

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

### Bridgend County Borough Council



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#### **Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate**

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 /  
643147 / 643694

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date:** Thursday, 26 November 2020

Dear Councillor,

### **CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held remotely via Skype on **Wednesday, 2 December 2020 at 09:30.**

#### **AGENDA**

1. Election of Chairperson 3 - 6
2. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
3. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations)
4. Approval of Minutes 7 - 22  
To receive for approval the minutes of 13/07/2020 and 07/09/2020
5. Budget Monitoring 2020-21 - Quarter 2 Revenue Forecast 23 - 56  
**Invitees:**  
All members of Cabinet and Corporate Management Board
6. Cabinet Response To The Cross-Party Recovery Panel Recommendations 57 - 68  
**Invitees:**  
The Leader
7. Forward Work Programme Update 69 - 76
8. Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination Report 77 - 80

**By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £1.60 in printing costs**

9. Nomination To The Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel

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10. Urgent Items

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

Note: Please note: Due to the current requirement for social distancing this meeting will not be held at its usual location. This will be a virtual meeting and Members and Officers will be attending remotely. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact [cabinet\\_committee@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk) or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

Chief Officer, Legal, HR & Regulatory Services

Councillors:

SE Baldwin  
JPD Blundell  
N Clarke  
J Gebbie

Councillors

T Giffard  
CA Green  
M Jones  
RL Penhale-Thomas

Councillors

KL Rowlands  
RMI Shaw  
JC Spanswick  
T Thomas

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

#### ELECTION OF CHAIR

#### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to receive nominations for the role of Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 The report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council’s well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 As part of the centralised Overview and Scrutiny structure it has been determined that the membership of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee would consist of the Chairs of each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee and nine other Members that reflect the political balance of the Authority.
- 3.2 At the Annual Meeting of Council on 30 September 2020, the three Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairpersons were appointed and as stated in the Report of the Monitoring Officer, the Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be appointed by the members of this Committee from one of the Chairpersons of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees, but not the Chairperson representing the Executive group.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to receive nominations and elect a Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the provisions set out at paragraph 3.2 of this report.
- 4.2 As set out in the Constitution, should the appointed Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee be unable to attend a meeting, it is for the Committee to appoint a Chair at the meeting in accordance with the political balance rules.

#### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 The work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council's Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council constitution to be updated.

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

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

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

- 7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:
- Long Term - The Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will assist in the long term planning of the business of the Council
  - Prevention – The Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be preventative in nature and ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place
  - Integration – This report supports all the well-being objectives
  - Collaboration - The Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will support partnership working with other organisations both locally and regionally
  - Involvement – The Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will promote the full involvement of external stakeholders, service users, expert witnesses and partners in scrutiny activity

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is requested to receive nominations and agree to elect a Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 3.2 of this report.

**K Watson**  
**Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services**  
**26 November 2020**

**Contact Officer:** Meryl Lawrence  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

**Telephone:** (01656) 643515

**E-mail:** [scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk)

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

**Background documents:** None

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN REMOTE MEETING VIA SKYPE ON MONDAY, 13 JULY 2020 AT 14:00

Present

Councillor CA Green – Chairperson

JPD Blundell  
T Giffard

NA Burnett  
RL Penhale-  
Thomas

N Clarke  
RMI Shaw

J Gebbie  
JC Spanswick

T Thomas

Apologies for Absence

M Jones and KL Rowlands

Officers:

Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Rachel Pick	Scrutiny Officer
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services

Invitees:

Mark Shepherd	Chief Executive
Huw David	Leader

170. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

171. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of 20/01/2020, 04/02/2020 and 13/02/2020 be approved as a true and accurate record.

172. ESTABLISHMENT OF A CROSS-PARTY RECOVERY PANEL - COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Chief Executive provided a summary of the report. He explained that the purpose of the report is to establish a Cross-Party Recovery Panel with the aim of shaping, informing and advising Cabinet on the Council's recovery planning, recognising the huge challenges we face post Covid-19 as we begin to ease the lockdown and move out of that phase. As far as the Council is concerned, change has been very significant. No Council staff had been furloughed. Understandably, a lot of the Council's services had been run differently including homeworking, agile working and the redeployment of staff with the focus being very much on the delivery of essential services with the aim of protecting the most vulnerable within the county borough and playing our part in stopping the spread of the virus. An unfortunate consequence of this had been emergency governance procedures, which, to some extent, has meant some Members' involvement through the normal processes of Scrutiny being suspended. He had set out in his report to Cabinet of 30 June 2020 the endeavours to keep all Members informed and involved as much as possible through weekly Group Leader meetings, Scrutiny Chair meetings and an enhanced programme of communications on a daily basis to keep people informed, including the circulation of formal decisions made under these emergency arrangements. That report set out a planning framework for the restart, recovery and renewal of the Council's services. A key part of the recovery element is the establishment of a Cross-Party Panel, recognising that equal elective Members of all

parties is crucial in order to establish a credible plan on a one-Council basis. He outlined some of the key priorities and considerations that the Council needs to deal with as part of its recovery. Those priorities and considerations fall in different timelines, i.e. some are fairly immediate while others will take longer. One of the challenges will be that recovery is not about everything happening at the same time but a programme of work that may take 12-18 months. Immediately, there is the challenge of reopening schools in September (details of which had been issued to Members and schools by the Corporate Director – Education and Family Support). He stated that the response to the economic crisis is ongoing, and Cabinet had discussed the formation of an Economic Task Force, predominantly comprising people from local businesses and industry to help formulate what the Council needs to do and how best to invest on that basis. The significance of some of the challenges includes homelessness (there is an expectation from Welsh Government that solutions are continued to be found to finding places for people to live, which is challenging both conceptually and financially) and continuing to form better relationships with some of its partners, particularly BAVO. The challenge will be how to nurture these relationships moving forward and how this plays a part in the recovery, recognising the benefits of this to communities and financially in order that the Council does not revert to how things were previously. Some things were very new to the Council, like having to provide PPE. The Council had to consider not only how to recover but how can it ensure to be resilient, should there be a second peak or something else that will require reverting to emergency procedures. Some things were already underway, e.g. most waste services were almost back to normal and libraries were starting to reopen (this does not preclude them having a different role as community hubs moving forward). He outlined the risks and opportunities around digital services, that staff had more readily embraced digital services during lockdown and consideration had to be given as to how much would be kept and how those who find it more difficult to access services digitally be protected. The Chief Executive envisaged the Recovery Panel as task and finish and some of its recommendations will need to be processed quickly. The Council's resources would need to be used widely in order to avoid duplication. He stated that the PSB intends carrying out a Community Impact Assessment and they are very keen to work with the Recovery Panel and identify quickly what the Council needs to prioritise on the basis of that assessment. The Wales Audit Office have also offered their support to the Panel, perhaps looking at best practice elsewhere or any other way they can add value. The Chief Executive was mindful there is an existing Panel for the budget (BREP) and it must be ensured that its work is coordinated and collated in a cohesive way to inform Cabinet and avoid duplication.

The Chief Executive envisaged that the Panel is flexible and agile and he referred to the Terms of Reference which proposed holding monthly group meetings, but that was a matter for the Panel to decide how often they meet, including any subgroups, in order to get the work done. This meant that the Panel would not be delayed by the usual 4- or 6-week cycle of Scrutiny committee meetings, where reports are required in advance. The Panel can therefore react much more effectively and invite people (key officers, Members, external stakeholders) to meet the Panel (all or part) on an ongoing basis. The main point in having the Panel is that Members can come up with key recommendations quickly that will improve the resilience of the Council's Recovery Plan, improve the Council's responsiveness, and ensure the Council makes the right decisions when we come to potentially reset the MTFs and Corporate Plan in the context of Covid-19.

A Member stated he was pleased that the Chief Executive had recognised that the issues needing to go to Panel for discussion will need recommendations quickly. He did not expect the Authority to wait 6-12 months for recommendations from the Panel because the Recovery begins now, if not already. Some of the recommendations will come from conversations that Panel Members will have had in their work, e.g. industry, where best practice is shared. This will be useful to the Authority going forward. How



can the Panel feed into the timeframes that work around decision-making processes and around Cabinet so that timely recommendations can be put forward. In response, the Chief Executive thought some of the Panel's initial recommendations would need to come forward ideally at the next Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled for September to inform Cabinet and Council reports towards the end of September, when it is envisaged that the reset of the budget and Corporate Plan would be considered. The Chief Executive had asked each service area to review what worked well and less well during lockdown, where money was spent and saved, what investments were now required and what operating model would they look to utilise going forward. This, together with anything the Panel produces, would be helpful within the initial timeframe to inform key documents and where the Authority spends/invests its money going forward. The Chief Executive wished to make it clear that he did not expect the Panel to consider every item within this timeframe. He recognised that some items need to come forward quickly while others will inevitably take longer, perhaps even feeding into the following year's MTFS or Corporate Plan.

A Member asked if the Panel would be able to see the feedback that the Chief Executive referred to. The Chief Executive agreed that it would be helpful to the Panel to see the results and that they would be shared with the Panel. It would take some time to collate the feedback to make it into something readable and meaningful but would serve to shape and inform the Panel's thinking. The Chief Executive envisaged that there will be a range of recommendations from services whilst acknowledging that some of which the Local Authority will not be able to do.

Members considered it prudent to increase the size of the committee from 12 to 16, or not necessarily mirror the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A Member also asked if the frequency of meetings could be flexible.

In response, the Chief Executive felt it was a matter for the Panel to decide on the flexibility of when it meets but encouraged Members to be proactive and to meet regularly. As set out by the Terms of Reference, Members may want to call monthly meetings of all Members if subgroup meetings do not include all Members, but the Chief Executive stressed that he would not dictate the frequency of the meetings. His only concern with regard to increasing the size of the Panel in assembling all 16 Members for frequent meetings. The Chief Executive then read out the legal advice he had received from the Group Manager – Legal and Democratic Services regarding increasing the size of the Panel: 'The Panel can comprise further Members, with additional Members being nominated by the Group Leaders and it should be politically balanced. The terms of reference would require amendment to widen the remit of the membership from that of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chief Executive also informed the Committee and to increase the membership from 12 to 16 and to formally change the Terms of Reference at this meeting to provide that flexibility. This gave the Panel the option of increasing to 16 Members, notwithstanding the complications already discussed that include achieving a political balance.

The Chairperson confirmed that it was an agreement in principle that the Panel was seeking as to how they would go about increasing the membership, and that increasing the membership would be one of the conclusions of the meeting. The process that is to be used can be confirmed at a later date. The Chairperson pointed out that the Terms of Reference will need to be amended to reflect an increase in membership to 16.

A Member asked that if the Panel were to increase the membership, can dates and times of meetings be arranged well in advance to ensure availability. Consistency of Members in order to deal with the issues was also considered very important. Further, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor could be invited given that they have spent a year getting

to know the county and the stakeholders and their perspectives would be useful going forward.

In response, the Chief Executive stated that based upon the legal advice, membership of the Panel can be increased from 12 to 16. If the Mayor, for example, were to be invited as an additional Member of the Panel, this would be down to the relevant Group Leaders to make the nominations, and political balance must be exercised.

Further to the point above, a Member commented that the Mayor's position will change midway through the process, and it was therefore the position and not the person that would need consideration. The Member continued with the question of whether expert witnesses would be invited for their views given that there are specific sectors and industries that will need the Authority's support in the aftermath of Covid-19. He also asked about the transparency and/or confidentiality of the Panel. He further pointed out the importance of ensuring that the views and opinions of the community are included in the recovery plan e.g. processes and activities, and asked how these opinions would be sought.

In response, the Chief Executive agreed that the Panel may want to invite expert witnesses but to be mindful that these witnesses may not be available within the quick, agile and responsive timeframes required by the Panel. With regard to increasing the number of meetings, the Panel must ensure that Members and relevant Cabinet Members, officers and stakeholders are available, which could prove challenging. He further pointed out that the Terms of Reference allow for Scrutiny Officers to service the Panel meetings on a monthly basis, and additional meetings for information gathering may not be able to be serviced in the same way. It may be that the Panel Members attending the additional meetings bring the information back to the monthly meeting. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Panel is confidential as this is the basis upon which it has been established and is intended to remain so until such time that the Cabinet agrees with what has been put before them. The confidentiality of the Panel does not exclude the attendance of expert witnesses to provide their views.

A Member continued the question of flexibility. It was his understanding that the committee will advise the Cabinet. However, there may be instances where the Panel will wish to bypass Cabinet, or the Panel will require the Cabinet to work very quickly. It may even be more desirable to advise Welsh Government or UK Government in some instances. The Member was concerned that if there is a scenario where there are local lockdowns, does the Authority have the resources to deal with this, e.g. local furloughing schemes.

In response, the Chief Executive advised that the Member may wish to call in the Leader or any other Cabinet Member to ask questions on particular topics. With regards to local furloughing, it is likely this would be funded by the Government. The Chief Executive could see there was clearly excitement and ambition within the Panel but advised a cautious approach in making the remit so big that the Panel would be unable to deal with its scope. The Panel must remain focused, prioritised and aware of the timelines.

The Leader reminded colleagues that the Economic Task Force will be set up with the primary role of engaging and working with businesses to plan the economic recovery of the borough. This will give the opportunity for the business sector in particular to engage with the Authority. There may also be different expert witnesses that the Panel may wish to invite. Engaging with the public is an interesting point, the only difficulty would be to ensure it was representative. The Leader stated that the Members are representative of the public and Members may also wish to consider how they use the Citizens' Panel given that it is a mechanism that is tried and tested as a representative voice of the diversity of the borough in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and geographical distribution.

The Citizens' Panel could be used as a potential mechanism to gauge the views of the public beyond the role of elected representatives.

A Member brought up the value of green spaces, which was recognised nationally as essential. He referred to the Cabinet report and today's report that include vital issues that must be dealt with but very little mention of how green spaces are to be protected or enhanced in the long term. The Member accepted there are asset transfers taking place but believed that the Authority has a role in securing and protecting its green spaces in the future. The PSB had conducted a survey on the use of green spaces during Covid-19, which would be fed back in due course. In addition, the emerging LDP had a good understanding of the value of green spaces and had done some good work, and there are some Town and Community Councils that are interested in doing some work around this topic. However, this remains a non-statutory service and the Member was somewhat disappointed in the lack of recognition to it in the long term in any report.

In response, the Leader agreed that green spaces is a long-term goal but the report in this meeting is focused on the immediate short-term recovery. In terms of the medium to long term, Welsh Government has identified the need for a green recovery and the Authority shares this aspiration. This involves a range of ways to ensure the recovery is sustainable, which includes green spaces in its wider sense. This includes tree planting that can help with jobs in the short term, flood management and providing green lungs. Thus while the report is not comprehensive or long term, green spaces is an area that the Authority will be looking at with the expertise of Members. Welsh Government is looking at a number of themed areas and the Authority can ensure that the report, which the Leader believes is public, is shared with Members as a crucial partner.

The Member thanked the Leader for his response. He further asked about the resource issue within the Authority in order for work such as tree planting to be realised, which will need officers to implement at a time of austerity and financial cutbacks. He gave the example of planning applications for large developments where there are rarely comments from the Parks section about open spaces due to the lack of officer capacity. There is therefore a capacity issue within the Authority in the long term to help, advise and organise work for future green spaces, and this will need to be built into future financial plans.

The Chief Executive commented that Green Spaces and the ability to go for a walk is important to people's wellbeing, which has been shown particularly over the last four months. The challenge will be prioritising within a finite budget and uncertainty around how much of the Authority's Covid-19 expenditure will be covered by the Government. We also have increased costs and a significant loss of income e.g. increased council tax reduction scheme and a loss of income in car parks, sports fields and rents. Thus while green spaces are valid, at some point what is put before Cabinet must be prioritised, and when resetting the MTFS or looking at the Corporate Plan we must still determine which of the many things we would like to spend money on are the most important. For example, there was likely to be a significant increase cost on homelessness. While not comparing homelessness with green spaces, the Authority will not be able to do everything and would have to prioritise and determine the best way in which it could achieve some of what it can from within finite resources. The Chief Executive felt the need to bring this back to basics because, despite Covid-19, the forecast MTFS still requires the Authority to make significant savings over the next 2-3 years.

