALNET Act is meeting needs of learners with ALN at an early stage and preventing situations escalating resulting in needs not being met.

Integration

The integration of all stakeholders is promoted with the introduction of the ALNET Act.

Collaboration

The ALNET Act and the preparation of its introduction promotes places an emphasis on collaboration in order to achieve a person-centered approach.

Involvement

There is diversity concerning the involvement of stakeholders such as schools, parents/carers, Central South Consortium, local health, further education institutes, early years providers and specialist post-16 providers.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The total value of the grant is £949,656 however the amount available to local authorities is £824,656 as there is a retained element of £125,000 for the employment of the regional ALN Transformation Lead and associated costs and administration and finance support. This relates to the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. Bridgend County Borough Council could expect to receive £70,350.
- 8.2 The funding is awarded to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council as the designated lead authority and on behalf of the Central South Region which also includes Bridgend County Borough Council, Cardiff County Borough Council, Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- 9.1.1 Approves the Council entering into the agreement with RCT, the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council;
- 9.1.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Education and Family Support in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal and Regulatory Services to negotiate and agree the terms of the agreement and enter into the agreement.

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Civic Offices
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Background Documents:

ALN Transformation Plan

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES

LICENSING ACT 2003

STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY AND CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with the draft Statement of Licensing Policy, and proposed Cumulative Impact Assessment (Bridgend Town Centre) for noting. The approval of the Statement of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessment is a Council function.

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 There is no direct link to the Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority. Approval to publish the Statement of Licensing Policy and/or a Cumulative Impact Assessment is a Council function and required so that the authority may effectively discharge its functions under the Licensing Act 2003.

3. Background

- 3.1 At their meeting on 6 November 2019, the Licensing Act 2003 Committee received a report for noting relating to the publication of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy for the period 2019 to 2024. The policy review also included a request from the South Wales Police to retain the special Cumulative Impact Policy which applies to the grant and variation of licences in Bridgend Town Centre. The report outlined that a statutory and public consultation had been undertaken as part of the review of the Statement of Licensing Policy.
- 3.2 The consultation process took the form of an online public consultation between 17 June 2019 and 9 September 2019. In accordance with the statutory provisions, the consultation included the Responsible Authorities, elected Members, Town and Community Councils, Town Centre Manager, Public Services Board, and the British Institute for Innkeeping (BII). Notification of the consultation was also sent to two firms of solicitors who represent licensing clients, and who had previously asked to be kept informed of policy reviews.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 Draft Statement of Licensing Policy

The Council, as licensing authority regulates a wide range of licensed premises including pubs, registered members's clubs, off-licences and late night takeaways.

The Policy sets out how the Council, as licensing authority intends to exercise its functions and the general approach to making licensing decisions.

4.2 There were no representations made in respect of the overarching draft Statement of Licensing Policy for 2019-2024 which is attached at Appendix A.

4.3 Request to retain a Cumulative Impact Policy for Bridgend Town Centre

Statements of Licensing policy can be tailored to address specific concerns about the impact of licensed premises. The fundamental concerns for the licensing authority will be the four licensing objectives set out in the Licensing Act 2003, and the Council must carry out its functions with a view to promoting these objectives:

- The prevention of Crime and Disorder
- The prevention of Public Nuisance
- Public Safety
- The protection of Children from Harm

In terms of preventing crime and disorder, Cumulative Impact Assessments (CIA) are a measure introduced under the Police and Crime Act 2017 to enable licensing authorities to undertake an assessment of the cumulative effect of a large number of licensed premises in a particular area. The CIA looks at crime and disorder, public nuisance, littering and other negative impacts on particular areas in order to assess whether the licensing authority should adopt a special policy to limit the number of new premises or variations to existing premises.

4.4 A Cumulative Impact Policy has been in place in Bridgend Town Centre since 2005. The current policy is that there is a presumption of refusal for applications for the grant and major variation of premises licences and club premises certificates (where relevant representations are received) unless the applicant can demonstrate that the premises will not add to the negative cumulative impact on the town centre.

The CIA is now a separate document which should be reviewed by the licensing authority every three years. There must be an evidential basis for completing and publishing a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). The request from the South Wales Police to undertake a CIA for Bridgend Town Centre is attached at Appendix B. A draft CIA is attached at Appendix C and reflects the responses submitted during the public consultation.

4.5 The draft CIA seeks to retain the special policy in respect of future applications within Derwen Road, Market Street, Wyndham Street, and Nolton Street (from its junction with Ewenny Road, to its junction with Merthyr Mawr Road, but not the area between Merthyr Mawr Road and the junction with Court Road Bridgend).

4.6 The view of the South Wales Police is that:

“It remains that there is still a saturation of licensed premises in this relatively small geographical area, within this area there are two premises licensed until 4am and one premise licensed until 4.30am which provides a high level of footfall at this early hour.”

- 4.7 93% of respondents stated that the Council should retain the Cumulative Impact Policy for Bridgend Town Centre. The responses also highlighted a range of concerns ranging from Anti-Social Behaviour to Violent Behaviour and the concentration of drinkers.

The top issues of concern by response in the town centre:

- Anti social behaviour 92%
- Littering 92%
- On street drinking 54%
- Violent behaviour 54%
- Street fouling/lavatory provision 46%
- Concentration of drinkers 46%
- Criminal activities 23%
- Street cleansing 8%

The draft CIA includes information on the number of premises within the streets named above. No evidence was submitted that Club Premises are causing a negative impact on the Town Centre.

- 4.8 The CIA includes other tools available to agencies and premises to manage the night time economy which includes enforcement, the use of CCTV as well as the Pubwatch Scheme supported by licensees.
- 4.9 In conclusion, the draft CIA has identified that the numbers and density of premises in streets in Bridgend Town Centre is having a negative effect on the licensing objective of the Prevention of Crime and Disorder. Responses from consultees also highlighted littering, street fouling and street cleansing as issues with 69% of consultees stating that this has an impact on the day and night time economies. The South Wales Police state within their report that the Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) has had a direct bearing on the reduction of recorded crime within the town centre and reported anti-social behaviour.
- 4.10 Having regard to the consultation responses there is evidence to support the continuation of a Cumulative Impact Policy in the named streets in Bridgend Town Centre. The policy aims to reduce incidents of alcohol related problems, crime and disorder and public nuisance and to discourage an increase in the number of late opening premises primarily concerned with the sale of alcohol and late night refreshment. The underlying intention is to ensure that Bridgend Town Centre is a safe environment to people visiting and working in the area.
- 4.11 The policy, if approved by Council, would apply to applications received for the grant and major variation of premises licences, but not to Club Premises Certificates or Temporary Event Notices. If approved, the Policy will create a rebuttable presumption that where relevant representations have been received, the application will be refused or subject to certain limitations unless the applicant can successfully demonstrate that the premises will not add to the negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives. The key issue is that the Responsible Authorities must make representations to trigger the policy if there are concerns that the application does not address the CIP and will add to the negative cumulative impact being experienced in the town centre.

4.12 Each decision must still be made on a case-by-case basis with a view to promoting the licensing objectives.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 None

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment has not been undertaken as there are no implications in relation to age; disability; gender and transgender; race; religion or belief and non-belief; sexual orientation on this matter.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications. Publication of the Statement of Licensing policy is a statutory function and will be met from existing budget.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Cabinet is requested to note the above report which will be presented to Council on 18 December 2019.

