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Bridgend County Borough Council



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

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



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: Friday, 24 June 2022

Dear Councillor,

CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held remotely - via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 30 June 2022 at 09:30.**

AGENDA

1. Election of Chair 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 - 44
To receive for approval the minutes of 01/12/21, 12/01/22 and 02/03/22
5. Call-In of Cabinet Decision: Recycling and Waste Service Post 2024 Invitees 45 - 66

Councillor John Spanswick - Cabinet Member for Communities
Councillor Hywel Williams - Cabinet Member for Resources

Mark Shephard - Chief Executive
Janine Nightingale - Corporate Director - Communities
Carys Lord - Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change
Zak Shell - Head of Operations - Community Services
6. Revenue Budget Outturn 2021-22 Invitees 67 - 106

Councillor Huw David - Leader of Council
Councillor Jane Gebbie - Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services

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and Early Help

Councillor Hywel Williams - Cabinet Member for Resources

Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell - Cabinet Member for Education

Councillor John Spanswick - Cabinet Member for Communities

Councillor Neelo Farr - Cabinet Member for Regeneration

Councillor Rhys Goode - Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations

Mark Shephard - Chief Executive

Carys Lord - Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change

Lindsay Harvey - Corporate Director - Education and Family Support

Claire Marchant - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Janine Nightingale - Corporate Director - Communities

Kelly Watson - Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

7. Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination 107 - 110
8. Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel 111 - 114
9. Forward Work Programme Update 115 - 122
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 health and safety requirements 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 or tel. 01656 643147 / 643148.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

H T Bennett

F D Bletsoe

P Davies

RM Granville

Councillors

S J Griffiths

M L Hughes

M Jones

RL Penhale-Thomas

Councillors

T Thomas

G Walter

A Williams

AJ Williams

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JUNE 2022

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

ELECTION OF CHAIR

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to receive nominations and appoint a Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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 health 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 Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure the membership of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee consists of the Chairs of each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee and nine other Members that reflect the political balance of the Authority.
- 3.2 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 established procedures whereby Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs are nominated and appointed. The Measure requires that as a minimum, the Chairpersons of these Committees be appointed based on the size and political balance of each of the groups that make up the Council. At the Annual Meeting of Council on 18 May 2022, Councillors Alex Williams, Freya Bletsoe and Paul Davies were appointed as the Chairpersons of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1 to 3 respectively. The Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is unallocated and therefore, in

accordance with the Measure, is to be appointed by the Members of the Committee from one of the Chairpersons of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees, but it cannot be the Chairperson nominated from the same Group as the Executive.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to receive nominations and appoint a Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the provisions set out at paragraph 3.2 above.
- 4.2 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 Council's Constitution.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and monitoring 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 Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of 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 appoint a Chairperson of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 3.2 of this report.

Kelly Watson

Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

24 June 2022

Contact Officers: Meryl Lawrence
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Lucy Beard
Scrutiny Officer

Jessica McLellan
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643515 / 643613 / 643263

Email: 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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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2021 AT
09:30

Present

Councillor KL Rowlands – Chairperson

JPD Blundell	J Gebbie	DG Howells	M Jones
RL Penhale- Thomas	RMI Shaw	JC Spanswick	T Thomas
A Williams	AJ Williams		

Apologies for Absence

D Patel

Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Invitees:

Councillor Nicole Burnett	
Councillor Huw David	Leader
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Gill Lewis	Interim Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Councillor Charles Smith	Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration
Councillor Hywel Williams	Cabinet Member Resources

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

47. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 1 September 2021 be approved as a true and accurate record.

48. BUDGET MONITORING 2021-22 - QUARTER 2 REVENUE FORECAST

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change introduced the Quarter 2 Revenue Budget Monitoring report that had been received by Cabinet in October, and which measured the Council's expenditure against the budget. The budget had been approved by Council on 24 February 2021 and the net budget was £298.9M, and this was the second quarter monitoring report against the budget. She expressed that it had never been such uncertain times in terms of the financial position. She advised she was

happy to give the detail of the current position as Quarter 2 had been at the end of September and things changed rapidly. The report contained some contrary messages as there were significant underspends in terms of the short term position, but some significant pressures in terms of the medium term position.