The Leader stated that in terms of making a difference and what the Council does in its day-to-day operations, he felt that the Authority's swift response to Welsh Government's request for temporary active travel measures is one of the best examples of what we do as an organisation. Some local authorities did not apply while others were unsuccessful, but we were successful in creating temporary active travel routes. He stated that this is

an example of creating a more sustainable future and we actioned it in a very short time. It is also an example of where the Authority is driven by Welsh Government, who control the bigger purse. This has also shown their commitment through funding different ways of working. The Leader pointed to the success of the Valleys Regional Parks and expressed his delight at the improvements underway at parks at Parc Slip Nature Reserve and at Bryngarw Park. Welsh Government will want to invest further in those types of green infrastructure and the Authority needs to be ready to take full advantage of further future funding so that Bridgend does not miss out.

The Chairperson agreed with the Leader that we will have to think differently and there may be a need for 'blended working'.

A Member commented that while references had been made to the short, medium and long term, they sought clarity on those timeframes and what would be discussed for each. It had been suggested that Members make speedy decisions on a weekly basis while conceding that the Panel would come to their own decisions. While the debate had been around the constituents, the Member felt that the debate should be centred on what the content of meetings would be.

In response, the Chief Executive stated that what had become apparent during the meeting was the different perceptions of short, medium and long term and it would be difficult for him to define in a way that everyone would agree on. He reiterated that he was asking the Panel to shape and inform Cabinet's decisions. He advised the Panel to prioritise initial recommendations as to what they agree will make a difference in the earlier stages, and then decide the longer-term issues moving forward. The Panel should therefore take some time going through the issues while bearing in mind the key corporate documents the Chief Executive referred to, and determine which issues they can potentially add more value to for a report to Cabinet in September. It was worth stressing that if the Cabinet was to revisit the MTFS and Corporate Plan at the end of September, this would mean that any other recommendation would only be applicable at the next MTFS from 1 April 2021.

Part of the problem was that people were talking in terms of short and medium term but this meant something different to each Member. The Member referred to how services had been delivered differently e.g. green spaces and the volunteering sector, and if the Authority does not support this going forward, another Covid-19 outbreak and resulting lockdown will result in significant difficulties because some of those volunteers will not be available.

In response, the Chief Executive stated that if a second peak of the pandemic was to occur in late autumn, this would fall into one of the initial recommendations that the Panel would need to make to Cabinet if it was felt additional financial/any other support was needed to go to, e.g., BAVO and other voluntary groups throughout the borough to ensure it can continue delivering some of the services that worked well during lockdown and are not sustainable without that support. One of the expert witnesses the Panel may wish to invite is the Chief Executive of BAVO regarding what she thought would be most helpful in terms of support moving forward. The Chief Executive stated that all have a responsibility to place this in the context of the Authority's overall budget. Some of these things may be relatively inexpensive and will be more about a change in how we do things and a different way of thinking. The Chief Executive suggest that it needed to embrace the way that relationship had built in the last four months and there are certain things it would wish to endure. He further advised that the Council need to be careful it does not revert to whatever the 'normal' was in February/March 2020. Unless it invested some time and effort in ensuring that relationship is put on a firmer footing, it will revert to the default setting prior to lockdown, which was a much more fragile relationship and a much less able and resilient third sector to be able to support the Council.

The Leader agreed with the Member that short, medium and long term meant something different to different people. The Leader welcomed the views of the Panel on all the actions it would take, whatever the timescale, and that one of the big advantages of the Panel and not a full committee meeting is that they can hopefully meet at very short notice. One of the lessons of the pandemic is that no one quite knew what decisions need to be made and decisions need to be taken very quickly. Decisions are therefore still being made on a weekly, if not daily, basis and we have very little time to make those decisions. Thus what had been found to be very helpful as the decision makers is that it can ask the Panel to meet with perhaps just a few days' notice to test a decision that has to be made. Decisions will still be made in a very short time as to how we respond to the pandemic, particularly if there is a second/third wave. Even if there is not a second/third wave, society is changing at a rapid rate with, for example, job losses and Welsh Government and the UK Government responding rapidly to this. The Authority also needs to respond rapidly, even if it is just on how we administer different initiatives and whether we take part in certain projects and funds. Thus even if the pandemic becomes more stable to manage, its impact will be felt for a long time and there will be a tidal effect of those impacts. Having the Panel to meet at short notice, if they can, will be very helpful to the Authority's decision making process.

The Chairperson reiterated that flexibility of the Panel is key, that legal advice has been received on additional membership, and it is the Panel's responsibility to set timetables. The Chairperson then asked if there were any further questions from the Members.

A Member asked if some of the Panel meetings could be held in the evening to fit around work commitments and to provide flexibility. This was in light of the Civic building being closed and no requirement to vacate the building at 6.30pm.

The Chairperson agreed that flexibility was key and that it could be flexible around the timing of meetings in order for the Panel to be as effective as possible. She pointed out that it did not wish to disenfranchise anyone and the frequency of the meetings is for the Panel to decide, notwithstanding that things can change and the necessity to react quickly.

The Leader advised that consideration would need to be given to its partners as to how it would ensure that the work of the Panel is aligned with the work of the PSB and to take advantage of the expertise that sits on that Board. Many of the most expert witnesses will be on that Board e.g. the Police, the Fire Service, the Health Service, the third sector, Natural Resources Wales, and the College. Consideration would need to be given how to make those partners available to the Panel but avoid duplication and benefit from that expertise.

The Chief Executive stated that the PSB Team are keen to work with the Panel and share their work on the Community Impact Assessment so that the work is integrated and aligned to avoid duplication. Thus one of the first actions the Panel may wish to do is meet with the PSB Team to talk about the work that the PSB is doing to help shape some of the direction in which the Panel may go. The Chief Executive felt there was a resource there that will help the Panel. In addition, there may be some scope for the Panel to influence to some extent the Community Impact Assessment being carried out.

The Chairperson thanked the Leader and the Chief Executive for their attendance before they left the meeting.

The Chairperson then asked the Scrutiny Officer to provide the salient points of the meeting. The Democratic Services Manager provided the following:

1. The Panel is able to increase its membership from 12 to 16, as confirmed by the legal representative via email. The membership needs to be politically balanced to comprise two additional Labour Group Members and one Member each from the Independent Alliance Group and Conservative Group as co-optees to the Panel. The Group Leaders nominate their additional representatives to be Members of the Panel in addition to the existing Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. In relation to the PSB's Community Impact Assessment due for completion by the end of September, it would be advisable to invite PSB Team Officers to one of the first meetings of the Panel.

3. While the Panel can be flexible and meet more frequently than monthly, the Democratic Services Manager raised concern about the impact of meetings held later in the day, especially in the evening, on the Scrutiny Team and whether Scrutiny Officers would be available to service those meetings.

A Member stated that while Terms and Conditions of staff and Employment Rights needed to be considered, the Panel needs to be flexible.

A Member commented that while green spaces are more a medium- to long-term goal and dependent on priorities and financial commitments, the report nevertheless references culture, leisure and libraries. The same priority should be accorded to green spaces and yet the future of green spaces is not mentioned in the report. There needs to be some recognition at this stage that this will be addressed in the future. The Chairperson agreed that the issue needs to be addressed and that the Panel could make recommendations to that effect.

A Member referred to the Chief Executive's suggestion that the Panel splits into working groups to tackle particular areas and asked if Members' preferences could be discussed at this meeting based upon their expertise and interests. These group meetings could be held in the evenings and Members can compile the notes and provide at the full Panel meeting without the need for Democratic Services' staff to service the subgroups. This could prove far more effective than a lengthy meeting attended by large numbers. The Chairperson suggested that Members email the Scrutiny Team with information about their expertise/interests in certain areas of work that can then inform membership of the subgroups under particular headings.

#### Recommendation

To note the report and approve the establishment of a Cross-Party Recovery Panel, comprising the 12 Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee plus 4 additional Members to be nominated by Group Leaders as follows: 2 Labour; 1 Independent Alliance, and; 1 Conservative, and to amend the membership in the Terms of Reference accordingly.

#### 173. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Democratic Services Manager advised that the purpose of the report, was to provide Members of the Committee with a list of potential Forward Work Programme items for formal prioritisation. He referred to paragraph 4.1, that the Committee has a responsibility for setting and prioritising the overall Forward Work Programme for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees. He outlined the items/topics that had been prioritised and agreed by this Committee, which had been compiled from suggested

items at previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and included information proposed from Corporate Directors.

The Chairperson asked Members if they wished to add anything to the list of topics.

A Member asked for homelessness to be included given that there had been a role for Scrutiny in the past when looking at, e.g., housing and empty homes. However, he did not wish for Scrutiny to duplicate any other work undertaken on the topic. In response, the Chairperson stated that Welsh Government would be instrumental in how the Authority can address the issue and that it will be dependent upon resources, but agreed that Scrutiny should play a role in homelessness.

A Member felt that putting Homelessness on the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme would be duplication as it was something that was already being addressed. The Authority had already looked into claiming some of the £20M provided by Welsh Government for the temporary accommodation provided to the homeless and is awaiting a reply. The Authority must be able to rehouse those people who have been placed into temporary accommodation across the borough to avoid returning to living on the streets. The Chairperson agreed that we need to look at how successful we have been in solving the problem of homelessness in the future.

A Member asked if the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee could look at the PSB in September to coincide with the expected completion of the Community Impact Assessment. This will have a greater bearing on what the Panel wishes to tackle. In response, the Chairperson advised that the Panel would be meeting with the PSB Team shortly. The Member further explained that a Community Impact Assessment will identify what has been done well and the things it needed to do longer term to manage further pandemic spikes. For example, in relation to schools, opening to all pupils on 14 September with a 2-week delay to put all necessary measures into place. Thus by the middle of September there could be problems with schools and there are many other issues that need to be looked at. She argued that homelessness is a long-term issue and Welsh Government should have funded it a long time ago and that Local government needs to be vocal about the lack of funding available and it is something the Panel needs to consider going forward.

A Member asked if Scrutiny could have a part in the role of governors and how governors are appointed, organised and trained. She felt that schools, now more than ever, needed to have their governance as stable and professional as possible and that schools were being let down. She felt that governors were not being recruited properly, the right people were not sitting on governing bodies, and the training from Central South Consortium was not effective or frequent enough. The Member did not feel that all schools had a full complement of effective governors and if they did it would make a huge difference to how we respond to the pandemic crisis.

In response, it was the Chairperson's understanding that the only governors the Authority had any choice over were the LEA representatives. All others are voted for by parents or by the governing body agreeing to appoint a community member. While Scrutiny can advise Cabinet, it was not within its remit to appoint. She felt that on the whole, Cabinet's criteria was good for electing members from the Authority, Town and Community or retired teachers that have the necessary experience to make a contribution.

A Member agreed on the issue of governing bodies. Although she believed the governing bodies had become a lot more effective, she did not feel they were effective enough.

A Member commented that it was his understanding that only LEA governors are appointed by the Local Authority. All other governor posts are appointed by the school. The Member has, in the past, proposed that more should be centralised to save Head Teachers from becoming experts in absolutely everything as well as the school. But this would mean a change in budgeting arrangements because schools have autonomy on how they spend their money. The Member agreed that not all governors seem to have the right acumen or skills, but in smaller schools the issue is securing governors at all, let alone being able to select from a list. The Member concluded by stating it was a complex area.

The Chairperson then reminded the Committee of the Recommendations at paragraph 9.1 of the FWP. The Recommendations at paragraph 4.2 were agreed and confirmed:

Recommendations

(1) That the items prioritised as outlined in paragraph 4.2 and those items delegated to the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees be confirmed;

(2) That any additional items be identified using the Criteria Form for future consideration on the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.

174. URGENT ITEMS

None.



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN REMOTE MEETING VIA SKYPE FOR BUSINESS ON MONDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 14:00**

Present

Councillor CA Green – Chairperson

JPD Blundell	NA Burnett	N Clarke	J Gebbie
T Giffard	M Jones	RL Penhale-Thomas	KL Rowlands
RMI Shaw	JC Spanswick	T Thomas	

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Matthew Voisey

Officers:

Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Rachel Pick	Scrutiny Officer
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Tracy Watson	Scrutiny Officer

Invitees:

Councillor Stuart Baldwin  
Councillor Richard Collins  
Councillor Alex Williams

176. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Nicole Burnett declared a personal interest as she was chair of Evergreen Hall.

177. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meeting of 4 November 2019 were approved subject to the following change: Cllr Blundell declared a personal interest due to being a non-playing member of the Cardiff Saracens who were in the same league as Brackla RFC.

The Minutes of the meeting of 24 January 2020 were approved.

178. CROSS-PARTY RECOVERY PANEL - PHASE 1 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chairperson of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel took the Committee through the report. The purpose of the report was to present the Committee with the Phase 1 Findings and Recommendations of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel. Section 2 noted the connection to corporate well-being objectives and other corporate priorities. Section 3 provided the background in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, and the establishment of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel and membership plus additional Members and invited guest speakers from the selected areas that the Panel wished to investigate further. Phase 1 of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel had taken a structured approach to the selection of key areas from those identified for priority to feed into the recovery process and had identified key issues following examination. The report also

included the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications. There were no financial implications directly associated with this report. The Chairperson of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel wished to thank all Members involved for what he considered to be a well-structured and attended participatory approach and hoped that it would continue.

The Vice-Chairperson of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel wished to echo the words of the Chairperson of the Recovery Panel. He pointed to Recommendation 8 as needing to be more explicit by recommending a Housing First Scheme that provided vulnerable people with housing before tackling any further needs as he did not believe there was such a scheme in Bridgend. The Chairperson of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel confirmed that V2C operated a Housing First Scheme in Bridgend.

The Chairperson took the Member's point but felt it would be unfair to do anything further with the recommendations given that these were the recommendations put forward by the Panel and the point was not raised at the Cross-Party Recovery Panel Meeting.

The Member then pointed to Recommendation 16. While he agreed in principle that it was important for the Authority to collaborate with other Authorities, he was concerned that Bridgend did not fit with the characteristics of the city councils that formed the cooperative. He felt it was better for Bridgend to collaborate with neighbouring authorities. Furthermore, he noted that Wales had different laws and principles to its English counterparts and that Welsh devolution needed to be respected.

The Chairperson reminded the Member that the recommendations were now for Cabinet to consider, who would respond appropriately should it be obvious that Bridgend did not fit with a cooperative. The Chairperson noted that the Committee could ask Cabinet to keep them informed of their findings should they take the recommendation forward. The Member agreed to this.

A Member noted that the Cross-Party Recovery Panel had been useful in its frequency and content. The work undertaken by the Panel showed what could be achieved by Task and Finish Groups and he was very happy with how it had worked to date and wished it to continue. He fully supported the recommendations, in particular Recommendation 1. He felt that the future sustainability and value of culture, leisure and green spaces had not been valued to date and therefore endorsed that it should be added to the list of key priorities that were identified in the recovery planning Cabinet report of 30 June 2020, in order to facilitate health, exercise and wellbeing.

A Member stated that she supported Bridgend becoming a Cooperative Council and noted that it was aligned fully with the Welsh Government (WG) agenda. She pointed to a WG paper published in 2013 that recognised the importance of cooperatives within Wales. A further research paper published in 2016 evaluated the corporate housing developments in Wales and included positive case studies. She noted that a lot of councils were working alongside cooperative lines. The Member felt that being part of a cooperative had nothing to do with devolution but was about cooperative work-owned models and democratising the economy. The fact that larger councils were currently counted as cooperative councils was due to their being the early responders and setting the pace. The Member saw no reason why Bridgend should not join them.

A Member pointed out that she too could see no reason why Bridgend, just because it was in Wales, did not meet any cooperative model. She pointed to the number of cooperative models, although small term and small scale, which had operated successfully throughout the pandemic.