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Head of Legal and Regulatory Services

10 December 2019

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Background documents: Section 182 Guidance issued by the Home Office available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explanatory-memorandum-revised-guidance-issued-under-s-182-of-licensing-act-2003>

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

LICENSING ACT 2003

Kelly Watson
Head of Legal and Regulatory Services
Bridgend County Borough Council
Licensing and Registration Section, Legal and Regulatory Services
Civic Offices, Angel Street
Bridgend, CF31 4WB

The approved policy document will be available in the Welsh Language, and in other formats on request, and at www.bridgend.gov.uk

Date of Approval:

Effective for five years from date of approval

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To be reviewed following consultation

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bridgend County Borough Council is the local licensing authority with responsibility for licensed premises under the Licensing Act 2003. This Statement of Licensing Policy sets out the policies the licensing authority will apply when making decisions on licensing applications and reviews. This policy has been prepared in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 having regard to the Statutory Guidance issued under section 182 of the Act. The Statutory Guidance document is available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/alcohol>
- 1.2 This Statement of Licensing Policy will be kept under review and published in line with Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003. Further consideration and review may be required in response to changes in demographics and operating models they may develop in response to increasing financial pressures on local government.
- 1.3 To avoid duplication and to ensure that information is up to date, applicants, residents and other persons, members of the public and responsible authorities will be directed to www.homeoffice.gov.uk for information on the licensing processes.

2. PROFILE OF BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH

- 2.1. The Council area contains a mix of urban and rural communities, and has a population of approximately 139,178. (Source data: ONS website Table KSI01UK 2011 Census).

The main towns are Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl.

The Corporate Plan for 2018-2022 identifies the following priorities:

- Supporting a successful economy
- Helping people to become more self-reliant
- Making smarter use of resources

Source: www.bridgend.gov.uk Council priorities and performance pages.

- 2.2 This policy links to many of the corporate themes and strategies of the Council but the ultimate duty of the Council, as the licensing authority is to promote the following licensing objectives.
- The prevention of crime and disorder;
 - Public safety;
 - The prevention of public nuisance; and,
 - The protection of children from harm.
- 2.3 To encourage more performances of live music, the Live Music Act 2012 amended the Licensing Act 2003 by deregulating aspects of the performance of live music so that in certain circumstances live music is not a licensable activity. However, event organisers and authorisation holders should visit www.homeoffice.gov.uk for further information before staging an event.

- 2.4 New businesses or businesses contemplating major refurbishments are also invited to discuss the proposals with the responsible authorities and other Council departments prior to submitting an application.
- 2.5 Whenever possible, the Council will enter partnership arrangements, working closely with the South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, local businesses, community representatives and local people in developing future Statements of Licensing of Policy and meeting the licensing objectives. The authority has adopted a Memorandum of Understanding and enforcement protocol with partner responsible authorities. The licensing authority also holds responsible authority meetings to discuss best practice, share information and to promote the licensing objectives through a risk based and targeted approach to compliance. The group also supports measures to assist and work with the local licensed trade and key partner agencies. Copies of protocols can be accessed at www.bridgend.gov.uk
- 2.6 Organisers of local community events must be aware that the licensing authority must have respect and regard for the concerns of local residents, and organisers must be aware of their legal responsibilities with regard to health and safety, noise pollution, temporary structures, pyrotechnics etc., and the sale of alcohol. Organisers are strongly advised to contact the Council's Events Safety Advisory Group for advice on planning and running an event.

3. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

- 3.1 Bridgend County Borough Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council") is the licensing authority as defined in the Licensing Act 2003 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act").
- 3.2 In discharging its licensing functions, the licensing authority will promote the licensing objectives which are as follows:
- The prevention of crime and disorder;
 - Public safety;
 - The prevention of public nuisance; and,
 - The protection of children from harm.

Each of the above objectives has equal importance.

- 3.3 The scope of the Statement of Licensing Policy covers the following licensable activities and any that are defined in the Licensing Act 2003.
- Retail sale of alcohol (including via the internet or mail order).
 - The wholesale of alcohol to members of the public.
 - The supply of alcohol to members of registered clubs.
 - The provision of regulated entertainment when it is performed in the presence of an audience and is provided for the purpose, or for purposes which include the purpose, of entertaining that audience, including performance of a play; film exhibitions; indoor sporting events; boxing or wrestling events; live music; any playing of recorded music; a performance of dance; entertainment of a similar

description; provision of facilities for dancing and provision of facilities for making music.

This Statement of Licensing Policy applies to all applications in respect of:

- Personal licences;
- Premises licences;
- Club premises certificates; and
- Temporary Event Notices.

- 3.4 The Statement of Licensing Policy sets out a general approach to the making of licensing decisions by the licensing authority but does not seek to undermine the right of any individual to apply under the terms of the Act for a variety of permissions and to have any such application considered on its individual merits.
- 3.5 The Statement of Licensing Policy does not seek to override the right of any person to make representations in relation to an application or seek a review of a licence or certificate where there is provision in the Act to do so.
- 3.6 Nothing in this policy should be taken as indicating that any requirement of licensing law or any other law may be overridden by the terms of this policy.

4.0 APPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An application or notice for licensing purposes will be accepted as being lawfully made only where it contains all of the required details specified by the Act and/or regulations. The licensing authority will, however, exercise appropriate discretion and not reject applications where they contain minor or factual errors which can easily be rectified.
- 4.2 To avoid unnecessary representations being made in respect of an application, applicants are advised to complete all relevant parts of an application form. Some parts of the form are mandatory and where matters have been considered, but are deemed not to be relevant to the application, it is suggested that, for the avoidance of doubt, the particular section is marked “not applicable”.
- 4.3 The grant of an application does not obviate the need for the applicant to satisfy the requirements of any other regulatory regime or statutory requirement.
- 4.4 All persons preparing operating schedules, including those for temporary events, should note that a number of publications are available to assist in the planning of an event. Applicants are advised to contact the bodies shown at Appendix A for further information.

5. DECISION MAKING - GENERAL POLICY

- 5.1 In determining a licensing application, the overriding principle adopted by the licensing authority will be that any individual has a right to apply under the terms of the 2003 Act for a variety of permissions and has a right to have any such application considered on its individual merits. In discharging its functions the

licensing authority will have regard to this policy and the guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act but may depart from it when there are compelling reasons to do so and following receipt of relevant representations.

- 5.2 If an application for a premises licence or club premises certificate has been made lawfully and there have been no representations from responsible authorities or other persons, the licensing authority will grant the application, subject only to conditions that are consistent with the operating schedule and the relevant mandatory conditions.
- 5.3 This policy does not override the right of any person to make representations on an application or to seek a review of a licence or certificate where provision has been made to do so in the 2003 Act. Nothing within this policy will override the right of an individual to a right of appeal to the Bridgend Magistrates' Court against the decisions of the licensing authority.
- 5.4 The licensing authority will not impose any conditions unless its discretion has been engaged following the making of relevant representations, and it has been satisfied at a hearing, of the necessity to impose conditions due to the representations raised. It will then only impose conditions as are necessary to promote the licensing objectives and will not impose standard conditions or those which duplicate other regulatory regimes as far as possible. Conditions will be tailored to individual premises but the authority may draw on pools of conditions where deemed appropriate to do so.
- 5.5 Wherever practical, officers of the licensing authority will endeavour to forward any representations to the applicant as soon as they are received and not at the end of the period given for making representations. The licensing authority would expect responsible authorities to commence discussions with applicants at an early stage of the consultation process in order to seek clarification on any points and prior to submitting representations to the licensing authority. The authority has agreed with responsible authorities that it will accept electronic submission of representations.
- 5.6. In the interests of transparency and fairness, the licensing authority will normally make personal details of persons available as part of the hearing process unless the person withholds permission or there are exceptional and compelling reasons why this is necessary. Each case will be determined on its merits in consultation with the party concerned.
- 5.7 Representations must be in written format and may be amplified at the subsequent hearing or may stand in their own right. Representations may be submitted electronically to the licensing authority via licensing@bridgend.gov.uk to include the name and postal address of the person or persons making representations. In the interests of transparency and fairness, the licensing authority will normally make personal details of residents and other parties available as part of the hearing process unless the person withholds permission or there are exceptional and compelling reasons why this is necessary. Each case will be determined on its merits in consultation with the person concerned.
- 5.8 The licensing authority maintains a register of applications received at www.bridgend.gov.uk. The licensing authority and its officers have not adopted any

measures for notifying persons of applications received beyond the statutory requirements.