The Chief Executive thanked the Cross-Party Recovery Panel for the efficient and prompt way in which they had come up with what he regarded as a list of sensible recommendations in the main. He was sure that Cabinet would also see it in the same way. He suggested that it would be helpful for some clarification and evidence around each recommendation so that Cabinet was clear on what basis it was being asked to undertake some of the recommendations. Broadly, these recommendations, together with those that would come from the Economic Taskforce, would form the makings of a list of priorities to take forward for Bridgend's recovery.

The Chairperson of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel noted there had been extensive minutes produced that accompanied the recommendations. These would formulate the evidence and context of each recommendation. The Panel chose to set only a certain level of context within the report for efficiency purposes. He pointed to some of the areas of discussion that were particularly lengthy, e.g. homelessness and the Authority's agenda on tackling vulnerable groups. The minutes could be provided to Cabinet.

The Chairperson proceeded with Recommendations 1 to 16 and invited any comments.

The Chief Executive asked for further clarity for Recommendations 11 and 12. He regarded these two recommendations as providing good examples of where the evidence/documentation would be helpful in order for Cabinet to understand on what basis it was being asked to write to V2C. He understood the general point and that if there were to be further lockdowns, Bridgend would want to learn lessons.

The Chairperson agreed with the above, adding that the figures presented to the Cross-Party Recovery Panel that were captured in the Minutes prompted the recommendation to write to V2C as the largest RSL provider.

The Chief Executive further pointed out that the context was important in trying to build and maintain a relationship with Bridgend's largest RSL going forward.

The Chairperson stated that she would be happy to speak to Cabinet on the above point and to provide any further information required.

A Member noted that there was a clear frustration felt, as he understood it, with V2C not cooperating as well as they could, especially during Covid-19, firstly through furloughing their staff so they were unable to carry out repairs, and secondly in trying to house people in need. They appeared to be less of the social landlord and more a landlord in the way they were operating. He said this had unfortunately been the trend for a while, and that a better deal needed to be struck in the future.

The Chief Executive said he understood the Member's point. He explained there had been a number of positive meetings in recent months with the new V2C Chief Executive who, up until this stage, had been willing to work with the Authority. He hoped that Cabinet would take on board the Cross-Party Recovery Panel's criticisms and make progress.

The Chairperson stated that the Panel felt strongly about trying to develop a better relationship with V2C and to have more cooperation in terms of their function and the Authority's function and responsibilities.

The Chief Executive asked for further clarification on Recommendation 14 and what the expectations were.

The Chairperson of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel explained that Recommendation 14 was in relation to whether the Leader would potentially utilise the vacant Cabinet

Member position. The recommendation was for the appropriate financial strategies to be put in place should a second/third wave of Covid-19 occur.

A Member further explained that Recommendation 14 was about the lessons that had been learned from the Authority's management of its responsibilities during the first wave, i.e. what had been done well and what could be improved. The recommendation asked for a plan to be put in place in the event of a second lockdown rolled out across Bridgend Borough. The plan needed to be fluid and have financial resilience to support the capital finance set up costs to support organisations such as BAVO, as well as a reserve budget to take Bridgend through a lockdown period. The recommendation was about generating and implementing a bespoke Covid-19 lockdown plan.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee:

a) Endorsed the Cross-Party Recovery Panel's Findings and Recommendations attached in Appendix A to be submitted to Cabinet on 15 September 2020 as part of the recovery process, in order to feed into the realignment of the Authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Corporate Plan and;

b) Noted the next steps proposed for the Recovery Panel as outlined in Paragraph 4.5 of the report and agreed the work of the Panel to continue beyond September.

179. **COUNCIL PERFORMANCE AGAINST ITS WELLBEING OBJECTIVES FOR 2019-20**

The Chairperson was concerned that the report had been sent as an information report containing red status items, and it would have been beneficial to ask questions on those items. She apologised for there being no officer in attendance. She asked if there were any comments on the report.

The Chief Executive suggested that as a Committee item going forward that Directors be present to provide an overview of their area and to go through red and amber status items. It was his personal view that this would create stronger scrutiny and greater opportunity for Member involvement and to understand the reasons why targets had not been met or, in some cases, been exceeded. The Chief Executive, with the Chairperson's permission, noted that if this was a recommendation that Members wished to make, the Directors and the Chief Executive could attend the Committee annually in order to answer the detailed questions.

The Chairperson thanked the Chief Executive. She said there should be an opportunity for Members of the Committee to ask questions of the Directors/most appropriate representative to explain what was being done and what targets were being met. Red status items required more scrutiny, and without asking questions scrutiny was not being done as it should. Green status items, i.e. where targets were being met, required no further explanation.

Members indicated that they would want the Directors/most appropriate representative to answer questions on report items that were not progressing going forward. The Chief Executive agreed to take this forward.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee noted the performance report, and agreed that Directors/most appropriate person should attend to answer questions regarding those areas that were not achieving in future performance reports.

180. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

#### BUDGET MONITORING 2020-21 – QUARTER 2 REVENUE FORECAST

##### 1.0 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an update on the Council's revenue financial position as at 30th September 2020, and virements between £100,000 and £500,000 as required by the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

##### 2.0 Connections to corporate wellbeing objectives / other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-

1. **Supporting a successful economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great 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 borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** – taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

2.2 The allocation of budget determines the extent to which the Council's well-being objectives can be delivered.

##### 3.0 Background

3.1 On 26th February 2020, Council approved a net revenue budget of £286.885 million for 2020-21. As part of the Performance Management Framework, budget projections are reviewed regularly and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The delivery of agreed budget reductions is also kept under review and reported to Cabinet as part of this process.

## 4.0 Current situation / proposal

### 4.1 Summary financial position at 30th September 2020

4.1.1 The Council's net revenue budget and projected outturn for 2020-21 is shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1- Comparison of budget against projected outturn at 30th September 2020**

Directorate/Budget Area	Original Budget 2020-21 £'000	Revised Budget 2020-21 £'000	Projected Outturn Q2 2020-21 £'000	Projected Over / (Under) Spend 2020-21 £'000	Projected Over / (Under) Spend Qtr 1 2020-21 £'000
<b>Directorate</b>					
Education and Family Support	120,931	120,968	122,462	1,494	1,992
Social Services and Wellbeing	70,894	72,111	72,531	420	1,182
Communities	27,790	27,810	28,266	456	(1,048)
Chief Executive's	18,228	18,228	19,346	1,118	677
<b>Total Directorate Budgets</b>	<b>237,843</b>	<b>239,117</b>	<b>242,605</b>	<b>3,488</b>	<b>2,803</b>
<b>Council Wide Budgets</b>					
Capital Financing	7,329	7,329	7,129	(200)	0
Levies	7,459	7,460	7,471	11	11
Apprenticeship Levy	650	650	636	(14)	(14)
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	15,254	15,254	15,255	1	317
Insurance Premiums	1,438	1,438	1,387	(51)	(66)
Repairs & Maintenance	870	790	790	0	0
Pension Related Costs	430	430	430	0	0
Other Corporate Budgets	15,612	13,917	10,651	(3,266)	0
<b>Total Council Wide Budgets</b>	<b>49,042</b>	<b>47,268</b>	<b>43,749</b>	<b>(3,519)</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>286,885</b>	<b>286,885</b>	<b>286,854</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>3,051</b>

4.1.2 The overall projected position at 30th September 2020 is a net under spend of £31,000, comprising £3.488 million net over spend on directorates and a £3.519 million net under spend on corporate budgets. The projected position is based on:-

- Inclusion of reimbursed expenditure/loss of income to date on areas impacted by COVID-19 received from Welsh Government (WG).
- Exclusion of COVID-19 expenditure/loss of income claims that are currently being reviewed by WG at the time of writing this report.
- Exclusion of COVID-19 expenditure/loss of income claims that have not yet been submitted as they relate to quarters 3 and 4 of 2020-21.



A detailed analysis of the more significant projected under and over spends is set out in section 4.3.

## **COVID-19**

- 4.1.3 The UK was put into lockdown on 23rd March 2020 in an unprecedented step to attempt to limit the spread of coronavirus. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has had an inevitable impact on the Council's financial position in a number of ways:

Additional cost pressures	Some have been one-off and some recurrent. The majority of one-off cost pressures have been submitted for funding to the WG Hardship Fund, e.g. PPE, ICT, voids etc. It is unlikely that recurrent pressures will be met in the medium term.
Lost income	Again, some have been one-off losses, others will be deferred losses (e.g. potentially planning income), and others could be permanent recurrent losses. Claims have been submitted to WG covering loss of income for Quarter 1. Main areas claimed were car parking and school meals.
2020-21 MTFS savings not met	Total MTFS savings for the year of £2.413m which may not be achieved (e.g. staffing restructures, remodelling of services, income generation) or which may be achieved fortuitously due to circumstances, but will require decisions going forward on whether or not to proceed or revisit.
Unanticipated savings	For areas where service provision has reduced or stopped and subsequent savings have been made e.g. home to school transport, premises and fuel.
Council Tax	There is likely to be a shortfall in council tax collection, especially given the delay in starting recovery, and an increase in council tax benefits.

- 4.1.4 As reported to Cabinet on 30th June 2020, a COVID Earmarked Reserve of £3 million was created at the end of 2019-20. Also on 30th June Cabinet agreed a proposed approach to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic to allow the council to re-start, recover and renew its service provision. A Recovery Panel to help shape, inform and advise Cabinet on the Council's recovery planning has been established. Phase 1 findings were reported to Cabinet on 15th September 2020.
- 4.1.5 Cabinet and Corporate Management Board (CCMB) agreed to establish a COVID-19 Recovery Fund for 2020-21 on a 'one off' basis to provide funding for conscious and proactive decisions aimed at boosting recovery that were unlikely to be paid for by WG, with £500,000 being utilised from the 2020-21 Public Realm fund (see section 4.3.3) and a further £500,000 being ring-fenced from the COVID Earmarked Reserve to create a fund of £1 million.

## **Estimated costs of the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

- 4.1.6 In response to the pandemic, the Council, alongside other organisations, has providing direct support to its community / residents in a number of ways. Welsh Government has provided specific eligibility criteria for each of its funding streams, and all directorates have been made aware of them, and are capturing costs

accordingly. Any COVID-19 costs which are not identified and claimed will need to be funded from the normal service budgets. Claims submitted to WG covering expenditure to August 2020, and the outcome of these claims are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 – COVID-19 expenditure claims up to August 2020**

Specific Hardship Fund	Claimed	Paid	On hold	Disallowed
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General	1,435	880	24	531
Homelessness	743	743	0	0
Free School Meals	1,328	605	617	106
Schools (including HUB costs)	609	546	33	30
Adult Social Services	2,230	2,194	17	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,345</b>	<b>4,969</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>685</b>

- 4.1.7 The majority of the disallowed expenditure (£461,000) relates to ICT costs incurred by the Council primarily to establish home working arrangements. The WG hardship panel agreed that these costs may be additional and not within the council's financial plans, however they also felt that having such assets in place provides longer term benefits to local authorities. A contribution of 50% was therefore agreed with the majority of the balance being funded from the annual ICT Capital budget. The majority of the £106,000 disallowed expenditure under the Free School Meals category relates to the delivery costs of the food parcels which took the cost of the provision over the funding threshold set by Welsh Government.
- 4.1.8 The majority of the £691,000 of claims that have been placed on hold relates to Free School Meal claims. A separate panel meets to determine the Free School Meal claims and at the time of writing this report, the outcome of the claims for July and August are not known. As there is no certainty at the time of writing this report in relation to the outcome of the items placed on hold, the reimbursement of costs has not been assumed in the quarter 2 projections (see 4.3.1).
- 4.1.9 The Council has also submitted claims for loss of income to the Welsh Government for the first quarter of 2020-21 totalling £2.507 million as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3 – COVID-19 loss of income for Quarter 1 2020-21**

Directorate	Claimed (covers to end of Qtr 1)	Paid	Delayed (50% paid)	On hold	Disallowed	Main areas
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Education and Family Support Directorate	1,253	1,047	0	205	0	£1.047m - School meal income, £205K - recoupment income
Schools	188	188	0	0	0	£90K - school meal income, £98K - loss of income from hire of school premises
Social Services & Wellbeing Directorate	314	184	0	130	0	£154K – contribution to Council’s leisure service provider, £130K - Residential and non-residential client contribution income
Communities Directorate	600	577	1	22	0	£210K - Car Park Income, £160K - rental income from properties due to 3 month rent holiday, £53K – civil enforcement income, £72K Green/Bulky/Trade waste income
Chief Executive's Directorate	152	9	29	41	74	£117K – legal, democratic and regulatory services, £29K - registration fees
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,507</b>	<b>2,005</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>74</b>	

4.1.10 £2.005 million has been approved. £30,000 has been received as a 50% contribution towards some services areas as WG predict that income might catch up in these areas by 31st March 2021. £398,000 is currently on hold whilst we provide further evidence to WG (mostly £160,000 special school recoupment income and £130,000 for residential care home voids). The quarter 2 projections have excluded the ‘delayed’ or ‘on hold’ loss of income categories as there is no certainty at the time of writing this report in relation to the outcome of these claims. £74,000 has been disallowed – this mainly relates to court cost income that WG have indicated is related to Council Tax income and not eligible from the hardship fund (See 4.3.4).

4.1.11 Cabinet has also committed £306,000 from the COVID Recovery fund to support the free car parking offer for Town Centres, a phased rental income increase for its own premises, waived sports fees for the current season and wider economic resilience schemes. These have been built into the quarter 2 projections.

4.1.12 In addition to lost income from service provision, the Council is also likely to see a reduction in council tax income over the 2020-21 financial year as more people have suffered financial hardship through the pandemic. A number of measures were put in place to support those facing difficulty in paying their council tax, but it is estimated that there is still likely to be a lower collection rate than normal. A 1% reduction in the council tax income collection rate could result in an

additional pressure to the Council of around £1 million. Given the range of measures put in place to support council tax payers, it is too early to provide a realistic indication of projected council tax for this financial year, but it will be monitored continuously throughout the year and reported accordingly. Whilst no funding has been identified by WG for reduced council tax income, WG are monitoring this across all Welsh Local Authorities.

- 4.1.13 Alongside this, the impact of a significant increase in claims for universal credit is manifesting itself in an increase in eligibility for council tax reduction support, and the additional cost of this could be between £500,000 to £1 million over the 2020-21 financial year. Funding has been received from WG for the first quarter of 2020-21 (£133,000) and there is ongoing commitment from WG to support this area. However, it is difficult to predict the full year impact as we have yet to see the impact of the end of the furlough scheme/newly unemployed and a likely increase in the number of benefits claimants, but the cost will at least be partly mitigated.

### **Budget virements/technical adjustments**

- 4.1.14 There have been a number of budget virements and technical adjustments between budgets since the MTFS was approved by Council in February 2020. The budget position is reported on the assumption that these virements will be approved. The main virements and technical adjustments are outlined below:

#### Budget Virements

<b>Service vired from / to</b>	<b>Amount</b>
One-off contribution from Public Realm Fund (Communities Directorate) to fund in-year COVID-19 Recovery Fund (see paragraph 4.1.5).	£500,000
One-off contribution from Corporate Contingency to fund the shortfall on the Home to School Transport savings within the Education and Family Support Directorate (see paragraph 4.1.22)	£344,000

#### Technical Adjustments

<b>Service vired from / to</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Transfer of inflationary uplifts not confirmed when the MTFS is agreed that are held centrally until evidence of the uplift is provided by the service areas	£281,305
Transfer of National Living Wage uplifts on commissioned contracts within Social Services and Wellbeing. This was an agreed Budget Pressure when the MTFS was approved but had been held centrally until evidence of the uplift was provided by the service areas.	£1,037,157
Transfer of Real Living Wage uplifts to School Budgets that were held centrally until evidence of the uplift was provided.	£75,541
Transfer of prudential borrowing from centrally held funding to corporate landlord – borrowing costs for buildings managed by the corporate landlord service.	£80,000

## **Pay/Price Inflation**

- 4.1.15 When the budget for 2020-21 was set, directorates were provided with funding for known pay and price inflation. The remaining provision was retained centrally within Council wide budgets, to be allocated as further information was known about specific contractual price increases e.g. for energy. The technical adjustments table above presents the start of the release of these budgets as and when evidence is provided by the service areas.
- 4.1.16 Inflationary pressures include those arising from specific contractual commitments and significant increases in staffing costs arising not only from the above inflation increases in the national living wage, and the recent implementation of the real living wage by the Council, but also the recently agreed pay award of 2.75% for National Joint Council (NJC) workers. An estimated £2.6 million is due to be transferred shortly from centrally held budgets to individual directorates/schools to reflect the uplift required for the NJC award.
- 4.1.17 In addition, consultation has recently ended on the teachers' pay award and the estimated impact of the outcome of this is a further £1.2 million transfer from centrally held budgets to schools.
- 4.1.18 The specific amounts transferred for the NJC award and teachers' pay award will be reported in the Quarter 3 Revenue Forecast to Cabinet in January 2021.
- 4.1.19 Inflation rates have fluctuated since the budget was set (CPI was 1.7% in February 2020 and had reduced to 0.2% by August 2020). With the uncertainty around Brexit and COVID-19, and the possible economic fallout arising from these, the budget will need to be monitored closely during the remainder of the year.

## **Budget Reduction Proposals**

- 4.1.20 The net budget for the financial year has been set assuming full implementation of the current year budget reduction requirements across the Council's budget, which amount to £2.413 million. Where proposals to meet this requirement have been delayed or are not achievable directorates have been tasked with identifying alternative proposals to meet their requirements such as vacancy management, or bringing forward alternative budget reduction proposals.
- 4.1.21 In February 2020 Council approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2020-21 to 2023-24. This identified the need to develop recurrent budget reduction proposals, based on the most likely scenario, amounting to £29.293 million over the next four years. Against that background it is essential that expenditure is kept within the overall approved budget and that longer term proposals continue to be developed so that the Council has as much flexibility as possible to meet the challenges which lie ahead.
- 4.1.22 On 15th September 2020 Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation exercise regarding proposed changes to the local authority's Learner Travel Policy. It was resolved to defer the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learner Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government

in March 2021. For 2020-21 the overall shortfall of £344,000 on the Home to School Transport savings will need to be funded from the Council's contingency budget. For future financial years the Education and Family Support Directorate will be required to submit a budget pressure as part of the 2021-22 MTFs process to cover this shortfall along with the additional pressure on the Home to School Transport budget as set out in section 4.3.1.

4.1.23 At year end consideration will be given to requests from directors to carry forward any planned directorate under spends for specific purposes into the following year, in line with the Council's Reserves and Balances Protocol, as long as these can be met from within the Council's cash limited budget for 2020-21. This is in line with the reports to Cabinet and Council on the MTFs, and the Council's Financial Procedure Rules. Similarly, consideration will be given to any budget over spends to determine how these will be funded, including whether or not they can be met from the Covid earmarked reserve, or whether these should be carried forward as a first call on the directorate budget for the following year. Finally, outstanding prudential borrowing will be repaid, where possible, to reduce future capital financing charges. However, a decision will not be made until towards the end of the financial year when the overall outturn position is more definite.

## 4.2 Monitoring of Budget Reduction Proposals

### Prior Year Budget Reductions

4.2.1 A report was presented to Cabinet on 30th June 2020 on Revenue Budget Outturn 2019-20. In the report it was highlighted that, for 2017-18 to 2018-19, there were £2.342 million of budget reduction proposals that were not met in full, with a total outstanding balance to be met of £459,000. In addition, of the 2019-20 budget reduction proposals of £7.621 million, it was reported that there was a total outstanding balance to be met of £806,000. Directors have been asked to identify if any of these proposals are still not likely to be achieved in full during the 2020-21 financial year, and to identify mitigating actions that will be undertaken to achieve them. A summary of the latest position is attached as Appendix 1 with a summary per directorate provided in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Outstanding Prior Year Budget Reductions**

	<b>Total Budget Reductions Required</b>	<b>Total Budget Reductions Likely to be Achieved</b>	<b>Shortfall</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE /BUDGET REDUCTION AREA</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Education and Family Support	269	0	269
Social Services and Wellbeing	452	452	0
Communities	1,750	1,310	440
Chief Executive's	30	30	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,501</b>	<b>1,792</b>	<b>709</b>

4.2.2 Table 4 shows that of the £2.501 million outstanding prior year reductions, £1.792 million is likely to be achieved in 2020-21 leaving a shortfall of £709,000. Proposals still not likely to be achieved include:

- Learner Transport Policy and Transport Route efficiencies (£194,000) and Review of Special Schools Home to School Transport (£75,000). As noted in paragraph 4.1.22, the shortfall will need to be funded from the Council's contingency budget in 2020-21.
- Permitting Scheme for Road Works (£100,000) due to delays in approval process with Welsh Government.
- Reductions to the budget for the MREC (£1.3 million). As reported to Cabinet on 21st July 2020 the shortfall will be funded from the Council's contingency budget in 2020-21, and for future years the Communities Directorate will be required to submit a budget pressure request as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.

4.2.3 As outlined in the MTFS reports to Cabinet and Council, MTFS Principle 7 states that *"Savings proposals are fully developed and include realistic delivery timescales prior to inclusion in the annual budget. An MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency Reserve will be maintained to mitigate against unforeseen delays"*. An MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency reserve was established in 2016-17. This reserve has been used to meet specific budget reduction proposals in previous years on a one-off basis pending alternative measures. During the financial year, the Section 151 Officer will consider applications from Directorates to the MTFS Budget Reduction Contingency reserve to mitigate some of the shortfalls.

### **Budget Reductions 2020-21**

4.2.4 The budget approved for 2020-21 included budget reduction proposals totalling £2.413 million, which is broken down in Appendix 2 and summarised in Table 5 below. The current position is a projected shortfall on the savings target of £451,000, or 18.6% of the overall reduction target.

**Table 5 – Monitoring of Budget Reductions 2020-21**

	<b>Total Budget Reductions Required</b>	<b>Total Budget Reductions Likely to be Achieved</b>	<b>Shortfall</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE /BUDGET REDUCTION AREA</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Education and Family Support	239	139	100
Schools	0	0	0
Social Services and Wellbeing	820	537	283
Communities	646	578	68
Chief Executive's	508	508	0
Council Wide Budgets	200	200	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,413</b>	<b>1,962</b>	<b>451</b>

- 4.2.5 The most significant budget reduction proposals unlikely to be achieved in full include:
- EFS1 - Phased Implementation of Learner Transport Policy (£75,000). As noted in paragraph 4.1.22, the shortfall will be funded from the Council's contingency budget in 2020-21.
  - SSW20 – Further savings from leisure centres and swimming pools (£70,000)
  - SSW27 – Increase income generation from mobile response and telecare charging (£75,000)
  - SSW29 – Further review of staffing structures across Adults' and Children's Services (£175,000)
- 4.2.6 Appendix 2 identifies the projected amount of saving against these proposals in detail and action to be taken by the directorate to mitigate the shortfall. Directors continue to work with their staff to deliver their proposals or alternatives and this is reflected in the forecast outturn for the year. During the financial year the Section 151 Officer will also consider applications from directorates to the MTFs Budget Reduction Contingency reserve to mitigate some of the shortfalls.
- 4.2.7 In the longer term, these proposals must be realised or must be met through alternative budget reduction proposals in order to deliver a balanced budget position. These will continue to be closely monitored and further draw down from the MTFs Budget Reduction Contingency reserve will be made as part of the overall review of earmarked reserves during quarter 3.



### 4.3 Commentary on the financial position at 30th September 2020

#### Financial position at 30th September 2020

A summary of the financial position for each main service area is attached as Appendix 3 to this report and comments on the most significant variances are provided below. The main impact of COVID-19 on the budget, if we assumed that no further funding was forthcoming from WG, is summarised in Table 6 below. This outlines the areas where there would be over spends as a result of the pandemic, alongside areas where we would make savings from reduced provision of services. If funding was received for all our additional cost pressures, the net position could improve by £2.7 million:-

**Table 6 – Net impact of COVID-19 on the financial position at 30th September 2020**

Directorate	Covid Related Over spends £'000	Covid Related Under spends £'000	Net Over spend £'000	Comments
Education and Family Support	1,020	-337	683	Net loss on the provision of school meals and shortfall in special school recoupment income, offset by reduced payments to bus contractors.
Social Services and Wellbeing	170	0	170	Level of voids in Local Authority Residential Care Settings.
Communities	125	-262	(137)	Reduced income from car parks and civil parking enforcement, and costs of providing rent free holidays, offset by net reduction in seasonal staff costs for parks and playing fields.
Chief Executive's	1,442	0	1,442	Additional costs of facilities for homeless plus lower income from registrars, licensing and public health.
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,757</b>	<b>-599</b>	<b>2,158</b>	

### 4.3.1 Education and Family Support Directorate

The net budget for the Directorate for 2020-21 is £120.968 million. Current projections indicate an over spend of £1.494 million at year end. COVID-19 expenditure and loss of income included in this projection amount to £1.020 million - if these were to be successfully claimed from WG, the projection would improve to an over spend of £474,000. The main variances are:

<b>EDUCATION &amp; FAMILY SUPPORT DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Projected Variance Over/(under) budget</b>	<b>% Variance</b>	<b>Over/ (under) specifically COVID-19 related</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>		<b>£'000</b>
Inclusion	2,314	2,832	518	22.4%	160
Home to School Transport	5,509	5,948	439	7.97%	(337)
Catering Services	896	1756	860	96.0%	860
Integrated Working and Family Support	1,472	1,378	(94)	-6.4%	-
Health & Safety	379	313	(66)	-17.4%	-
Youth Justice Service	350	300	(50)	-14.3%	-

#### Schools' Delegated Budgets

Total funding delegated to schools in 2020-21 is £99.686 million.

The schools' delegated budget is reported as balanced as any under or over spend is automatically carried forward into the new financial year before being considered by the Corporate Director - Education and Family Support in line with the 'Guidance and Procedures on Managing Surplus School Balances'.

At the start of 2020-21, projections indicated an overall deficit balance for school delegated budgets of £1.146 million at year end. At quarter 2 this has improved to a projected deficit of £848,700. There are 25 primary schools, 4 secondary schools and 1 special school (51% of all schools) projecting a deficit balance at year end.

#### Central Education and Family Support Budgets

##### Inclusion

- There is a projected over spend of £518,000 for Inclusion which primarily relates to the shortfall in recoupment income for other Local Authority (LA) placements at Heronsbridge School and Ysgol Bryn Castell. £160,000 has been included in our claim to WG for 'loss of income' for the first quarter of 2020-21 which is currently on hold, hence the income has not been included in the above projection. If the claim is successful the projected over spend will reduce accordingly. The balance of the projected over spend is due to a reduction in the number of other LA pupils in Bridgend schools from 20 in the summer term 2020 compared with 13 currently projected for the Autumn term. It should be noted that some places can result in income in excess of £100,000.

##### Home to School Transport (HTST)

- There is a projected over spend on Home to School Transport of £439,000 in 2020-21. Whilst the schools were closed for the majority of the first quarter of 2020-21 due to COVID-19, the Minister for Economy, Transport and North

Wales recommended that local authorities continue to pay a minimum of 75% of the contract value for school and other contracted local passenger services in order for them to remain viable whilst longer-term measures were developed. It is estimated that £337,000 was saved during this period. However, at quarter 2 the projections still indicate a projected overspend of £439,000 illustrating the significant ongoing pressure on the Home to School Transport budget.

- In September 2015, Cabinet agreed changes to the local authority's Home to School/College Transport Policy in order to meet MTFS savings identified from 2016-17 to 2019-20. The policy change was implemented in September 2016 and Cabinet resolved to protect the entitlement of all pupils currently benefitting from home to school transport at the former distances until they moved schools or moved from one phase of education to another. Furthermore protection was provided for siblings of children already in receipt at the former distances, where they too would benefit from free transport at the same distance. Parents who were aggrieved that their child was at detriment in comparison with their peers challenged the safety of walked routes to schools. Therefore, the local authority agreed in August 2017 to progress the formal assessments of walking routes to schools. It was then proposed to seek the views of the public on a number of policy proposals, not least the implementation of available walked route assessments. In July 2019, Cabinet agreed to undertake a full 12-week public consultation on a new set of proposals that would provide sufficient savings to support the MTFS.
- On 15 September 2020 Cabinet were updated on the outcomes of the consultation exercise and resolved to defer the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learner Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government in March 2021. It is unlikely that any change to the statutory distances by Welsh Government will follow until 2022 at the earliest and therefore even if the statutory distances reduce as a result of this review, the RSG would unlikely reflect this until 2022-23 at the earliest. In the meantime there are ongoing historic pressures associated with budget reductions that have not been supported by a policy change of £269,000 and an in year MTFS savings target of £75,000 which remains undeliverable. As noted in paragraph 4.1.22, for 2020-21 the overall shortfall of £344,000 on the HTST savings will be funded from the Council's contingency budget.
- By combining the £337,000 in-year saving, the £344,000 funding from the Council's contingency budget and the projected overspend of £439,000, the underlying budget pressure on the HTST budget amounts to £1.120 million.

#### Catering Services

- The projected over spend of £860,000 has primarily arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The projection includes the claim for provision of free school meals (FSM) of £617,000 that is currently on-hold by WG until further supporting evidence is received and therefore not included in our projections (see Table 2).
- The remaining over spend relates to an early projection on a reduction in forecast levels of school meal income due to reduced take up of schools meals since the return to school in September. It is anticipated that claims for shortfalls in school meal income will be included in our future claims to WG, however the income is not assumed in our current projections. The impact of reduced take up will require close monitoring for the remainder of 2020-21.

#### Integrated Working and Family Support

- The projected under spend of £94,000 relates primarily to staff vacancies within the service and maximising grant income. The vacant posts are expected to be filled during the year and this is built into the current projection.

#### Health & Safety

- The projected under spend of £66,000 relates to staff vacancies within the service. The vacant posts are expected to be filled during the year and this is built into the current projection.

#### Youth Justice Service

- There is a projected under spend of £50,000 within the Youth Offending Service. This is primarily due to current staff vacancies within the service. A planned re-structure this calendar year will result in the full budget being committed moving forward.

### 4.3.2 Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate

The Directorate's net budget for 2020-21 is £72.111 million. Current projections indicate an over spend of £420,000 at year end. Loss of income included in this projection amounts to £170,000 – if these were successfully claimed from WG, the projection would improve to an over spend of £250,000. The main variances are:

<b>SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Projected Variance Over/(under) budget</b>	<b>% Variance</b>	<b>Over/ (under) specifically COVID-19 related</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>		<b>£'000</b>
Adult Social Care	47,977	48,499	522	1.1%	170
Prevention and Wellbeing	5,180	5,151	(29)	-0.6%	-
Childrens Social Care	18,954	18,881	(73)	-0.4%	-

#### Adult Social Care

There is a projected over spend of £522,000 on the Adult Social Care budget. The main areas contributing to this over spend are:-

- Residential Care – there is projected over spend of £530,000 due to increased placement costs and reduction in personal contributions. £130,000 has been included in the claim to WG for 'loss of income' for the first quarter of 2020-21, and a further £40,000 is estimated for the quarter 2 claim.
- Care at Home for Older People – this includes domiciliary care services, local authority homecare services and the provision of direct payments. The under spend of £271,000 is a combination of an over spend on the Direct Payments budget (£227,000) due to an increase in the number of cases, offset by an under spend on the homecare budget primarily due to staffing vacancies and delays implementing a reorganisation due to Covid-19.
- Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment - there is a projected under spend of £108,000 which due to a combination of an under spend on the Residential Care budget (£146,000) due to increases in client contributions and a reduction

in placements, and an under spend due to staff vacancies on Assessment & Care Management (£30,000), offsetting an over spend on Care at Home (£76,000) - mainly due to an increase in Direct Payment costs.