- 5.9 Prior to the determination of an application, the licensing authority will determine whether any representation or objection is irrelevant, frivolous or vexatious. The licensing authority may delegate this function to a Sub-Committee or officer.
- 5.10 The decisions taken by the licensing authority will be focused on matters within the control of individual licensees and others granted relevant permissions. These matters will centre on the premises and places being used for licensable activities and the vicinity of those premises and places. In addressing this matter, the authority will primarily focus on the direct impact of the activities taking place at the licensed premises on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned. The authority does not seek to define the term “vicinity” and will examine each case on its merits.
- 5.11 When carrying out its functions as a licensing authority under the 2003 Act the licensing authority will have regard to its obligations under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 5.12 The licensing authority is under a duty to protect the rights of residents to privacy and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998. At the same time, it respects the rights of commercial organisations to operate their premises without unnecessary restraint.
- 5.13 The licensing authority is mindful that, once away from the licensed premises, a minority of consumers will behave badly and unlawfully. As outlined in the Home Office Guidance, this policy recognises that there are other mechanisms both within and outside the licensing regime that are available for addressing such issues. These are listed within the Home Office guidance. Applicants are advised that Designated Public Places Orders apply to certain parts of the County Borough and should contact the Licensing Section for further information.
- 5.14 Policy in respect of determining variations of licences:

The licensing authority may not vary a licence so as to vary substantially the premises to which it relates. The authority considers that any physical addition to the footprint of the premises, including outside areas, where additional licensable activities could take place would constitute a substantial variation of the premises. Each case, however, must be examined on its merits and applicants are therefore encouraged to discuss the proposals with the licensing authority and fire authority prior to commissioning any works. Applicants are invited to consider whether the application falls within the definition of Minor Variation set out in the Licensing Act 2003. When assessing applications in this category, the licensing authority will assess each case on its merits having regard to the latest guidance issued by the Home Office under Section 182 of the Act.

- 5.15 General policy in respect of licensing hours:

In line with Home Office Guidance, shops, stores and supermarkets will normally be free to provide sales of alcohol for consumption off the premises at any times when

the retail outlet is open for shopping unless there are good reasons. There are no local policies in place and each case will be determined on its merits.

5.16 Policy in respect of assessing applications to prevent public nuisance:

The following criteria will be considered when assessing applications within the context of preventing public nuisance:

- Environmental quality;
- Residential amenity;
- Character of function of a particular area; and
- Nature of the proposed activities to be provided at the premises.

The licensing authority will normally consider favouring applicants wishing premises in noise sensitive areas to remain open after the regular closing time on a specified number of occasions (such as on Bank Holidays and weekends preceding Bank Holidays or special occasions) providing that:

The number of extensions has been included in their operating schedule and steps to address public nuisance have been considered;

AND

The authority is given prior notice of each proposed later opening.

In the absence of relevant representations, however, the authority will grant the application.

Applicants may also consider using the Temporary Event Notice procedure for special occasions or Bank or special Holidays.

Where relevant representations are received, the licensing authority will consider stricter conditions with regard to noise control in noise sensitive locations such as residential areas.

5.17 Policy in respect of the protection of children from harm:

Decision making will not seek to limit the access of children to any premises unless it is appropriate for the prevention of physical, moral or psychological harm to them. It is not possible for this licensing policy to anticipate every issue of concern that could arise in respect of children in relation to individual premises and therefore each case will be dealt with on its merits. However, this authority believes that it is completely unacceptable to sell alcohol to children or by proxy to children. Conditions relating to the access of children where alcohol is sold, and which are appropriate to protect them from harm, will be carefully considered on receipt of relevant representations. More detailed provisions are shown in Section 7.

6. SPECIAL POLICY: CUMULATIVE IMPACT

- 6.1 Cumulative impact is the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a number of licensed premises concentrated in one area.
- 6.2 The licensing authority has published a cumulative impact assessment (CIA) to help limit the number of types of licence applications granted in areas where there is evidence to show that the number or density of licensed premises in the area is having a cumulative impact and leading to problems which are undermining the licensing objectives.
- 6.3 The licensing authority has had regard to the guidance published by the Home Office before determining whether to publish a CIA and has undertaken a statutory consultation.
- 6.4 Summary of Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA):
- 6.4.1 The CIA applies to Bridgend Town Centre in respect of Derwen Road, Market Street, Wyndham Street, and Nolton Street (from its junction with Ewenny Road, to its junction with Merthyr Mawr Road, but not the area between Merthyr Mawr Road and the junction with Court Road Bridgend).
- 6.4.2 The South Wales Police advised the Licensing Authority that:
- “It remains that there is still a saturation of licensed premises in this relatively small geographical area, within this area there are two premises licensed until 4am and one premise licensed until 4.30am which provides a high level of footfall at this early hour.”*
- 6.4.3 Although a small sample size, 93% of public respondents stated that the Council should retain the Cumulative Impact Policy for Bridgend town centre. The responses also highlighted a range of concerns from consultees of ranging from Anti-Social Behaviour to Violent Behaviour and the concentration of drinkers. No evidence was submitted that Club Premises are causing a negative impact on the Town Centre.
- 6.4.4 The CIA identified that the numbers and density of premises in streets in Bridgend Town Centre is having a negative effect on the licensing objective of the Prevention of Crime and Disorder. Responses from consultees also highlighted littering, street fouling and street cleansing as issues with 69% of consultees stating that this an impact on the day and night time economies. The South Wales Police stated within their report that the Cumulative Impact Policy has had a direct bearing on the reduction of recorded crime within the town centre and reported anti-social behaviour.
- 6.4.5 Having regard to the consultation responses there is evidence to support the continuation of a Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) in the named streets in Bridgend Town Centre. The policy aims to reduce incidents of alcohol related problems, crime and disorder and public nuisance and to discourage an increase in the number of late opening premises primarily concerned with the sale of alcohol and late night refreshment. The underlying intention is to ensure that Bridgend Town Centre is a safe environment to people visiting and working in the area.

- 6.4.6 The policy applies to applications received for the grant and major variation of premises licences, but not to Club Premises Certificates or Temporary Event Notices. When the Policy applies it creates a rebuttable presumption that where relevant representations have been received the application will be refused or subject to certain limitations unless the applicant can successfully demonstrate that the premises will not add to the negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.
- 6.4.7 Where relevant representations are received for a premises adjoining or in close proximity to the Cumulative Impact Policy area, and where those representations raise a material impact on the area then the policy will be applied if the Licensing Authority reasonably judges that to grant the particular application would add to the cumulative impact being suffered in the defined area.
- 6.4.8 The publication of a CIP does not relieve responsible authorities or other persons of the need to make relevant representations where they consider it appropriate to do so for the promotion of the licensing objectives. In addition the publication of a CIP does not change the fundamental way that licensing decisions are made. It is therefore open to the licensing authority to grant an application where it considers it appropriate and where the applicant can demonstrate in the operating schedule that they would not be adding to the negative cumulative impact.
- 6.4.9 The licensing authority will expect that applicants in areas covered by a CIP give consideration to cumulative impact issues within the operating schedule submitted.
- 6.4.10 The licensing authority will proper regard to the different types of premises and the differing impact they will have on the local community. However, if no relevant representation is received, the licensing authority will grant the application in terms which are consistent with the operating schedule.

7. PROVISIONS IN RESPECT OF THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HARM

- 7.1 The body designated to advise on the protection of children from harm is The Children's Directorate, Bridgend County Borough Council.
- 7.2 Where relevant representations are received, the licensing authority will consider imposing conditions restricting the access to children to premises in circumstances where:
- Entertainment or services of an adult nature are provided;
 - A member or members of the current management have been convicted for serving alcohol to minors or with a reputation for allowing under-age drinking (other than in the context of the exemption in the 2003 Act relating to 16 and 17 year olds consuming beer, wine and cider when accompanied by an adult during a table meal);
 - It is known that unaccompanied children have been allowed access;
 - There is a known association with drug taking or dealing;
 - Premises where there is a strong element of gambling;
 - The supply of alcohol is the exclusive or primary purpose of the premises; and

- Premises where children’s entertainment is provided and there is insufficient evidence that proper supervision of the access, egress, safety and welfare of children is provided.
- 7.3 The licensing authority is also mindful that activities, such as adult entertainment, may take place at certain times on premises but not at other times. For example, premises may operate as a café bar during the day providing meals for families but also provide entertainment with a sexual content after 8.00pm. It is not possible to give an exhaustive list of what amounts to entertainment or services of an adult or sexual nature. Applicants and the responsible authorities are expected to consider this point carefully. The licensing authority considers this issue to broadly include topless bar staff, striptease, lap-, table- or pole-dancing, performances involving feigned violence or horrific incidents, feigned or actual sexual acts or fetishism, or entertainment involving strong and offensive language.
- 7.4 The licensing authority expects applicants to be clear in their operating schedules about the activities and times at which the events would take place to help determine when it is not appropriate for children to enter the premises. Consideration should also be given to the proximity of premises to schools and youth clubs so that applicants take appropriate steps to ensure that advertising relating to their premises, or relating to events at their premises, is not displayed at a time when children are likely to be near the premises.
- 7.5 The licensing authority will expect applicants, when preparing an operating schedule or club operating schedule, to set out the steps to be taken to protect children from harm when on the premises.
- 7.6 Conditions whether offered, or imposed following the receipt of relevant representations, should reflect the licensable activities taking place on the premises. In addition to the mandatory condition regarding age verification, the licensing authority may consider other conditions relating to the protection of children from harm, for example:
- Restrictions on the hours when children may be present;
 - Restrictions or exclusions on the presence of children under certain ages when particular specified activities are taking place;
 - Restrictions on the parts of the premises to which children may have access;
 - Age restrictions (below 18);
 - Restrictions or exclusions when certain activities are taking place;
 - Requirements for an accompanying adult (including for example, a combination of;
 - Requirements which provide that children under a particular age must be accompanied by an adult); and
 - Full exclusion of people under 18 from the premises when any licensable activities are taking place.
- 7.7 On receipt of relevant representations, the licensing authority will consider whether a condition should be attached to a premises licence or club premises certificate which requires the presence of a sufficient number of adult staff on the premises to ensure the wellbeing of the children during any emergency in a theatre offering entertainment aimed primarily for children.

8. INTEGRATING STRATEGIES

- 8.1 The Council will, as appropriate, take account of any relevant information in relation to community safety, substance misuse, disability, equality, transport, tourism, economic development and cultural issues. The Council will monitor these areas and where it is shown that licensing activities are impacting adversely on these areas it will be reported to the committee having responsibility for these areas.
- 8.2 The authority's planning, building control and licensing regimes will be properly separated to avoid duplication and inefficiency. Licensing Committees will not be bound by decisions made by a Planning Committee and vice versa. The granting by a Licensing Committee of any variation of a licence which involves a material alteration of a building does not relieve an applicant of the need to apply for planning permission or building control where appropriate. The licensing authority also recognises that terminal hours for planning consents may differ from licensing hours and therefore the operator must observe the earlier closing time.
- 8.3 Applicants are reminded that the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, places a legal obligation on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination; and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups. Applicants are referred to the Council's Race Equality Scheme published at www.bridgend.gov.uk.
- 8.4 Licence conditions will not be imposed where they would duplicate other regulatory regimes or legislation; this includes health and safety at work, fire safety, disability or equalities legislation.
- 8.5 The licensing authority will have regard to cultural strategies which relate to the wider cultural and economic benefits to the community of the promotion of live music, dance and theatre. In coming to a decision, the potential for disturbance in neighbourhoods will be carefully balanced with these wider benefits and focus on the licensing objectives and the individual merits of the application.
- 8.6 Copies of Council policies are available on www.bridgend.gov.uk or from individual Council Departments. The licensing authority webpages can be found under Licensing in the A-Z of Services.

9. STEPS TO PROMOTE THE LICENSING OBJECTIVES

- 9.1 These sections will be of relevance to all sectors within the licensed trade, including Club Premises, the retail sector and events to which Temporary Event Notices apply. However, the licensing authority recognises that applicants, existing licensees and premises users should consider only those matters which are relevant to the individual style and characteristics of their premises and/or events. The licensing authority encourages liaison between applicants and responsible authorities when drafting operating schedules and risk assessments.
- 9.2 When drawing up an operating schedule applicants must comply with the regulations in respect of completing applications. They may also wish to consider the following points but are under no statutory obligation to do so. Applicants and responsible

authorities are reminded that they should not offer conditions which duplicate offences set out in the Licensing Act 2003 or in existing legislation.

9.3 The responsibility for ensuring compliance with non-licensing legislation rests with the applicant. The authority considers the most up to date information to be available on the Home Office website.

9.4 The following licensing objectives have equal importance. Applicants should note that the licensing authority may also develop pools of conditions based on the Home Office Guidance from which necessary and proportionate conditions may be drawn should relevant representations be received.

9.5 The Prevention of Crime and Disorder

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Council and licensing authority to consider crime and disorder reduction in the exercise of their duties. When addressing crime and disorder, applicants should initially identify any particular issues (having regard to their particular type of premises and/or activities) which are likely to adversely affect the promotion of the crime and disorder objective. Such steps as are required to deal with these issues should be included within the operating schedule. Conditions should be targeted on deterrence and preventing crime and disorder.

- a) The installation and maintenance of CCTV inside and outside the premises, to include the precise location of cameras on plans to ensure that areas are properly covered.
- b) A written drugs policy covering searches of patrons, seizures, and storage of seized drugs at the premises.
- c) The use of SIA registered Door Staff and an agreed per capita rate of door persons to customers.
- d) A training policy relating to the prevention of crime and disorder at the premises.
- e) Information on and/or the provision of transport for customers.
- f) The adoption of Nitenet or similar direct radio link.
- g) Membership of schemes with other licensees to prevent crime and disorder.
- h) Maintenance of incident books to record crime and disorder.
- i) Adherence to the best practice issued in relation to nightclubs, dance venues, outdoor dance events and the like.
- j) The use of plastic containers and toughened glass at all times or at specific times, or for specific events or periods during the year.
- k) A policy with regard to the management of patrons drinking outside the premises in order to minimise the potential for crime, disorder anti-social behaviour and

nuisance to the public, which may include measures to prevent glasses and bottles being taken outside.

- l) A written policy to advise staff on protection of young persons and vulnerable adults.
- m) The use of clickers or other measures to prevent overcrowding.
- n) A last admission or re-admission policy at the premises including measures to manage customers who smoke where there is no suitable area within the premises curtilage for such customers.
- o) Measures to prevent crime and disorder arising if entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is provided and/or involves strong or offensive language.
- p) Measures to prevent under age sales, for example till prompts and refusals registers.
- q) Crime prevention/Get Home safely posters.
- r) A prohibition on the admittance of customers carrying open or sealed bottles into the premises.
- s) A prohibition on customers taking alcoholic and other drinks from the premises in glasses and open bottles to prevent the use of these containers as offensive weapons in surrounding streets after individuals have left the premises.
- t) Queue management systems inside and outside the premises.
- u) Internal patrols by management.

9.6 Public Safety

Where an applicant identifies an issue with regard to public safety (including fire safety) which is not covered by existing legislation, he or she should identify in their operating schedule the steps which will be taken to ensure public safety.

- a) The number of people attending the premises.
- b) Customer profile (age, disability etc).
- c) Fire safety and fire prevention measures not covered by other regulatory regimes.
- d) Measures of management control within the premises.
- e) Design, construction and operation of premises, including toilets, lighting, strobe lighting etc.
- f) Staff training in disability awareness and evacuation procedures.
- g) The use of special effects such as pyrotechnics, lasers, smoke machines, foam machines.