- Mental Health – there is a projected over spend of £251,000. This is mainly due to increased homecare costs due to additional placements relating to independent domiciliary care and high cost supported living placements.
- Management and Central Services – there is a projected over spend of £107,000 primarily due to the delay in the implementation of the staffing MTFs proposal linked to staffing structures across Adults' and Children's services.

#### Prevention and Wellbeing

- The projected outturn for Prevention and Wellbeing has improved from quarter 1, from an over spend of £982,000 to an under spend of £29,000. The Council has received WG funding to compensate for the quarter 1 loss of income (£153,000), however there is deficit for the remainder of 2020-21 due to COVID-19. If no further funding is received from WG towards the net loss of running the leisure services for the remainder of 2020-2, a contribution will be made from the Public Realm budget within the Communities Directorate towards this (see section 4.3.3). At quarter 1, the full net loss for running the leisure services was included within the Social Services and Wellbeing projections.

#### Childrens Social Care

There is a projected net under spend of £73,000 on Children's Social Care. The main areas contributing to this under spend are:-

- The Looked After Children (LAC) budget is projected to over spend by £79,000. Average LAC numbers were 376 in 2018-19, 384 in 2019-20 and are currently 395. However, the average number of children in independent residential placements has reduced from an average of 9 placements in 2019-20 to 5 at quarter 2. Some individual placements can cost around £300,000 per annum, therefore the reduction in numbers has seen a positive impact on the projected year end position. Number can fluctuate month to month so will require close ongoing monitoring for the remainder of the financial year.
- Family Support Services is projected to over spend by £131,000 primarily due to the increased demand for Direct Payments (DP). There are currently 112 Direct Payment clients compared with 114 at the end of 2019-20 however the projected overspend is primarily because of increased costs due to complexity of cases.
- The above over spends have been offset by a projected under spend of £220,000 on staffing vacancies within Commissioning and Social work due to a challenging recruitment environment and maximising grant income to offset staffing costs.

### 4.3.3 Communities Directorate

The net budget for the Directorate for 2020-21 is £27.810 million. The current projection is an anticipated over spend of £456,000. Loss of income included in this projection amounts to £125,000 - if this were successfully claimed from WG, the projection would improve to an under spend of £331,000. The main variances are:

<b>COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Projected Variance Over/(under) budget</b>	<b>% Variance</b>	<b>Over/ (under) specifically COVID-19 related</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>		<b>£'000</b>
Parks & Open Spaces	2,228	1,966	(262)	-11.8%	(262)
Parking Services	-296	2	298	-100.7%	50
Corporate Landlord	2,863	3,352	489	17.1%	75

#### Parks and Open Spaces

- There is a projected under spend of £262,000 on the parks and open spaces budget. This is primarily due to a reduction in the use of seasonal staff due directly to COVID-19.

#### Parking Services

- There is a projected over spend on the parking services budget of £298,000. This is an improved position compared with the projection at quarter 1 of £355,000, due to the successful claims from WG for 'loss of income' for the first quarter of 2020-21 (Table 3) and funding confirmed from the COVID recovery fund as noted in 4.1.11. However, the shortfall still appears to be significant as it was hoped that by quarter 2 more staff would have returned to work in council offices and lockdown would have been completely lifted encouraging more footfall in the town centres. The ongoing restrictions have placed additional pressures in this service area. There are also reduced levels of civil enforcement income.

#### Corporate Landlord

- There is a projected over spend on the corporate landlord budget of £489,000. Again, this is despite successful claims to Welsh Government of £160,000 (Table 3) and support from the COVID Recovery Fund towards rental holidays (See 4.1.11). It is anticipated that a further £75,000 will be claimed from WG but this has not been built into the projections.
- There are other shortfalls in income generated from properties run by the Council that are not necessarily COVID-19 related, but relate to occupancy shortfall. These include:-
  - Science Park                      £28,000
  - Watersports Centre              £15,000
  - Bridgend Market                  £60,000
  - Maesteg Market                  £24,000
  - Village Farm                        £28,000

- The balance of the shortfall in Corporate Landlord is primarily due to a reduction in productivity levels in the Facilities Management team in the first quarter of 2020-21, due to social distancing requirements in the workplace, and staff being re-deployed to support COVID-19 related activities – e.g. supporting FSM deliveries.

#### Public Realm Infrastructure

- Council approved a £2 million public realm budget pressure for 2020-21 as part of the MTFs in February 2020. At quarter 1 there was a projected under spend of £1.716 million against this budget heading. As reported in para 4.1.5 CCMB agreed to establish a COVID-19 Recovery Panel with £500,000 being utilised as a one-off from the Public Realm fund. In addition, unless further funding is received from WG towards the net loss of running the leisure services due to COVID-19, the Public Realm budget will be used to contribute towards this. CCMB have also approved a list of schemes to be funded from this budget in 2020-21, hence a break even position is projected at quarter 2.

#### 4.3.4 Chief Executive's

The net budget for the Directorate for 2020-21 is £18.228 million. Current projections anticipate an over spend against this budget of £1.118 million. COVID expenditure and loss of income included in this projection amount to £1.442 million - if these were to be successfully claimed from WG then the projection would improve to an under spend of £324,000. The main variances are:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S	Net Budget £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget £'000	% Variance	Over/ (under) specifically COVID-19 related £'000
Housing & Homelessness	1,126	2,316	1,190	105.7%	1,225
Finance	3,579	3,575	(4)	-0.1%	192
HR and Organisational Development	1,790	1,614	(176)	-9.8%	-
ICT	3,316	3,461	145	4.4%	-
Legal, Democratic & Regulatory	4,867	4,991	124	2.5%	217
Customer Services & Engagement	1,585	1,430	(155)	-9.8%	-

#### Housing & Homelessness

- The projected over spend of £1.190 million on Housing & Homelessness is primarily due to the additional costs due to COVID-19 – e.g. provision of facilities to isolate homeless individuals (B&B, hotels etc) and provision of essential supplies. As shown in Table 2, £743,000 has been successfully claimed for COVID-19 homelessness costs incurred to August 2020. The current projection does not include the value of future claims to WG to cover COVID-19 costs for the remainder of 2020-21. The final claim is estimated to be an additional £1.225 million and if the claims are successful, the projections would improve by this amount.

## Finance

- Whilst there is only a projected under spend of £4,000 on Finance, included in this projection is a shortfall of £192,000 relating to court cost income. As noted in paragraph 4.1.10, WG have indicated this shortfall is related to the impact on Council Tax income and not eligible to be claimed from the hardship fund. The shortfall has been offset by staffing vacancies across Finance and Housing Benefits.

## HR and Organisational Development

- There is a projected under spend of £176,000. This primarily relates to staffing vacancies (£115,000) which HR are actively recruiting to fill, or have already filled. In addition, whilst Council approved a £200,000 Council Wide Apprenticeship Programme budget pressure for 2020-21 as part of the MTFs in February 2020, the pandemic has impacted on the ability to appoint to the apprenticeship posts resulting in a projected £57,000 under spend.

## ICT

- The projected over spend of £145,000 is primarily due to a shortfall in re-charge income due to reduced ICT day to day activities, such as printing, as there are more staff working from home as a result of the pandemic whilst the fixed costs remain the same – e.g long term lease costs.

## Legal, Democratic & Regulatory

- There is a projected over spend of £124,000. This is primarily due to lower than forecast levels of income received for registrars, land charges, licencing fees and public health fees - £217,000. £68,000 has been included in our claim to WG for 'loss of income' for the first quarter of 2020-21 and is currently on hold so has not been included in the quarter 2 projections. The balance for anticipated loss of income (£149,000) for the remaining quarters of 2020-21 will be included in our future claims to WG. These shortfalls in income have been offset by staff vacancies.

## Customer Services & Engagement

- The projected under spend of £155,000 is predominantly in customer services and is due to staff vacancies, changes in staffing hours, staff opting out of pension and annual leave purchases. Various recruitment activities have been actioned in order to fill vacant posts but appointments have been affected by COVID-19.

### 4.3.5 Council Wide budgets

This section includes budgets, provisions and services which are council wide, and not managed by an individual directorate. The budget for 2020-21 is £47.268 million. The projected outturn is £43.749 million, resulting in a projected under spend of £3.519 million. The main variances are detailed below:

<b>COUNCIL WIDE BUDGETS</b>	<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>Projected Outturn</b>	<b>Projected Variance Over/(under) budget</b>	<b>% Variance</b>	<b>Over/ (under) specifically COVID -19 related</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>		<b>£'000</b>
Capital Financing	7,329	7,129	(200)	-2.73%	-
Other Corporate Budgets	13,917	10,651	(3,266)	-23.5%	-



### Capital Financing

- There is a projected under spend of £200,000 on interest paid/received due to a combination of lower borrowing than anticipated as the Council uses its own internal resources to finance schemes, and additional interest from current investments.

### Other Corporate Budgets

- Other corporate budgets includes funding for pay, price and pensions increases along with funding to deal with unexpected costs unforeseen when the budget was set. When the MTFs was approved in February 2020, the pay increases for NJC employees and teacher had not been finalised, but a claim for NJC staff had been submitted for an increase of 10% and whilst provision was made in the budget based on previous years' increases, an element of contingency was built in given that. Even a variance of 1% on the pay settlement for NJC staff alone can result in a swing of required funding of over £1 million per annum.
- In addition, inflation rates have fluctuated since the budget was set (CPI was 1.7% in February 2020 and had reduced to 0.2% by August 2020). The majority of the budget estimated for price inflation is retained centrally within Council wide budgets and allocated to directorates/schools as further information is known about specific contractual price increases e.g. for energy. Therefore, part of the under spend relates to the movement on inflation rates since budget setting, and the reduced requirement to allocate budget to service areas in-year.
- It is anticipated that when the detailed review of earmarked reserves is undertaken in the next quarter, that £700,000 of this under spend will be utilised to establish an earmarked reserve to meet the one-off pressures that have been identified for the 2021-22 financial year. In addition, based on the latest information available and the level of increase in recently agreed pay awards and the national living wage, it is likely that the provision currently set aside in the MTFs for 2021-22 will need to be supplemented by any funding not committed from the Council wide budgets this financial year.
- The decision to utilise the Corporate contingency reserve to fund the HTST and MREC budget pressures on a one-off basis has resulted in this budget being fully allocated for 2020-21 financial year.
- Given the uncertainty of Brexit and Covid-19 at this point in the financial year, it is prudent to assume that all other Council wide budgets will be fully spent by the year end.

### Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- There is currently a projected break even position on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme based on spend to date, funding from WG for quarter 1 of £133,000 and comparison against 2019-20 outturn. This is a demand led budget and take-up is difficult to predict. As noted in paragraph 4.1.13, the Covid pandemic has resulted in a significant increase in claims for universal credit, with a subsequent increase in eligibility for the council tax reduction scheme. The final additional cost of this is difficult to predict as we have yet to see the impact of

the end of the furlough scheme/newly unemployed and a likely increase in the benefits claimants. This budget will require close monitoring during 2020-21.

#### 4.4 Review of Earmarked Reserves

4.4.1 The Council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves to meet the needs of the organisation. The MTFs includes the Council's Reserves and Balances Protocol which sets out how the Council will determine and review the level of its Council Fund balance and earmarked reserves. At quarter 2 a review of the particular pressures that were to be covered by earmarked reserves was undertaken and Directorates have drawn down funding.

4.4.2 There have been net additions of £850,000, the cumulative draw down by directorates is £681,000 and £350,000 has been unwound, as shown in Table 7 below.

**Table 7 – Usable Earmarked Reserves (Excluding Council Fund) – Quarter 2**

Opening Balance 01-Apr-20 £'000	Reserve	Net Additions/Re classification £'000	Draw-down £'000	Unwound £'000	Closing Balance 30-Sep-20 £'000
	<b>Corporate Reserves:</b>				
(9,555)	Education & Family Support	(650)	-	-	(10,205)
(410)	Social Services & Wellbeing	-	35	-	(375)
(11,289)	Communities	-	48	-	(11,241)
(8,031)	Chief Executives	300	224	-	(7,507)
(14,004)	Non-Directorate	(500)	-	-	(14,504)
<b>(43,289)</b>	<b>Total Corporate Reserves</b>	<b>(850)</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(43,832)</b>
	<b>Directorate Earmarked Reserves:</b>				
(289)	Education & Family Support	-	-	-	(289)
(2,027)	Social Services & Wellbeing	-	115	350	(1,562)
(4,991)	Communities	-	-	-	(4,991)
(824)	Chief Executives	-	98	-	(726)
<b>(8,131)</b>	<b>Total Directorate Reserves</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>(7,568)</b>
	<b>Equalisation &amp; Grant Earmarked Reserves:</b>				
(961)	Education & Family Support	-	143	-	(818)
(65)	Social Services & Wellbeing	-	-	-	(65)
(1,902)	Communities	-	-	-	(1,902)
(767)	Chief Executives	-	18	-	(749)
<b>(3,695)</b>	<b>Total Equalisation Reserves</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,534)</b>
<b>(108)</b>	<b>School Balances</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(108)</b>
<b>(55,223)</b>	<b>Total Usable Reserves</b>	<b>(850)</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>(55,042)</b>

- 4.4.3 The net appropriation to earmarked reserves during Quarter 2 is £500,000 (£850,000 additions offset by £350,000 that have been unwound).
- 4.4.4 The main additions are £350,000 for the Children's Residential Accommodation Hub and £500,000 for the COVID Recovery Fund (See 4.1.5). The main reserve that was unwound related to Looked After Children which was then used to create the reserve for the Accommodation Hub in its place.
- 4.4.5 A more thorough review will be undertaken at quarter 3 when there is a clearer picture on pressures and projected year end balances.

## **5.0 Effect upon policy framework & procedure rules**

- 5.1 As required by section 3 (budgetary control) of the Financial Procedure Rules; Chief Officers in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member are expected to manage their services within the approved cash limited budget and to provide the Chief Finance Officer with such information as is required to facilitate and monitor budgetary control.

## **6.0 Equalities Impact Assessment**

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

## **7.0 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. As the report is for information it is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8.0 Financial implications**

- 8.1 These are reflected in the body of the report.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

- 9.1 That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:
- note the projected revenue position for 2020-21
  - note the virements between £100,000 and £500,000 as outlined in paragraph 4.1.14.