- h) Regular testing of electrical systems and the provision of RCD protection.
- i) Awareness of the effect of alcohol and other substance misuse.

9.7 Public Nuisance

Licensed premises have the potential to have an adverse impact on the local community. The licensing authority recognises that a balance should be struck between local businesses, cultural diversity and the need to protect the local residents from nuisance.

The licensing authority understands public nuisance to include the following: noise and disturbance, odour, litter and anti-social behaviour.

The licensing authority recognises that where there are gardens or tables and chairs placed outside the premises, users of these can cause nuisance. If residential premises overlook tables and chairs on the frontage of the licensed premise or in beer gardens and relevant representations are received, the licensing authority will be likely to adopt the standards contained in the Institute of Acoustics “Good Practice Guide on the Control of Noise from Pubs and Clubs” and not permit the use of these areas before the start of normal trading hours, and after dusk or 9.00 pm whichever is the earlier.

When addressing public nuisance, the applicant should identify any particular issues (having regard to the vicinity of the premises, the type of premises and the type of entertainment or activity) which are likely to adversely affect the promotion of the objective to prevent public nuisance. The licensing authority will expect the operating schedule to indicate that, in respect of those premises which are located in primarily residential areas; steps will be taken to reduce the impact of noise from patrons congregating outside. Other measures could include:

- a) Measures to control amplified and non amplified sound, music and speech within and outside the premises.
- b) Sound proofing measures to contain sound and vibration.
- c) Reducing sound levels and installing a sound limiting device to prevent amplified music exceeding the level agreed by the Council.
- d) Keeping doors and windows closed and providing adequate alternative mechanical ventilation (and ensuring the mechanical ventilation itself does not cause a noise problem).
- e) The management of gardens, play and other outside areas to ensure minimal disruption to the neighbourhood – this may include restricting areas where alcoholic drinks may be consumed or the times they may be consumed.
- f) Providing quieter areas for patrons.
- g) Where there are beer gardens or similar outdoor areas, ensuring the amplified music is not relayed to such areas and that these areas are properly screened.

- h) The operation of plant and machinery so as to minimise disruption to the neighbourhood.
- i) The impact of car parks at the premises and access roads on the local community.
- j) The impact of deliveries on the local community.
- k) The location of premises in relation to residential properties, hospitals, places of worship etc.
- l) The adoption of a “last admission” policy.
- m) Erecting prominent notices at the exists to premises asking customers to leave quietly and not to slam car doors and at appropriate times making announcements to the same effect.
- n) Instructing door staff or other staff to ask customers leaving the premises to leave the area quietly.
- o) Regular assessments by staff or managers to assess whether there are problems and how best to deal with them.
- p) Reducing the volume of music towards the end of the evening and, where appropriate, playing quieter more soothing music as the evening winds down.
- q) Considering excluding people from the premises who often leave in a noisy fashion.
- r) Increasing outside lighting levels (but in such a manner that does not cause a nuisance to the local residents).
- s) Vacating smoking shelters, patios or any other such areas where customers smoke, by no later than 2300 hours.
- t) encouraging patrons to return indoors as quickly as possible e.g. preventing drinks from being taken outdoors, restricting the number of tables and chairs, refraining from erecting smoking shelters and from using patio heaters.
- u) Provision of door staff or other staff to supervise the smoking areas and to ensure that doors are kept closed when amplified music is being played.

9.8 The Protection of Children from Harm

Such steps as are required to address this licensing objective may include:

- a) Types of entertainment provided, especially if aimed primarily at children.
- b) Applicants should specify whether entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is involved or involves strong or offensive language to enable the Council to consider

the risk to the promotion of the licensing objectives, particularly the protection of children from harm.

- c) Staff training for awareness of offences.
- d) Staff training for the protection of children, young persons and vulnerable adults at the premises including proof of age measures and awareness of proxy sales of alcohol.
- e) Active support and enforcement of a Proof of age Scheme (e.g. Validate Scheme).
- f) Age limitations.
- g) Exclusion of children from certain areas.
- h) Requirements for adult supervision.
- i) Risk assessment of hazards.
- j) The location of cigarette machines in areas that can be easily seen by staff.

The Council's Trading Standards Department can give advice on Proof of Age Schemes.

10. COMPLIANCE

- 10.1 Where necessary, enforcement action will be taken in accordance with the principles of the Enforcement Concordat issued by the Government and the Hampton Principles.
- 10.2 The Council is developing a strategy with responsible authorities which provides for the targeting of agreed problem and/or high risk premises which require greater attention, while employing a "light touch" approach to low risk premises or those which are well run. The licensing authority and responsible authorities will give licence holders and businesses early warning of problems, clear explanations of what needs to be done, action plans, and timescales in order to resolve problems. Formal action will be taken if this is deemed essential to promote the licensing objectives.
- 10.3. The licensing authority will carry out inspections to determine if licence conditions are being complied with. These visits may be carried out as joint inspections with other statutory bodies or responsible authorities.
- 10.4 Although the review process is a key protection for the local community, local residents or businesses who have concerns about premises should contact the relevant agency in the first instance. The Council can also act as the point of contact for concerns via licensing@bridgend.gov.uk

11. ADMINISTRATION, EXERCISE AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

- 11.1 In determining applications, the licensing authority will adopt the principle of delegation as laid down in the Act and Guidance in the interests of speed, efficiency

and cost effectiveness. The Council's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation to Officers and Member Code of Conduct can be accessed at www.bridgend.gov.uk

12. REVIEWS OF LICENCE

- 12.1 Reviews of premises licences represent a key protection for the local community in respect of problems which may arise during the term of a premises licence. Any person and responsible authority has the right to make representations in respect of an application or seek a review of a licence or certificate within the provisions of the Act. Each case will be dealt with on its merits.
- 12.2 The licensing authority considers that it is good practice for responsible authorities to give licence holder's early warning of problems and of the need to improve.
- 12.3 Individuals or groups may request a representative to make representations on their behalf, for example a legal representative, friend, Member of Parliament, Member of the National Assembly for Wales. Licensing authority Members are bound by the Member Code of Conduct when participating in the licensing process.
- 12.4 Where the licensing authority makes a decision on an application it will provide reasons in writing and in other formats on request.
- 12.5 In the interests of transparency and fairness, the licensing authority will normally make personal details of residents and other parties available as part of the hearing process unless the person withholds permission or there are exceptional and compelling reasons why this is necessary. Each case will be determined on its merits in consultation with the person concerned.
- 12.6 Any person may submit representations electronically to the licensing authority via licensing@bridgend.gov.uk to include the name of the person or persons making the representations and a postal address. Accessibility enquiries should be addressed to the Licensing Section in the first instance.

13. TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICES

- 13.1 There are no special policies applicable to Temporary Event Notices. Full details of the process can be found at www.homeoffice.gov.uk. Event organisers should take particular notice of the references and meaning of the term "working days" when calculating when to serve a Temporary Event Notice.
- 13.2 Whilst not a mandatory requirement, early engagement and discussion with the South Wales Police and Council Public Protection team around proposed TENS may reduce the likelihood of an objection notice on the grounds of crime and disorder or public nuisance. The Council would strongly urge all persons to give the Council at least 28 days notice of an event (and at least two to three months notice or longer for larger outdoor events) in order that the organiser can access Events Safety Information, contact points and advice through the Council.
- 13.3 The South Wales Police request that in order that the crime prevention objectives are not undermined, Temporary Event Notices are served at South Wales Police, F Division, Bridgend, Bridgend Police Station, Brackla Street, Bridgend, CF31 1BZ and that the envelope is marked for the Chief Officer of Police. Although not a

mandatory requirement, the envelope should also be marked "Temporary Event Notice".