**Gill Lewis**  
**Interim Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change**  
**October 2020**

**Contact Officer:** Joanne Norman  
Interim Group Manager – Financial Planning and Budget Management

**Telephone:** 01656 643645

**Email:** [joanne.norman@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.norman@bridgend.gov.uk)

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

**Background documents:** Individual Directorate Monitoring Reports  
MTFS Report to Council – 26 February 2020

## PRIOR YEAR BUDGET REDUCTIONS CARRIED FORWARD INTO 2020-21

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal		Original Reduction and RAG £000	Revised RAG £000	Total amount of saving likely to be achieved by 20-21 £000	Reason why not achievable	Proposed Action in 2020-21 to achieve
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## RAG STATUS KEY

<b>RED</b>	Not likely to be achieved at all in this financial year or less than 25%.
<b>AMBER</b>	Reduction not likely to be achieved in full in financial year but greater than 25%
<b>GREEN</b>	Reduction likely to be achieved in full

## EDUCATION &amp; FAMILY SUPPORT

EFS1 (2017-18)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		20		0	Shortfall in savings identified to be funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.	Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process
EFS2 (2017-18)	School transport route efficiencies.		40		0	Shortfall in savings identified to be funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.	Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process
EFS1 (2018-19)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		67		0	Shortfall in savings identified to be funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.	Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process
EFS27 (2018-19)	Review arrangements for Special Schools Home to School Transport with a view to achieving efficiency savings		75		0	Shortfall in savings identified to be funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.	Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process
EFS 1 (2019-20)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		67		0	Shortfall in savings identified to be funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.	Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process
<b>Total Education &amp; Family Support Directorate</b>			<b>269</b>		<b>0</b>		

## SOCIAL SERVICES &amp; WELLBEING

SSW010 (2018-19)	Increase in-house fostering provision		392		392	Savings were staggered over 3 year period. No reason why this saving should not be achieved in full in 2020-21.	Close monitoring of this budget will be required in 2020-21 - it is anticipated that the saving will be achieved in full.
SSW22 (2019-20)	Identify further savings from library and cultural facilities and related services including reviewing the numbers of facilities (libraries, community centres) and also reductions in services or opening hours.		60		60	No reason why this saving should not be achieved in full in 2020-21.	No action required. Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
<b>Total Social Services &amp; Wellbeing Directorate</b>			<b>452</b>		<b>452</b>		

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal		Original Reduction and RAG £000	Revised RAG £000	Total amount of saving likely to be achieved by 20-21 £000	Reason why not achievable	Proposed Action in 2020-21 to achieve
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## COMMUNITIES

COM19 (2017-18)	Permitting Scheme road works net of existing income of £95,000		100		0	Timeline not in the direct control of BCBC officers as the business case is going through multiple steps in an approval process with WG. However ultimately a positive response is expected, and this is being lead by the group manager to ensure it is followed through.	The Streetworks review is reaching completion and will be submitted to WG for consideration. The responsible highways network budget area is committed to stay within budget irrespective of the delivery of the scheme.
COM 4 (2019-20)	Review of School Crossing Patrol service in line with GB standards		10		0	The level of service need is currently in excess of the available budget, hence saving is not likely to be fully achieved in 2020-21.	The provision of the service and the MTFS is predicated on sites meeting certain guidance. Assessment of sites continue to be reviewed in line with the Council protocol and if sites do not meet the criteria they could be considered for dis-establishment.
COM 20 (2019-20)	Highways Dept Management Structural Savings Target		100		100	No reason why this saving should not be achieved in full in 2020-21.	No action required. Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM 26 (2019-20)	Investigate the introduction of charging to users of the Shopmobility facility in Bridgend Town Centre to reduce/remove the current level of subsidy		5		0	Cabinet considered a report in January 2020 and approved the introduction of new hire fees and alteration to opening times to enable this saving to be achieved. However, whilst the new charges have been implemented in 2020-21, the lockdown of the town centre early in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 has impacted on the ability to fully achieve the savings proposal.	No further action required as shortfall is COVID-19 related. Close monitoring of the income levels will be required for the remainder of 2020-21.
COM 44 (2019-20)	Bridgend Bus Station - alternative measures to explore full cost recovery and external support will be pursued but, failing this, the likely required step to deliver this saving is closure.		45		45	Budget re-alignment from Public Realm budget actioned in 2020-21.	No action required. Budget re-alignment actioned in 2020-21.
COM 46 (2019-20)	Removal of budget for Subsidised Bus Routes		148		148	No reason why this saving should not be achieved in full in 2020-21.	No action required. Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM 52 (2019-20)	Reductions to the budget for the Materials Recovery and Energy Centre (MREC) to be achieved through the current procurement being undertaken with Neath Port Talbot CBC for the provision of new operator arrangements for the MREC facility at Crumlyn Burrows		1,300		1,000	Shortfall in savings identified of £300,000 - funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.	Budget Pressure to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process
COM 55 (2019-20)	Increase charge for Green Waste Service from £28.30 per household to £38.30		25		0	Whilst the new charges have been implemented, closure of the green waste processing facility and hence cessation of the green waste service for the first part of 2020-21 due to COVID-19 has impacted on the ability to fully achieve the savings proposal	No further action required as shortfall is COVID-19 related. Close monitoring of the income levels will be required for the remainder of 20-21.
COM 59 (2019-20)	Reduction to the opening hours of the Community Recycling Centres by 1 hour, per day.		17		17	No reason why this saving should not be achieved in full in 2020-21.	No action required. Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
<b>Total Communities Directorate</b>			<b>1,750</b>		<b>1,310</b>		

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S

CEX10 (2019-20)	Review CCTV function with aim to create efficiencies		30		30	No reason why this saving should not be achieved in full in 2020-21.	No action required. Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
<b>Total Chief Executive's Directorate</b>			<b>30</b>		<b>30</b>		

<b>GRAND TOTAL OUTSTANDING REDUCTIONS</b>			<b>2,501</b>		<b>1,792</b>		
<b>REDUCTIONS SHORTFALL</b>					<b>709</b>		

**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
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**EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT  
CENTRAL EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT**

EFS1	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Savings should occur naturally as a result of the policy application year on year, however dispersed learners and contractual pressure from operators as routes become more untenable may mean it becomes increasingly difficult to find the identified savings.</li> <li>Risk of price increases from Contractors.</li> </ul>	75	0	On 15 September 2020 Cabinet resolved to defer the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learner Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government in March 2021. It is unlikely that any change to the statutory distances by Welsh Government will follow until 2022 at the earliest and therefore even if the statutory distances reduce as a result of this review, the RSG would unlikely reflect this until 2022/23 at the earliest. The shortfall in savings identified to be funded from corporate contingency in 2020-21 with a Budget Pressures to be submitted as part of the 2021-22 MTFS process.
EFS44	Review of Childcare Team	Review existing staffing structure within the Childcare Team with a view to moving core funded staff to grant, where this option is eligible under grant conditions. In addition a review of the service demand placed on the Development Officers in supporting the private nursery settings throughout the county borough, ensuring a streamlined service that meets minimum statutory requirements. There are however, significant risks in making further reductions in this budget line (RSG) given Welsh Government's policy linked with both the national statutory Childcare Offer and Child Sufficiency requirements. In addition, this budget line has been reduced in previous years and existing demand (to fund placements) is exceeding budget.	10	10	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
EFS48	Efficiency saving targeting supplies and services budgets across the Education and Family Support Directorate	Limited impact as review has identified small historic underspends against this budget category.	87	87	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
EFS54	Further reduction to contribution to the Central South Consortium (CSC)	This would need to be agreed with other partners within the Consortium.	17	17	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
EFS57	Further review of staffing structures across the Education and Family Support Directorate	Potential delays in service delivery.	50	25	Delays to implementation of restructure due to COVID-19.
<b>Total Education and Family Support</b>			<b>239</b>	<b>139</b>	

**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
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**SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING**

SSW19	Further review of HALO partnership contract, including the Council taking over the management and payment of utility bills currently incurred by HALO. This will result in VAT efficiencies for HALO and contribute towards the reduction in the management fee	Previous negotiations have proved successful. No adverse impact identified.	40	0	Ongoing detailed discussions and seeking advice from VAT consultants. Underspends held across the service area to mitigate the shortfall in the short term.
SSW20	Identify further savings from leisure centres and swimming pools including reviewing the number of facilities and also reductions in services or opening hours.	Reduced availability of services and accessibility to the public. Negative impact on healthier wales wellbeing goals.	70	0	COVID-19 has impacted on the delivery of this saving in 2020-21. Underspends being held across the service area to mitigate the shortfall in the short term.
SSW22	Identify further savings from library and cultural facilities and related services including reviewing the numbers of facilities (libraries, community centres) and also reductions in services or opening hours.	Reduced availability of services and accessibility to the public. Negative impact on healthier wales wellbeing goals.	20	20	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
SSW26	Remodelling day service provision for older people and learning disability services	Full review of services which could mean alternative methods of service delivery	90	90	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
SSW27	Increase income generation from mobile response and telecare charging	Limited impact on current services but would require commercial expertise to assist with the proposal	75	0	Commercial expertise involvement required to progress this proposal. Savings likely to be achieved will not be known until review has been completed.
SSW28	Increase non-residential charging limits from £90 to £100 per week. This is totally reliant on Welsh Government changing the limits within their non-residential charging policy in 2020/21	Limited impact on services	200	200	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21 as charging policy has been amended by Welsh Government.



**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
SSW29	Further review of staffing structures across Adults and Children Services including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The management structures in the direct provider services as well as reviewing the demands on the service and the direct care hours needed to meet those demands.</li> <li>• The overall management structure across Adults, Children and Wellbeing services</li> <li>• The service will be reviewing its overall professional staff to ensure the levels of the staff meet current demands whilst being aware that the service need to ensure that the caseloads of qualified staff are in line with acceptable standard because if they are not it would impact on practice and performance and increase risk in the service as well as impacting on recruitment and retention and the Authority's ability to attract suitably experienced and qualified staff .</li> </ul>	This will mean reducing staff numbers, which will incur redundancy costs. There will also be reduced capacity within teams across the directorate	175	77	Shortfall due to timing of implementation of restructures. Close scrutiny of staff vacancy management will support the current shortfall.
SSW30	Further review of care packages linked to the assessment framework to include consideration of transport	It is envisaged that the number of care hours will reduce for service users across the directorate	150	150	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
<b>Total Social Services &amp; Wellbeing Directorate</b>			<b>820</b>	<b>537</b>	

**COMMUNITIES**

COM26	Investigate the introduction of charging to users of the Shopmobility facility in Bridgend Town Centre to reduce/remove the current level of subsidy otherwise closure of the facility will be necessary	The popularity of the service is generally declining with a significantly reduced number of users. Changes in technology have meant that lightweight, affordable scooters have now greatly increased in private ownership, compared to when the facility was introduced. The provision is non statutory and not one provided in other town centres in the County Borough or in many town centres of neighbouring authorities. On this basis in order to make the service viable it is proposed to introduce charging but if this does not present a realistic option to make the full required saving closure of the facility would be necessary. There is a risk that some members of the community with mobility issues may struggle to pay the necessary charges and therefore maybe unable to gain access to the town centre. It is proposed to engage with users of the facility to inform the way forward.	18	0	Cabinet considered a report in January 2020 and approved the introduction of new hire fees and alteration to opening times to enable this saving to be achieved. However, whilst the new charges have been implemented in 2020-21, the lockdown of the town centre early in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 has impacted on the ability to fully achieve the savings proposal.
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**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
COM42	Review of parks and playing fields service split over two financial years - 19/20 and 20/21:- 15% reduction to seasonal operatives budget (£75K). Corresponding reduction to large and small plant (£29k). Removal of bowls club grant (£34K).	The cut identified for both 2019-20 and 2020-21 will mean that there are reduced levels of maintenance and slower reaction times which will mean a degradation over time which will result in higher future capital costs i.e. maintenance of remaining pavilions.	69	69	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM43	End of management of Kenfig National Nature Reserve	The agreement between BCBC and Kenfig Corporation Trust (KCT) ends in December 2019. It is currently proposed that BCBC does not enter into any new agreement. KCT are underway with a process, supported by their agent HRT, to identify a new tenant. This process is being conducted in partnership with NRW. There is a risk that the level of management may be affected, however there is also the opportunity that the new tenant may be able to draw on resources that BCBC cannot.	35	35	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM51	Ongoing implementation of Corporate Landlord model	The savings will be delivered in a number of ways including operational efficiencies, streamlined business processes, IT investment, improved procurement and contract management, and some deletions of vacant posts.	350	325	Level of savings identified as at Quarter 2 2020-21. Service area will continue to identify efficiencies to meet shortfall
COM55	Increase charge for Green Waste Service from £28.30 per household to £38.30	The new waste contract related items would require both Contract Variation negotiations with Kier to confirm the saving levels proposed and public consultation regarding the charge changes and reduced levels of service.	25	0	Whilst the new charges have been implemented, closure of the green waste processing facility and hence cessation of the green waste service for the first part of 2020-21 due to COVID-19 has impacted on the ability to fully achieve the savings proposal
COM56	Increase charge for collection of 3 bulky waste items from £15.50 to £20.	The waste contract items would require both Contract Variation negotiations with Kier to confirm the saving levels proposed and public consultation regarding the charge changes and reduced levels of service.	10	10	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM59	Reduction to the opening hours of the Community Recycling Centres by 1 hour, per day.		17	17	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM73	BCBC to save the annual BID funding now BID no longer functions	No impact that is within the control of BCBC following a unsuccessful BID ballot.	15	15	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM76	Review of Porthcawl Marina with a view to it running on a full cost recovery basis. This will involve a review of the berth fees.	This would involve a review of the berth fees and other operational costs. Any approach to outsourcing management would likely require financial support and therefore negate any savings.	25	25	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.

**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
COM77	Direct Services Organisation (DSO) staffing restructure - the front line staffing for highways which deal with a range of highway issues such as Winter gritting, Traffic collisions clear up, Flooding, Gully maintenance, Maintenance of Traffic signs, streetlights and traffic signals. The team have a major role within the Borough in the maintenance and repair of the highway. Since the loss of work the team undertook on behalf of the South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTRA) there is the potential to make a saving in the DSO staffing structure.	This would be potentially focused at a managerial level with the implication on the ability to deal with service requests in regard of local construction projects. It would also increase the single point failure in regard of sickness absence for remaining members of team.	50	50	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM79	Investigate reducing costs and increasing charging for running the Bridgend Business Forum for specific events to reduce/remove the current level of subsidy otherwise reduction in the service level will be necessary.	If reduced costs and increased charges are accepted impact should be minimal, there is a risk that the level of support / number of events may need to be reduced to support the saving.	18	18	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
COM96	WG National AHP Waste Programme - capital contribution from WG towards 7.5 tonne vehicle to collect AHP recycling	This would require Contract Variation negotiations with Kier to confirm the saving levels proposed based on a reduction in costs in relation to the current AHP vehicle that is leased	14	14	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
<b>Total Communities Directorate</b>			<b>646</b>	<b>578</b>	

**CHIEF EXECUTIVES**

CEX1	Efficiencies from Shared Regulatory Service	May require restructuring within service and impact on response times, but will be managed across the 3 participating Councils and will aim to minimise impact.	37	37	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
CEX11	The expansion of the shared internal audit service has created efficiencies resulting in reduced contribution for BCBC	No impact on service provision	40	40	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
CEX12	Reduction of HR staffing budgets	Potential reduction of posts and redundancy costs	44	44	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
CEX13	Reduction of Partnerships Services budgets - savings achieved through software rationalisation and removal of vacancies within the ICT service unit	Minimal service impact as savings a result of vacancies and efficiencies	200	200	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
CEX15	Reduction of Legal fees budgets	Minimal impact	80	80	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.

**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
CEX16	Reduce Members' training budget	Less training opportunities for elected members.	7	7	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
CEX17	Reduction of Business Support staffing budgets	Potential reduction of posts and redundancy costs	100	100	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
	<b>Total Chief Executive's Directorate</b>		<b>508</b>	<b>508</b>	

**MONITORING OF 2020-21 BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Proposed 2020-21 £'000	Value Likely to be Achieved 2020-21 £'000	Reason why not likely to be achievable
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**CORPORATE / COUNCIL WIDE**

CWD6	Reduction in funding required for Apprenticeship Levy	No impact as budget historically been higher than required.	50	50	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
CWD11	Reduction in the budget to cover the cost to the Council of the outstanding liability for Employers Liability, Public Liability and Property following favourable insurance contract renewals in previous years.	No impact as favourable insurance contract renewals have been achieved, however no mitigation available for potential increases to premiums in future years.	150	150	Full saving should be achieved in 2020-21.
<b>Total Corporate / Council Wide</b>			<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	

<b>GRAND TOTAL REDUCTIONS</b>	<b>2,413</b>	<b>1,962</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET REDUCTION REQUIREMENT (MOST LIKELY)</b>	<b>2,413</b>	<b>2,413</b>
<b>REDUCTION SHORTFALL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>451</b>

<b>1,023</b>	<b>1,535</b>
<b>996</b>	<b>575</b>
<b>394</b>	<b>303</b>
<b>2,413</b>	<b>2,413</b>

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL	Budget 2020-21			Projected Outturn	Projected Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	Expenditure Budget	Income Budget	Net Budget			
	£000	£000	£000			
<b>EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT</b>						
School Delegated Budgets	120,988	(21,302)	99,686	99,686	-	0.0%
Learning	9,779	(3,060)	6,719	7,101	382	5.7%
Strategic Partnerships & Comm	24,646	(10,462)	14,184	15,362	1,178	8.3%
Health and Safety	381	(2)	379	313	(66)	-17.3%
<b>TOTAL EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT</b>	<b>155,794</b>	<b>(34,826)</b>	<b>120,968</b>	<b>122,462</b>	<b>1,494</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING</b>						
Adult Social Care	66,081	(18,104)	47,977	48,499	522	1.1%
Prevention and Wellbeing	5,973	(793)	5,180	5,151	(29)	-0.6%
Safeguarding & Family Support	19,840	(886)	18,954	18,881	(73)	-0.4%
<b>TOTAL SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING</b>	<b>91,894</b>	<b>(19,783)</b>	<b>72,111</b>	<b>72,531</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
<b>COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE</b>						
Planning & Development Services	1,754	(1,257)	497	566	69	13.9%
Strategic Regeneration	2,080	(420)	1,660	1,660	-	0.0%
Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability	2,670	(1,672)	998	976	(22)	-2.2%
Cleaner Streets and Waste Management	12,415	(1,865)	10,550	10,686	136	1.3%
Highways and Green Spaces	21,914	(10,943)	10,971	10,760	(211)	-1.9%
Director and Head of Operations - Communities	271	-	271	265	(6)	-2.2%
Corporate Landlord	13,951	(11,088)	2,863	3,353	490	17.1%
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>55,055</b>	<b>(27,245)</b>	<b>27,810</b>	<b>28,266</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S</b>						
Chief Executive	509	-	509	514	5	1.0%
Finance	46,407	(42,828)	3,579	3,575	(4)	-0.1%
HR/OD	2,153	(363)	1,790	1,614	(176)	-9.8%
Partnerships	2,999	(1,037)	1,962	1,768	(194)	-9.9%
Legal, Democratic & Regulatory	5,855	(988)	4,867	4,991	124	2.5%
Elections	162	(60)	102	102	-	0.0%
ICT	4,646	(1,330)	3,316	3,461	145	4.4%
Housing & Homelessness	7,124	(5,998)	1,126	2,316	1,190	105.7%
Business Support	1,088	(111)	977	1,005	28	2.9%
<b>TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S</b>	<b>70,943</b>	<b>(52,715)</b>	<b>18,228</b>	<b>19,346</b>	<b>1,118</b>	<b>6.1%</b>
<b>TOTAL DIRECTORATE BUDGETS</b>						
	<b>373,686</b>	<b>(134,569)</b>	<b>239,117</b>	<b>242,605</b>	<b>3,488</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
Council Wide Budgets	48,238	(970)	47,268	43,749	(3,519)	-7.4%
Earmarked Reserves	500	-	500	500	-	0.0%
<b>NET BRIDGEND CBC</b>	<b>422,424</b>	<b>(135,539)</b>	<b>286,885</b>	<b>286,854</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

NB: Differences due to rounding of £000's

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

#### CABINET RESPONSE TO THE CROSS-PARTY RECOVERY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) present the Committee with the Cabinet response to the Recommendations of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel attached as **Appendix A** submitted to Cabinet on 15 September 2020.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

3.1 On 23 March 2020 the UK Government imposed a nationwide lockdown in an effort to help minimise the spread of coronavirus. The Council has undergone significant change during this period, in that some services have been created, some services stopped and some staff have been redeployed.

3.2 The Chief Executive presented a report to the meeting of Cabinet on 30 June 2020 for a proposed approach to recovery planning from Covid-19. The recovery programme had the following 3 strands - Restart, Recover and Renew.

3.3 It was agreed at the meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 July 2020 to establish a Cross-Party Recovery Panel. Membership of the Recovery Panel comprises the 12 Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee plus 4 additional Members: 2 Labour; 1 Independent Alliance and 1 Conservative, nominated by Group Leaders. The Panel was established with the aim of shaping, informing and advising Cabinet on the Council's recovery planning to form the basis of the recovery phase for the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4 The Recovery Panel would select key areas for examination in greater depth and make recommendations to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for recommending to Cabinet on 15 September 2020, noting the extremely short timescales in order to feed into the realignment of the Authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

4.1 The Panel met on six occasions during August and were supported by the Senior Democratic Officer – Scrutiny, two Scrutiny Officers and the Group Manager Legal & Democratic Services.

4.2 During its meetings, the Recovery Panel considered presentations from requested invitees including: Public Service Board (PSB) Team Officers; Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) Chief Executive, Operational Manager and a Community Navigator; the Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing and the Head of Adult Services; the Director of Bridgend County Care and Repair, and; the Head of Partnerships and Performance and Group Manager – Housing.

4.3 In Phase 1, the Cross-Party Recovery Panel has taken a structured approach to the selection of key areas from those identified for priority to feed into the recovery process and has identified key issues following examination.

4.4 It is recommended that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the Cabinet response to the findings and recommendations attached in **Appendix A** submitted to Cabinet on 15 September 2020 and provide any feedback.

#### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 This item relates to the role of Cross-Party Recovery Panel as consultees in respect of the recovery process.

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no equality implications directly attached to this report.

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

7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The consideration and approval of this report will assist in the recovery process for both the short-term and in the long-term.
- Prevention - The consideration and approval of this report will assist in the Recovery process by approving and shaping preventative measures provided by Directorates to generate savings.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - The consideration and approval of this report will assist in the recovery process by approving and shaping collaboration and integrated working.
- Involvement - Publication of the report ensures that the public and stakeholders can review the work that has been undertaken by Recovery Panel Members.

## 8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

## 9. Recommendations

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- Note the Cabinet response to the Cross-Party Recovery Panel's Recommendations attached in **Appendix A**, submitted to Cabinet on 15 September 2020 as part of the recovery process, and provide any feedback.

**K Watson**  
**Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services**  
**26 November 2020**

**Contact officer:** Scrutiny Team

**Telephone:** 01656 643263

**Email:** [scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk)

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

**Background Documents:** None

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**CABINET RESPONSE TO THE CROSS-PARTY RECOVERY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE  
CABINET ON 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

**Recommendation 1**

**The Panel recommends that the future sustainability of culture, leisure and green spaces should be added to the list of key priorities that were identified in the recovery planning Cabinet report of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020, in order to facilitate health, exercise and wellbeing.**

**CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet fully recognise and acknowledge the crucial role culture, leisure and green spaces play in ensuring opportunities for local people to participate in recreational activities, whether as a participant or as a spectator, and the impact that has on health, exercise and both physical and mental wellbeing. This has been demonstrated by the support that has already been given to our partners Halo Leisure and Awen Cultural Trust to ensure the long term sustainability of the services that they run on our behalf and promote a more rapid recovery from the impact of the Covid 19 lockdown. In addition Cabinet have, as part of our Covid response, introduced a range of measures to promote the continued use of green space both for formal and informal activity, including waiving playing fields charges and developing and publicising the use of rights of way across the County Borough. Cabinet are of the view therefore that these priorities are already implicit in the holistic 'public health' theme that has been identified and approved as one of the Council's four main recovery priorities moving forward. However, Cabinet are happy to make the link with culture, leisure and green spaces more explicit in line with the panel's recommendation.

**Recommendation 2**

**The Panel recommends that the Economic Taskforce training that had already been offered to businesses should be offered to the Third Sector and Charities, to avoid duplication of effort.**

**CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet understands that a significant amount of training has been provided to businesses and also extended to small numbers of third sector and charity organisations. This includes nearly 2,700 business with one of the funding streams made available as a result of the coronavirus pandemic BCBC undertook a series of specific measures to support businesses in different sectors to 'start-back' as restrictions were lifted.

In response to an identified need within the retail community, the Council's Enterprise and Employability section led on a 'Retail start-back pack' which included the distribution of 2,000 sneeze guards. These provided a barrier between businesses and their customers, which in addition to other measures put in place by businesses following their own risk assessment, aided measures to support consumer confidence. In addition, the team secured the delivery of COSHH accredited Covid training courses to 350 business employees across the County. This course supported awareness and understanding amongst the business community in relation to health and safety measures in their properties when re-opening to customers. Additionally, the team supported

efforts within the tourism and hospitality sectors with 260 guest registers delivered to local businesses to support Test, Track and Trace process as part of the tourism and hospitality start-back pack. All of these measures were specifically created in Bridgend County and directly in response to identified business needs following research with the business community.

Cabinet are advised that certain aspects of the above may be suitable for some of those in third sector and charities. If this was to be taken forward, a period of research with the third sector and charities would be needed to identify need and determine demand. Based on this options could be considered and resources secured prior to options being deployed.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The panel recommends that through the Welsh Government Procurement, all organisations providing care across the County Borough have access to suitable and appropriate PPE following Welsh Government and HSE guidelines, for the activity being undertaken.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet are of the view that the circumstances regarding PPE has improved changed significantly. At the start of Lockdown, PPE was in short supply which resulted in the "Push delivery" that all Local Authorities received from and provided by Welsh Government was totally inadequate to meet demand. For example the first delivery received from Welsh Government included only 1500 masks. Initially PPE was intended to be provided to Independent Providers under emergency circumstances which meant that such allocations were rationed to ensure that the meagre supplies could be stretched to meet wider demand, and in those early days, PPE received was inadequate to meet the requirements of national guidelines. However during week 3, the Push delivery increased to include in excess of 22000 masks, which allowed the Council to arrive at a formula that enabled all Independent Providers (and Council provided services) to be apportioned a share that has since resulted in a weekly delivery of PPE to all Registered (in the region of 60) providers of Residential and Nursing Care, Domiciliary Care and Supported Living Care. Gradually BCBC Push delivery increased to a maximum of 102,000 masks (in addition to 300,000 gloves, 10,000 visors and 102,000 aprons) per week of which in the region of 75% is delivered weekly to all providers. This regular weekly delivery has been a game changer for the PPE service which is very much appreciated by the Independent Providers. In addition due to the regular volumes of a weekly delivery a substantial PPE reserve has been developed within BCBC and provides assurance that should there be any drop of supply in future, the essential weekly delivery of PPE can be maintained for a number of weeks.

### **Recommendation 4**

**The panel recommended that Cabinet formally approach and enter into discussions with Welsh Government in respect of funding to be held locally as local volunteer organisations should have a say in how that money is spent in their Communities, rather than it being held by the WCVA.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet recognise that whilst local volunteer organisations would benefit from being more involved in the allocation of funding rather than it being held by WCVA, such a change would require a national approach. Welsh Government in their publication on the Third Sector Scheme in Wales

Report 18/19 (published July 2020) identifies how the WG invests in the Third Sector Support Wales approach (ie. WCVA and the 19 County Voluntary Councils across Wales). The scheme aims to deliver a partnership between Welsh Govt and the third sector to support the growth of a stronger and more resilient third sector, better policy and better public services. At the risk of generalisation, it is known that CVC's work with grassroots organisations (local and regional activity) many of whom have complex support needs, whereas large, national organisations tend to have staff capacity, higher skills sets and different support needs. The relationship between WG and CVC's is mainly channelled through WCVA.

Given the importance of the local and hyperlocal third sector response to Covid to our local authority, there may be value in WG reviewing the proportion of funding distributed between the national and local delivery agents within the Third sector infrastructure so that local and regional partnership working is the focus and third sector activity is strengthened and sustained.

Additionally, the proportionality and methods of distribution of investment into the community and third sector should be reviewed.

As an example, the small VSEF fund (£25000) distributed via the local CVC quickly injected cash into those organisations delivering crucial support on the ground in our communities, and it did so with good local intelligence and through simple processes. The fund that was centralised and distributed via WCVA directly was millions in comparison.

The next iteration of that funding (Voluntary Services Recovery fund) was wholly centralised with no local distribution made available to CVC's. The related processes of this centralised approach can create barriers and is proving complex for many small local groups, some of whom are not connected to WCVA or struggle with working online or utilising the MAP system.

There may be benefit in WG recognising the value of local CVC's distributing investment directly into the communities, adding value to other local investment (as was the case with VSEF and indeed, the old CFAP community grants). The CVC's are directly connected into the PSB and RPB and are fully aware of the local needs assessments and are therefore able to make informed decisions that tie into the overall ambitions for our County.

Recognising that there is some potential benefits in funding allocations being made direct to CVCs, Cabinet will consider how it can engage other local authorities to approach Welsh Government to gain a Wales wide approach.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The Panel recommends that no further cuts are placed on Third Sector funding and that a whole Council approach to funding the Third Sector be adopted. The Panel also recommends that the appropriate resources be put in place for BAVO to facilitate this.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet are very much aware of the importance of the role provided by the Third Sector and have taken opportunities to protect and increase with other funding opportunities. Reduced funding has been considered each year as part of the MTFs proposals. Cuts to CAB and BAVO were part of the formal budget consultation last year and the proposals did not gain acceptance. The public and the

Cabinet were keen to continue support for the 3rd sector organisations and to maintain the successful partnership that has been built.

Consideration will be given to how we best work with our partners and ensure that resources are deployed in the most effective way.

#### **Recommendation 6**

**The panel recommends that Cabinet approach Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to understand their Covid-19 plan in relation to both Primary and Secondary health care plans and obtains copies of these.**

Cabinet recognises that there is close working between our services and Health Board during the delivery of integrated services and through the exceptional circumstances experienced during the pandemic. It is normal expectations that local authorities in the region will contribute to appropriate Health Board plans. The Health Board are currently in the process of developing Winter Quarter 3 and 4 plans for submission to the Health Board on the 29th October. These plans will be developed for the Region but further work will be undertaken to identify the specifics for the Primary care response within BCBC.

#### **Recommendation 7**

**The Panel noted the Covid-19 impact on people with dementia in Wales and the massive deterioration seen in sufferers and noted that BAVO had worked with BCBC on developing Dementia friendly communities, but that funding was coming to an end soon, and would be reverting back to the Alzheimer's Society. The Panel therefore recommended that Cabinet write to Welsh Government to ensure that this is adequately funded.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

Developing Dementia Supportive Communities is a strategic priority within the "Ageing Well Plan for Bridgend". The funding identified had been previously provided by Western Bay to BAVO as opposed to via Welsh Government and this funding stream has concluded. There are other sources of investment provided by the Integrated Care Fund that Bridgend is accessing and also some core funding relating to the Older Persons strategy that can support the ongoing development of work. This work can be progressed with BAVO and other local partners. BCBC currently commissions the Alzheimers society to support people living with dementia and carers on an annual basis beyond this funding which was not a large sum. There is the potential for cross sector working and partnership with BAVO to develop a strategic approach that meets the needs of Bridgend.

#### **Recommendation 8**

**The Panel recommended that Cabinet engage with Welsh Government on the continued financial support to eradicate homelessness and the use of more innovative approaches for organisations to do that.**



#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet are fully engaged with the WG on this matter and share the ambition to tackle homelessness. Capital and revenue funding has been secured from WG to increase housing stock in Bridgend for this year through the WG Phase 2 Homelessness Scheme. This is for the financial year 20/21 only. This will only provide funding for a small number of premises. Cabinet will continue to request additional funding for on-going revenue and capital schemes that can target provision for homelessness cases. The cost of the increased guidelines for supporting homeless in accommodation is estimated at around £2m per year. This will increase further if our particular emergency provision such as Nightshelters and Floorspace provision is not supported by WG.

#### **Recommendation 9**

**The Panel recommends to Cabinet that a holistic Service Level Agreement is set-up between the Authority and BAVO.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

There is an annual SLA in place between BCBC and BAVO that provides financial support towards core resources and activity of the CVC. Additionally, from time to time opportunities may arise for project activities and funding will be put in place via an SLA or similar arrangement. Existing project funding to BAVO is currently linked primarily to joint work with the Wellbeing directorate. BAVO also act as a distributor for small amounts of funding to the sector on behalf of BCBC and other partners (such as Food poverty grant) for which an agreement is also in place. There is an opportunity as part of the "Building Resilient Communities" approach to explore how to make best use of overall resources and what this might mean in terms of further support of BAVO and the third sector

#### **Recommendation 10**

**The Panel recommend that Cabinet investigate the establishment of an adapted housing register that works with all partners and covers the whole County Borough area.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

BCBC has previously had an Adapted Housing Register which was removed as it was not seen to have real benefits. RSL's are key partners in the nomination and allocation process of all housing in Bridgend. In order to understand whether this is beneficial change to the new housing Jigsaw system that was established in January this year engagement will take place with RSL's to determine whether there is a need to introduce an adapted housing register and determine any operational changes, IT requirements and implementation timescale if required. Cabinet will be kept abreast of these developments and oversee appropriate service improvements.