14. SPECIAL NOTES

- 14.1 Where extracts from the Licensing Act 2003 are reproduced, they are provided as an information guide only. They are not a full and authoritative statement of the new licensing law. In particular, it must be noted that, although the Council has made every effort to ensure that the information in these pages is correct, changes to the law and the implementation of specific regulations for licensing mean that the supporting information in these pages may be subject to change.

15. CONSULTATION

- 15.1 The draft policy statement, including the information provided by the South Wales Police at Appendix Two, was published via the Bridgend County Borough Council website between*****. Consultation also took place with the Responsible Authorities, partner agencies, Members of Bridgend County Borough Council and Town and Community Councils.
- 15.2 This Statement of Licensing Policy was prepared by the Licensing Section, Bridgend County Borough Council and approved by the Bridgend County Borough Council at their meeting held on *****

16. APPEALS

- 16.1 In the case of a premises licence, an appeal should be made to the magistrates' court for the petty session's area in which the premises are situated. (Bridgend Magistrates' Court).
- 16.2 In the case of a personal licence, an appeal should be made to the magistrates' court for the petty session's area where the personal licence was granted.
- 16.3 Entitlements to appeal for parties aggrieved by decisions of the licensing authority are set out in Schedule 5 to the Licensing Act 2003.

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

The Chief Officer of Police	The Chief Constable South Wales Police Bridgend Police Station, 'F' Bridgend Division Brackla Street Bridgend CF31 1BZ
The Fire Authority	The Chief Fire Officer South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Department Forest View Business Park Llantrisant CF72 8LX
The enforcing authority for Section 18 of the Health and Safety of Work etc Act 1974	Health and Safety Executive Government Buildings Ty Glas Llanishen Cardiff CF14 5SH
The Local Planning Authority	Bridgend County Borough Council Development Control Communities Directorate Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB
The local authority by which statutory functions are exercisable in relation to minimising or preventing the risk of pollution of the environment or of harm to human health	Bridgend County Borough Council Public Protection Department Legal and Regulatory Services Address as above (01656) 643260 publicprotection@bridgend.gov.uk
The body which represents those who are responsible for, or interested in, matters relating to the protection of children from harm	Bridgend County Borough Council Children's Directorate Safeguarding and Family Support Address as above
The Local Health Board Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	Judith Tomlinson (Public Health Consultant) ABM Public Health Team Public Health Wales Floor 1, Oldway Centre 36 Orchard Street Swansea SA1 5AW
Home Office's Alcohol Licensing Team	Alcohol Licensing Team Lunar House 40 Wellesley Road Croydon CF9 2BY

These details may change from time to time and applicants are advised to contact the Licensing Section for up to date contact details.

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PC 2322 MORRIS
Licensing Department
Central West Division
Police Station
Brackla Street
Bridgend
CF31 1BZ

Thursday 13th June, 2019

Legal Services Department
Corporate Services
Bridgend County Borough Council
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Review of the Cumulative impact policy

What is Cumulative Impact?

“Cumulative impact” is not mentioned specifically in the 2003 Act. It means the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a significant number of licensed premises concentrated in one area.

Problems occurring as a result of cumulative impact are described as large numbers being concentrated in an area, for example when leaving premises at peak times or when queuing at fast food outlets or for public transport.

Large concentrations of people are of concern in Cumulative Impact Area (CIA) because they may also increase the incidence of disorder or criminal activities in the street. Local services such as public transport services, public toilet provision and street cleaning may not be able to meet the demand posed by such concentrations of people leading to issues such as street fouling, littering, traffic and public nuisance caused by concentrations of people who cannot be effectively dispersed quickly.

These are the reasons for implementing Cumulative Impact Policies (CIP's) and these, therefore are the types of impacts that should be examined when considering new applications within CIP areas.

The s182 Guidance also makes it clear that there should be an evidential basis for the decision to include a 'special policy' within the statement of licensing policy.

HEDDLU DE CYMRU

Pencadlys Heddlu De Cymru, Heol y Bont-faen, Penybont CF31 3SU
Mewn argyfwng ffoniwch 999, fel arall, ffoniwch 101
Gwefan: www.heddlu-de-cymru.police.uk

Mae Heddlu De Cymru yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.
Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

SOUTH WALES POLICE

South Wales Police Headquarters, Cowbridge Road, Bridgend CF31 3SU
In an emergency always dial 999, for non-emergencies dial 101
Website: www.south-wales.police.uk

South Wales Police welcomes receiving correspondence in Welsh and English.
Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Key findings

The report has been commissioned to review crime and incident levels within the following streets which form part of the Cumulative Impact Area within Bridgend Town Centre and identify whether there has been an increase since the opening of new premises on 31st July 2015 in Market Street.

- Market Street
- Derwen Road
- Wyndham Street
- Nolton Street

The total number of occurrences reported has been in decline in the analysis period, however we have to factor in that there have been three licensed premises which have now closed which would impact the analysis.

Although there have been declines in many areas of the findings South Wales Police still support the (CIA) as the removing of such a policy would have a negative impact upon the Licensing objectives.

The prevention of crime and disorder

Public safety

The prevention of public nuisance

The protection of children from harm

It remains that there is still a saturation of licensed premises in this relatively small geographical area, within this area there are two premises licensed until 4am and one premise licensed until 4.30am which provides a high level of footfall at this early hour.

Conclusion

South Wales Police supports the continual use of a Cumulative Impact Area (CIA) policy in Bridgend town centre.

This has in effect created a rebuttable presumption that applications for new premises licences or variations are likely to impact on the four licensing objectives.

The implications of the CIA policy are essential when South Wales Police has made representations against new or varied licence applications.

Taking this into account, this has had a direct bearing on the reduction of recorded crime within the town centre and reported anti-social behaviour.

This report is submitted with the authorisation by the officer submitting, to include within the document for a public consultation on the review of the Council Licensing Policy.

Yours sincerely

PC 2322 Darren MORRIS

Licensing
Bridgend

Bridgend Town Centre Cumulative Impact Assessment

Background

The Council area contains a mix of urban and rural communities, and has a population of approximately 139,178. (Source data: ONS website Table KSI01UK 2011 Census).

The main towns are Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl. The population of Bridgend is approximately 15,000 living within a two mile distance of the town (source: Bridgend Town Council).

Some town centre streets are pedestrianised. Since the inception of the Licensing Act 2003 in November 2005, Derwen Road, Market Street, Wyndham Street and Nolton Street have been the subject of a special policy to mitigate the cumulative impact of licensed premises.

Reasons for the Policy

The cumulative impact of large numbers of licensed premises undermines the licensing objectives of:

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Prevention of Public Nuisance
- Public Safety

Evidence

The main factor in formulating the assessment is the evidence submitted by the South Wales Police. The SWP report identifies that

“It remains that there is still a saturation of licensed premises in this relatively small geographical area, within this area there are two premises licensed until 4am and one premise licensed until 4.30am which provides a high level of footfall at this early hour.”

For information only, the following is a list of premises in the four streets mentioned, showing the latest time for the licensable activity shown (late night refreshment or sale of alcohol). It is a summary only and the premises are not all open or able to trade as indicated in the SWP report. The two premises mentioned in the report are highlighted:

Latest time for licensable activity (source Council Licensing database) in named town centre streets

Late Night Refreshment	Nolton Street	0300
Sale of alcohol (tables and chairs) small venue	Nolton Street	0200

Late Night Refreshment	Wyndham Street	0100
Late Night Refreshment and alcohol (restaurant)	Market Street	0100
Nightclub (closed)	Wyndham Street	0200
Nightclub	Market Street	0400
Late Night Refreshment	Wyndham Street	0400
Night Club	Market Street	0300
Takeaway	Wyndham Street	0230
Bar	Nolton Street	0130
Pub	Nolton Street	0200
Late Night Refreshment (restaurant)	Wyndham Street	0200
Music Venue	Queen Street	0400
Late Night Refreshment (Restaurant)	Nolton Street	0100
Late Night Refreshment	Derwen Road	0300
Late Night Refreshment and alcohol (restaurant)	Nolton Street	0200
Late Night Refreshment	Nolton Street	0100
Bar	Dunraven Place	0100
Pub	Nolton Street	0100
Nightclub	Derwen Road	0430
Pub	Dunraven Place	0100
Pub	Market Street	0100
Nightclub	Market Street	0400
Pub	Nolton Street	0100
Pub	Queen Street	0200

The South Wales Police state within the report that the Cumulative Impact Policy has had a direct bearing on the reduction of recorded crime within the town centre and reported anti-social behaviour.