#### **Recommendation 11**

**The Panel recommend that Cabinet write to Valleys to Coast expressing its disappointment of their level of cooperation during Covid-19.**

**CABINET RESPONSE:**

There have been some previous difficulties with V2C, however the Council and V2C are now engaging more successfully. The Council's routes for re-housing and meeting WG expectations during the initial lockdown were hampered by a number of external factors such as limited private sector access to accommodation and Covid 19 impacted on all RSL's during this period. However all local RSL's have subsequently responded positively to the need to introduce a Rapid Rehousing Panel to help resolve and move people on from temporary accommodation. V2C and Linc have also been supportive in our bids to WG for capital funding to increase the housing stock. The co-operation and collaborative nature of this work is crucial in delivering housing and support schemes in Bridgend and Cabinet will reinforce with all RSL's the joint responsibilities and collaborative efforts required to meet homelessness challenges of the future.

**Recommendation 12**

**The Panel recommend that Cabinet write to Welsh Government regarding the decision of Registered Social Landlords to furlough their staff at a time of need, which has impacted on other public services.**

**Cabinet Response**

The co-operation and collaborative nature in delivering housing and support schemes in Bridgend is crucial and Cabinet will reinforce the joint responsibilities and collaborative efforts required to meet homelessness challenges of the future and seek reassurances from WG that support will be provided to RSL's to ensure that furloughing is not required in the future.

**Recommendation 13**

**The Panel recommend to Cabinet that the targeting of Social Housing Grant should be considered to develop housing options for the homelessness and people with support, to enable them to access suitable accommodation.**

**Cabinet Response:**

Cabinet already have oversight over the targeting and spend of Social Housing Grant (SHG) in the Borough Council area. SHG is a planned 3 year programme of development which is decided by Welsh Government. Discussions take place with WG regularly on new developments and projects with the aim of increasing stock. Discussions have been held with all RSL's to develop schemes as quickly as possible which will support homelessness – primarily one bed stock. It is also important that all areas and communities have a balanced and sustainable approach and development of all stock to meet rehousing needs.

Capital and revenue funding has been secured from WG to increase housing stock in Bridgend for this year through the WG Phase 2 Homelessness Scheme. Cabinet will continue to request additional funding for on-going revenue and capital schemes that can target provision for homelessness cases in particular emergency provision.

#### **Recommendation 14**

**That BCBC prepares a corporate contingency strategic Covid-19 plan that will involve all statutory partners and Third Sector support networks in line with their individual responsibilities to the citizens of the County Borough of Bridgend.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

During the initial Lockdown period, BCBC was part of a range of strategic arrangements that included statutory and non-statutory partners. These arrangements include ILF Regional arrangements and PSB and played critical roles in ensuring that Bridgend services are aligned to partner organisations to meet the challenges of COVID-19 in our communities. In addition to this we have developed a local Recovery Plan that has been approved and is based on Lessons Learnt provided by services. In addition a corporate contingency budget has been created that has been used to support necessary responses to COVID-19 and will continue to be used as required. Nevertheless we will continue to work with RPB and PSB to ensure that BCBC plays its part in such arrangements and deliver some of the expectations set out in the developing Community Impact Assessment being overseen by the PSB.

#### **Recommendation 15**

**The Panel recommend that Cabinet revisit the Authority's policy on the disposal of surplus land which could be made available for the development of affordable housing, in line with Welsh Government guidelines.**

#### **CABINET RESPONSE:**

Cabinet are overseeing the development of a new acquisitions and disposals strategy, which builds on current practice around achieving the best disposal outcome for BCBC - balancing the best price against the benefits being offered through alternative uses including partnership working/ community asset transfers, in line with BCBC policies. In essence the current practice works dynamically to support BCBC corporate plan and policies, including working with RSLs on a number of projects and disposing of land to them off market, where appropriate.

If there is a Council policy for planning to identify more land for affordable housing this will potentially negatively impact on capital receipts and hence delivery of other corporate programmes, unless there is a mechanism to fund the gap from WG.

However If WG was to make funding available to bring sites forward for affordable housing that otherwise are not viable, particularly North of the M4, this may also be considered as an opportunity.

Local authorities have a clear statutory obligation to achieve “best consideration” in terms of any sale receipt. So if it is to restrict the sale for affordable housing, it will need to consider the legal means (including state aid) for doing this; particularly where there is likely to be challenge from house builders on the more attractive sites.

**Recommendation 16**

**The Panel recommend that Cabinet consider exploring the potential of Bridgend County Borough Council becoming a Cooperative Council.**

**CABINET RESPONSE:**

In efforts to make Bridgend CBC a better place for residents to live and businesses to thrive, Cabinet acknowledges this recommendation and will explore in more detail how the Council can achieve the status of becoming a cooperative Council and to identify what the benefits and costs to such an approach would be.

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

#### FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

##### 1. Purpose of report

- a) To present the proposed initial items for the draft interim Forward Work Programme, including those items delegated to the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- b) To request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next meeting, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) To request the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings, using the agreed criteria form.

##### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

### **3. Background**

#### Scrutiny Update

- 3.1 Following the Covid-19 Pandemic lockdown in March, Scrutiny Committees were initially postponed as the Council focused upon key priorities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A report was presented to Cabinet in June 2020 requesting that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) consider the creation of a Cross-Party Recovery Panel. The COSC met on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and approved the establishment of a Recovery Panel with the aim of shaping, informing and advising Cabinet on the Council's recovery planning to form the basis of the recovery phase of the pandemic. The Panel met 6 times and heard from 5 sets of invitees between 4<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and produced recommendations to COSC on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 which were further reported to Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> September, and a formal response from Cabinet has now been received and is being reported to this Committee meeting. Members of the Recovery Panel have recently received the Public Service Board's Community Impact Assessment to read and reflect upon the content in full, prior to its next meeting in December, to utilise the information when the Panel considers and selects its next key area of focus to be examined in greater detail.
- 3.2 A Combined meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1 and 2 was held remotely via Skype for Business on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Scrutiny considered proposals for Post-16 Education and Learner Travel and made recommendations to Cabinet upon the proposals. Cabinet considered the Scrutiny recommendations for Post-16 Education on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 and took a decision on the preferred option, and considered the recommendations upon Learner Travel on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learner Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government in March 2021.
- 3.3 Planning and preparations for this year's cycle of Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) meetings commenced well ahead of the first meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020, with 3 meetings being supported to date, and arrangements are underway for the fourth meeting.

#### Recommencing of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.4 The Schedule of Meetings for the remaining municipal year was agreed at the Annual Meeting of Council on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. As the Recovery Panel has now been established, it is recognised that, moving forward, meetings of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will need to be focused and strategic to avoid a duplication of work.

#### Forward Work Programme

- 3.5 Under the terms of the Council's Constitution, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee must publish a Forward Work Programme (FWP) as far as it is known.
- 3.6 An effective FWP will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected, as well as the approach that will be adopted; i.e. will the Committee be undertaking

a policy review/ development role (“Overview”) or performance management approach (“Scrutiny”).

- 3.7 The FWPs will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC) and any information gathered from Forward Work Programme meetings with Corporate Directors and Cabinet.

#### **4. Current situation / proposal**

- 4.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 30<sup>th</sup> September, the scheduling of standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees upon: the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Performance, the Corporate Plan, Budget Monitoring, Scrutiny Annual Report, etc. has been mapped.
- 4.2 Forward Work Programme Update reports have been submitted to Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees held in October / November for consideration, with the outcomes being fed back to this Committee to set a focused overall Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.
- 4.3 At the time of the reports, the Council had been advised that due to the revised timing of the Local Government financial settlement from Welsh Government, scrutiny of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) would need to be considered by Scrutiny Committees after Cabinet considers draft MTFS proposals on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and not in the December cycle of meetings as originally planned. Consequently, arrangements have been made to move the date of the January meetings to facilitate this, as approved by Council on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- 4.4 At the first meeting of SOSC 1, 2 and 3 which were held in October and November, the Committees received Forward Work Programme Updates and agreed to receive updated briefings from the relevant Corporate Director upon the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic upon their Service areas and the operational response, in the next meetings in December and that the MTFS would be considered in the January cycle of meetings, for the reasons stated in paragraph 4.3 above.

#### Identification of Further Items

- 4.5 The SOSCs were also asked whether they wished to identify any further items for consideration on the interim Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings, using the prior agreed Criteria Form. The Committee are reminded of the Criteria Form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The Criteria Form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to ensure a strategic responsibility for Scrutiny and that its work benefits the Authority. The SOSCs agreed it would be prudent to wait until the Corporate Directors report to their December meetings, before identifying further items for consideration for inclusion in the Forward Work Programme.
- 4.6 The draft interim Forward Work Programme for COSC and the SOSCs is presented below:

### First Cycle of Meetings (for information):

<b>Scrutiny Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Report:</b>
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	- Forward Work Programme Update;
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	- Nomination to Corporate Parenting Committee;
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	- Nomination to Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel.
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2020	- Nomination of a Chairperson; - Budget Monitoring 2020-21 Quarter 2 Revenue Forecast; - Cabinet response to Cross-Party Recovery Panel Recommendations; - Nomination to Corporate Parenting Committee; - Nomination to Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel; - FWP Update Report.

### Second Cycle of Meetings:

Directors have been requested to present a verbal update upon the impact of Covid-19 upon their service area / their operational response, at the next SOSC meetings:

<b>Scrutiny Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Report:</b>
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	Corporate Director - Education and Family Support
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2	14 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3	17 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	Corporate Director – Communities
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	- Corporate Plan 18-22 reviewed for 21-22; - Quarter 2 Performance; - <i>Capital Strategy 21-22 onwards (may be at this meeting or with MTFS in January meetings below.)</i>



### Third Cycle of Meetings:

<b>Scrutiny Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Report:</b>
Combined Scrutiny Committee of all Scrutiny Members for	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 10am	Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy for: - <b>Education &amp; Family Support;</b> - <b>Communities.</b>
Combined Scrutiny Committee of all Scrutiny Members for	Thursday, 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2021 at 10am	Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy for: - <b>Social Services &amp; Wellbeing;</b> - <b>Chief Executive's.</b>
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2021 at 10am	Medium Term Financial Strategy and Draft Budget Consultation Process (to present the Committee with the final report of the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) and the responses from all the Subject the SOSCs and the final BREP Recommendations upon the Draft Budget Proposals and MTFs.

### Corporate Parenting

- 4.7 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a Local Authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend.
- 4.8 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.

### Scrutiny Member Training

- 4.9 Members may recall that Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Questioning Skills Training for Scrutiny Members and Training for Scrutiny Chairs was postponed due to the national lockdown. However, WLGA can now offer the training via Microsoft Teams software, which has recently been installed on Members' devices. Following consultation with Scrutiny Chairs, the following training sessions have been arranged via Microsoft Teams:
- One session of Scrutiny Questioning Skills for all Scrutiny Members on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm;

- One session of Scrutiny Chairs' Training for 3 Scrutiny Chairs, the Chair of the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel, the Chair of the Cross-Party Recovery Panel and the Chair of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Panel on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November at 10am.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 The work of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council constitution to be updated.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

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

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

- 7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
- Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service, Elected Members and members of the public.
- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that the public and stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The delivery of the Forward Work Programme will be met from within existing resources for Overview and Scrutiny support.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Confirm the draft interim Forward Work Programme in paragraphs 4.6 above, including the items delegated to the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wish to be included in the item for the next meeting, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings, using the agreed Criteria Form.

**K Watson**  
**Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services**  
**26 November 2020**

**Contact Officer:** Meryl Lawrence  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

**Telephone:** (01656) 643515

**E-mail:** [scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk)

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

**Background documents:** None

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## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

#### CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION REPORT

##### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the Committee to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

##### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
  2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
  3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

##### 3. Background

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

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

- 3.2 In order to further develop and enhance the Council's Corporate Parenting role with its partners, a Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting comprising all Members of Cabinet was established by Cabinet on 4 November 2008.
- 3.3 The inaugural meeting of the Cabinet Committee was held on 27 November 2008 where it was agreed that the Cabinet Committee will meet bi-monthly. The terms of reference for the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting are:
- to ensure that looked after children are seen as a priority by the whole of the Authority and by the Children and Young People's Partnership;
  - to seek the views of children and young people in shaping and influencing the parenting they receive;
  - to ensure that appropriate policies, opportunities and procedures are in place;
  - to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Authority in its role as corporate parent against Welsh Government guidance.
- 3.4 At its inaugural meeting, the Cabinet Committee requested that a Corporate Parenting "Champion" be nominated from each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to become permanent invitees to the Cabinet Committee.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.
- 4.2 The role of the Corporate Parenting Champion is to represent their Overview and Scrutiny Committee, partaking in discussions with Cabinet over items relating to children in care and care leavers.
- 4.3 It is also suggested that in this role each Champion considers how all services within the remit of Scrutiny affect children in care and care leavers and encourage their own Committee to bear their Corporate Parenting role in mind when participating in Scrutiny.
- 4.4 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.

#### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

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

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

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

7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long Term – The establishment of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee demonstrates the Authority’s long term commitment to improving and strengthening their role as Corporate Parents to care leavers and Looked After Children.
- Prevention – The Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee are preventative in their nature and ensure that appropriate policies, opportunities and procedures are in place for all care leavers and Looked After Children.
- Integration – This report supports all the well-being objectives.
- Collaboration – All members are Corporate Parents and this report supports collaborative working with Cabinet and Members of Scrutiny and emphasises the role of Corporate Parents for all Elected Members.
- Involvement – Corporate Parent Champions provide practical support and guidance to children in care and care leavers to ensure they achieve their well-being goals.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is asked to nominate one Member of the Committee as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

**K Watson**  
**Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services**  
**26 November 2020**

**Contact Officer:** Meryl Lawrence  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

**Telephone:** (01656) 643515

**E-mail:** [scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk)

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

**Background Documents**

None



## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, HR & REGULATORY SERVICES

### NOMINATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY PANEL

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to request the Committee to nominate three Members to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:
1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
  2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
  3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 From 1 April 2016, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 introduced statutory Public Services Boards (PSB) across each local authority area in Wales. PSBs work together to improve the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of the board's area. The Act specified that one Committee take an overview of the overall effectiveness of the Board which the Authority determined to carry out via a PSB Scrutiny Panel which now sits under the remit of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.2 The purpose of the Panel is to review and scrutinise the efficiency and effectiveness of the PSB and its decisions as well as the governance arrangements surrounding it. The Panel will hold up to two meetings a year and will make reports or recommendations to the Board regarding its functions, with the aim of enhancing its impact. These recommendations are to be presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval prior to submission to the Board.
- 3.3 A copy of any report or recommendation made to the Public Service Board must be sent to the Welsh Ministers, the Commissioner and the Auditor General for Wales.
- 3.4 The membership of the PSB Panel is determined annually and incorporates three Members from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, one Member from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees and counterpart representatives that sit on the Public Service Board.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 In addition to the one Member nominated from each of the three Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Committee is asked to nominate a further three Members to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

#### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

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

#### **6. Equalities Impact Assessment**

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

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

- 7.1 The Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- Long-term - The establishment of the PSB Panel will assist in the long term planning of the business of the Council by the continuation of effective relationships with other organisations to improve wellbeing in Bridgend County now and in the future.
- Prevention - The PSB Scrutiny Panel will monitor the

Public Service Board's objectives and priorities within the Wellbeing Plan which address underlying causes of problems and prevent them getting worse or happening in the future.

- Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
- Collaboration - The PSB Panel supports partnership working with other organisations both locally and regionally.
- Involvement - The PSB Panel will maintain a relationship with other Organisations through effective partnership working and act as a critical friend to ensure the PSB are involving citizens of Bridgend when making decisions that affect them.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is asked to nominate three Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

**K Watson**  
**Chief Officer - Legal, HR & Regulatory Services**  
**26 November 2020**

**Contact Officer:** Meryl Lawrence  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

**Telephone:** (01656) 643515

**E-mail:** [scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk)

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## **Background Documents**

None

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