Other evidence considered

The statutory consultation also included a questionnaire to help identify additional issues which could impact on the retention of the Cumulative Impact Policy.

Regard should be given to the very small sample replies – fifteen but the summary of responses is as follows:

Who replied

Members of the public – 50%

Other interested parties – 43% (Includes elected representatives at County, town and community level)

Licence holders – 7%

Issues identified

93 % of respondents stated that the Council should retain the Cumulative Impact Policy for Bridgend town centre.

The top issues of concern by response in the town centre:

- Anti social behaviour (12)/92%
- Littering (12)/92%
- On street drinking (7)/54%
- Violent behaviour (7)/54%
- Street fouling/lavatory provision (6)/46%
- Concentration of drinkers (6)/46%
- Criminal activities (3)/23%
- Street cleansing (1)/8%

69% said that this affected them in the day and night time economies whilst 31% said that it applied to the night time economy only.

Takeaways were said to be the most problematic premises followed by pubs and clubs, whilst off licences and restaurants were said to be causing the least problem.

Narrative responses on the negative impact of licensed premises included the following:

- The licensed hours are too late into the evening which adds risks to public due to lower police numbers and more time to drink
- No physical evidence however it was heard recently that it is safer to go to Cardiff on a night out than Bridgend. About 2 years ago a friend was attacked when trying to get into a taxi.
- Congregations of drunks and drug takers near the ***** especially during the daytime.
- Take aways in town have always a problem with revellers late at night buying food and disposing of empty wrappers and containers after eating contents. Another problem has been people leaving licensed premises carrying either full or half full beer glasses. You often see a number of empty glasses left on the pavement, walls etc. these are a hazard and could be fatal for anyone who may come into contact them.
- littering outside of the pubs and clubs. On street drinking during the day with cans bought from the off licence.

Other measures considered

- Pubwatch Scheme
- Public Space Protection Order under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which provides the Police with the power to require a person in the designated area not to drink alcohol or to surrender any alcohol or alcohol containers (other than sealed containers) in their possession.
- Provision of CCTV in public areas
- Enforcement powers available to the Police, Licensing Officers and Trading Standards Officers under the Licensing Act 2003

Conclusion

The Licensing Authority is satisfied that in the Cumulative Impact Area there is evidence to support the continuation of the Cumulative Impact Policy and, after taking into consideration other existing initiatives, that it is proportionate and the most effective measure to address the problems identified.

Application of the policy

Having regard to the Guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, Bridgend Council has consulted upon the issue of cumulative impact in Bridgend Town Centre. It has taken into account the views of the South Wales Police and other respondents and has adopted a Cumulative Impact Policy in respect of Derwen Road, Market Street, Wyndham Street, and Nolton Street (from its junction with Ewenny Road, to its junction with Merthyr Mawr Road, but not the area between Merthyr Mawr Road and the junction with Court Road Bridgend).

Regard will also be given that where relevant representations are received for a premises adjoining or in close proximity to the Cumulative Impact Policy area, and where those representations raise a material impact on the area then the policy will be applied if the Licensing Authority reasonably judges that to grant the particular application would add to the cumulative impact being suffered in the defined area.

This document should be read in conjunction with Bridgend County Borough Council's Statement of Licensing Policy 2019-2024.

The Cumulative Impact Policy applies to applications for the grant and full variation of Premises Licences. It does not apply to Club Premises Certificates or Temporary Event Notices.

When the policy applies it creates a rebuttable presumption that where relevant representations have been received the application will be refused or subject to certain limitations unless the applicant can successfully demonstrate that the premises will not add to the negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.

Applicants are expected to address the effects of the Cumulative Impact Policy within the Operating Schedule. They are expected to clearly demonstrate how the operation of the premises would not add to the negative cumulative impact being experienced in the area.

The Cumulative Impact Policy is not absolute. The circumstances of each application will be considered on its merits and the Licensing Authority will grant licences that are unlikely to add to the negative cumulative impact on the licensing objectives.

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for items to be included on the Forward Work Programme for the period 1 January to 30 April 2020.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives

- 2.1 The active engagement with the public regarding key decisions of the Authority contributes to all of the following Corporate Priorities.

1. **Supporting a successful economy** – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to 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 support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Forward Work Programme will be prepared by the Monitoring Officer to cover a period of four months except when ordinary elections of councillors occur, in which case the Forward Work Programme will cover the period up to the date of the elections.
- 3.2 The Forward Work Programme will contain matters which the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and full Council are likely to consider. It will contain information on:
- (a) the timetable for considering the Budget and any plans, policies or strategies forming part of the Policy Framework and requiring Council approval, and which body is to consider them;

- (b) the timetable for considering any plans, policies or strategies which are the responsibility of the Cabinet;
- (c) any individual matters on which the Cabinet intends to consult in advance of taking a decision, and the timetable for consultation and decision;
- (d) the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, to the extent that it is known.

3.3 The Forward Work Programme will be published at least 14 days before the start of the period covered. The Authority is required to publish once a year a notice in at least one newspaper circulating in the area, stating that a Forward Work Programme will be published and giving the publication dates for that year.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 The proposed Forward Work Programmes are described below:

- Cabinet 1 January to 30 April 2020 - **Appendix 1**
- Council 1 January to 30 April 2020 - **Appendix 2**
- Overview and Scrutiny - **Appendix 3**

4.2 Following consideration by Cabinet, the Forward Work Programme will be published on the Council's website.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 There are no implications relating to the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no negative equality implications arising from this report.

7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There will be a translation cost of approximately £60 for each quarterly update of the Forward Work programme when it is published on the Bridgend County Borough Council Website. These will be met from within existing budgets.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- Approve the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the period 1 January to 30 April 2020 at Appendix 1;

- Note the Council and Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes as shown at Appendix 2 and 3 respectively.

Kelly Watson
Head of Legal and Regulatory Services
6 December 2019

Contact Officer: Andrew Rees
Democratic Services Manager
Telephone: (01656) 643147
Email: Andrew.rees@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal address: Democratic Services
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Background documents: None

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CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - 1 JANUARY 2020 TO 30 APRIL 2020

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Item	Title and Description of Report	Cabinet	Contact Officer
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1.	Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24	14 Jan 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
2.	Revenue Budget Monitoring 2019-20 Quarter 3 Revenue Forecast	21 Jan 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
3.	Treasury Management - Quarter 3 2019-20	21 Jan 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
4.	Capital Programme Update - Quarter 3 2019-20	21 Jan 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
5.	Shopmobility	21 Jan 2020	Mark Shephard, Chief Executive Tel: 01656 643380 mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk
6.	Climate Change Emergency Declaration	21 Jan 2020	Mark Shephard, Chief Executive Tel: 01656 643380 mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk
7.	Transport Fund	21 Jan 2020	Mark Shephard, Chief Executive Tel: 01656 643380 mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk

Item	Title and Description of Report	Cabinet	Contact Officer
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
8.	School Modernisation Programme: Band B	21 Jan 2020	Lindsay Harvey, Corporate Director Education and Family Support Tel: 01656 642612 lindsay.harvey@bridgend.gov.uk
9.	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2022-23 and Draft Budget Consultation Process	11 Feb 2020	Kelly Watson, Head of Legal & Regulatory Services Kelly.watson@bridgend.gov.uk
10.	Learner Travel Policy	11 Feb 2020	Lindsay Harvey, Corporate Director Education and Family Support Tel: 01656 642612 lindsay.harvey@bridgend.gov.uk
11.	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24	25 Feb 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
12.	Corporate Plan 2019-2023 Reviewed for 2020-21	25 Feb 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
13.	Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy 2020-21 Onwards	25 Feb 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
14.	Insurance Renewal	10 Mar 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk

Item	Title and Description of Report	Cabinet	Contact Officer
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
15.	Regional Care Home Contract and Pooled Funding arrangement	10 Mar 2020	Susan Cooper, Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing Tel: 01656 642251 susan.cooper@bridgend.gov.uk

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COUNCIL FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - 1 JANUARY 2020 TO 30 APRIL 2020

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Item	Title of Report	Council	Contact Officer
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1.	Capital Programme Update - Quarter 3 2019-20	22 Jan 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
2.	Support Teams Support Fund	22 Jan 2020	Mark Shephard, Chief Executive Tel: 01656 643380 mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk
3.	Review of Polling Stations and Polling Districts	22 Jan 2020	Mark Shephard, Chief Executive Tel: 01656 643380 mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk
4.	Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy	22 Jan 2020	Mark Shephard, Chief Executive Tel: 01656 643380 mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk
5.	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24	26 Feb 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
6.	Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy 2020-21 Onwards	26 Feb 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
7.	Council Tax 2020-21	26 Feb 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk

Item	Title and Description of Report	Cabinet	Contact Officer
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
8.	High Street and Retail Rates Relief Scheme 2020-21	11 Mar 2020	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME - 1 JANUARY 2020 TO 30 APRIL 2020

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Date	Title of Report	Scrutiny Committee	Contact Officer
20 Jan	Budget Consultation - Chief Executive's Directorate	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
20 Jan	Capital Strategy 2020-21 Onwards	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
20 Jan	Quarter 2 Performance Report 2019-20	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
21 Jan	Budget Consultation - Education and Family Support Directorate	Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
22 Jan	Budget Consultation - Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate	Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
23 Jan	Budget Consultation - Communities Directorate	Subject	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and

Date	Title and Description of Report	Scrutiny Committee	Contact Officer
		Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3	Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
24 Jan	Budget Consultation - All Directorates	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
3 Feb	Education Outcomes	Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1	Lindsay Harvey, Corporate Director Education and Family Support Tel: 01656 642612 lindsay.harvey@bridgend.gov.uk
4 Feb	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2022-23 and Draft Budget Consultation Process	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk
5 Feb	Home to School Transport	Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2	Lindsay Harvey, Corporate Director Education and Family Support Tel: 01656 642612 lindsay.harvey@bridgend.gov.uk
13 Feb	Budget Monitoring 2019-20 - Q3 Forecast	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk

Date	Title and Description of Report	Scrutiny Committee	Contact Officer
		Committee	
13 Feb	Commissioning Plan for Social Care in Bridgend	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Susan Cooper, Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing Tel: 01656 642251 susan.cooper@bridgend.gov.uk
13 Feb	Corporate Plan 2019-2023 Reviewed for 2020-21	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Gill Lewis, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer gill.lewis@bridgend.gov.uk

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES

INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOTING

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the Information Report for noting which has been published since its last scheduled meeting.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The report relates to the corporate priority/priorities:
- Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 At a previous meeting of Cabinet, it was resolved to approve a revised procedure for the presentation to Cabinet of Information Reports for noting.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Information Reports

The following information report has been published since the last meeting of Cabinet:-

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date published</u>
Estyn Inspection Outcomes for West Park Primary School, Tynyrheol Primary School and Cynffig Comprehensive School	11 December 2019

4.2 Availability of Documents

The document has been circulated to Elected Members electronically via Email and placed on the BCBC website, and is also available from the date of publication.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 This procedure has been adopted within the procedure rules of the Constitution.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no negative equality implications arising from this report.

7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial Implications.

8.1 There are no financial implications regarding this report.

9. Recommendation.

9.1 That Cabinet acknowledges the publication of the document listed in this report.

K Watson
Head of Legal and Regulatory Services
10 December 2019

Contact Officer: Mark Anthony Galvin
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Email: cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk

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Legal and Regulatory Services
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Background documents: None.

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

INFORMATION REPORT TO CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

ESTYN INSPECTION OUTCOMES FOR WEST PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL, TYNRYHEOL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CYNFFIG COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

1. Purpose of report

1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the outcomes of the recent Estyn:

- inspection of West Park Primary School;
- revisit of Tynyrheol Primary School; and
- review of progress at Cynffig Comprehensive School.

2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 The information in this report relates to the following corporate priority in the Corporate Plan:

- Supporting a successful economy.

3. Background

3.1 During autumn term 2019, Estyn inspected one primary school, revisited one primary school and reviewed progress at one secondary school in Bridgend. The full text of these reports is available on the Estyn website: www.estyn.gov.uk

3.2 In September 2019, Estyn inspected West Park Primary School. The report was published on 25 November 2019.

3.3 In October 2017, Estyn inspected Cynffig Comprehensive School and placed the school into a follow-up category. Estyn reviewed progress at the school in November 2019.

3.4 In June 2018, Estyn inspected Tynyrheol Primary School and judged that special measures were required. Estyn revisited the school in November 2019.

4. Current situation

West Park Primary School

4.1 At West Park Primary School, inspectors reached the following judgements:

Inspection Area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Excellent
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Excellent
Learning and management	Good

4.2 The West Park Primary School report included the following recommendations:

R1 Improve pupils' spelling and handwriting in key stage 2

R2 Extend the governing body's role in gathering first-hand information to support their decisions concerning standards, provision and finance

4.3 West Park Primary School will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations.

4.4 The local authority, with Central South Consortium (CSC) will support the school to address the recommendations.

4.5 Estyn will invite the school to prepare a case study on its work in relation to the contributions of pupil groups, for dissemination on Estyn's website.

Tynyrheol Primary School

4.6 In November 2019, Estyn revisited Tynyrheol Primary School and judged the school to have made sufficient progress since the section 28 inspection.

4.7 The school has been removed from the list of schools requiring special measures.

4.8 There will be no further monitoring visits in relation to this inspection.

Cynffig Comprehensive School

4.9 In November 2019, Estyn reviewed the progress of Cynffig Comprehensive School and judged the school to have made sufficient progress in addressing the recommendations from the section 28 inspection.

4.10 The school has been removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn review.

4.11 There will be no further monitoring activity in relation to this inspection.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no impact on the Council's policy framework or procedure rules.

6. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

6.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment provides a comprehensive summary of the outcomes expected from the implementation of the service.

Long-term Supports the improvement of standards and outcomes in schools.

- Prevention Development of post-inspection action plans or refinement of school improvement plans helps to ensure that recommendations identified are addressed and acted upon to secure school improvement, preventing standards from slipping.
- Integration Monitoring and acting upon school inspection reports is key to ensuring that outcomes for schools are achieved thus helping to support a successful economy.
- Collaboration The local authority works closely with schools, Estyn and with CSC to deliver the well-being objectives related to school improvement. The local authority receives the school inspection reports from Estyn and this informs the work conducted by CSC to deliver the support for school improvement services.
- Involvement This area of work involves all stakeholders in school improvement. Schools work closely with challenge advisers from CSC to refine their improvement plans or post-inspection action plans and to identify strategic support from the local authority, CSC and elsewhere (as required) reflecting the diversity of stakeholders involved in aspects of school improvement.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this information report.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet notes the content of this report.

Lindsay Harvey
Corporate Director – Education and Family Support

Telephone: (01656) 642612

Email: Lindsay.Harvey@bridgend.gov.uk

Background documents :

Estyn inspection report - West Park Primary School
Estyn outcome letter - Tynyrheol Primary School
Estyn outcome letter - Cynffig Comprehensive School

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