The Officer explained that table 1 was the summary of the main position and showed a projected net underspend of £2M which included anticipated funding from the hardship fund for the second half of the year. She advised they had been successful each month in getting most of their additional costs back which would increase the projected underspend in quarter three and that the underspend significantly masked the underlying budget pressures that persist in 2021-22 and would undoubtedly continue in 2022-23 and onwards.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change referred to the following points of reference in the report:

- In Paragraph 4.1.4 there was a significant overspend of over £2M on home to school transport.
- Paragraph 4.1.5 referred to the pressures in social care which the Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised they had received grant for recovery at the time of writing the report of £1.7M, but it had since gone up to £2.9M.
- In paragraph 4.1.6 the Council had approved over £2M growth for homelessness in the budget knowing they would have significant pressures going forward due to the new regulations and the pandemic. However Welsh Government had provided funding through the COVID hardship fund for homelessness, which the Council had successfully claimed. It had not been expected to continue through the year, so they had a significant underspend on that budget in the short term. In terms of temporary accommodation, about 200 families, 370 individuals, were still in need of accommodation, so, while the budget looked fine, the service delivery in the medium term was a high risk for the Council.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised that the Council had established a £1M Covid Recovery fund that continued to be used for issues such as free parking in the town centre and waiver of sports fees. She advised they had been successful in getting more in terms of their loss of income and more in terms of expenditure claims so the quarter three position would improve. Council tax collection and claims for council tax reduction had been closely monitored, with no additional funding likely to be announced by the Welsh Government until later in the year when the position would be clearer. It would depend on the position across the twenty-two local authorities whether additional funding for loss of council tax would be required.

When the budget had been set, CPI had been 0.7 percent and it had gone up to 4.2 percent which would have a significant effect on next year's budget. Funding would be released on teachers' pay, partly offset by grant funding, which had not been expected, and money had been set aside for the NJC pay award when that was agreed. She advised they were still likely to need budget reductions going forward as there would likely be significant reductions in the money that would be received in the next few years going forward, and the likely level of savings needed would depend on the settlement. She explained a summary of the financial position was set out in 4.3 and that went into detail for each of the Directorates and the earmarked reserves shown in table 6. She wished to remind Members that earmarked reserves were for a specific purpose, not to be used for different purposes and particularly not for propping up council tax. They were usable but only for the purpose they were set aside for.

Wherever possible they were endeavouring to add to their capital reserve, they were short on capital receipts as a Council and very ambitious in terms of what they would like

to do. If they did have any short term underspends, they were trying to transfer them into a capital reserve to enable them to fulfil those ambitious plans and programs.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change concluded that school balances were £8.5M at the year end due to receiving significant money from Welsh Government late in 2021 after they had set the budget. At the time of writing the report it had dropped down to £4M and would move further still as some of those balances were used for the purpose for which they had been given to them.

The Chair thanked the Interim Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change for her presentation, following which Members of the Committee asked the following:

A Member highlighted the pressures on the home to school transport budget irrespective of Covid and questioned whether Officers and Cabinet Members felt there ought to be a longer term perspective in that area, and whether home to school transport to a certain extent could be brought in house to avoid some of the procurement issues which were dictated by external factors. It was a recurring problem that they had a significant overspend in, and the Member was interested in hearing Officers' points of view on what they could do going forward.

A Member added that there had been a continuous increase in additional taxis and minibuses.

The Corporate Director of Education and Family Support advised that the situation was very much in hand, the issue being there were additional demands and pressures regarding budgetary needs within the area. With regard to the long-term perspective, they were trying to look at longer term contracts extending in more recent procurement rounds. He advised that the long-term view needed to be steered by policy and they were waiting with some anticipation for the Welsh Government's home to school transport report which had been delayed but would inform and influence their policy position going forward. He explained there were a couple of elements that were complex, referring Members to Appendix one which referred to the previous year's pressures, operational issues which were causing concern within the budget, in addition to wider policy implications regarding nursery travel and all aspects of non-statutory spend in that area.

With regard to the point made regarding minibuses and taxis, the Corporate Director of Education and Family Support advised that in all cases they are demand led. He explained they have a range of duties and as a Local Authority need to make sure they meet the statutory requirements. There had been additional small transport needed regarding nursery provision and again it had added to the cost of providing the home to school transport for learners, but he concluded in all cases they were monitored very closely.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration advised it was necessary to take a long-term view as four or five years ago they had taken an austerity decision on school transport to cut back in a phased approach of which the outcome was still affecting young people now. He explained that school transport was a complex issue and not as simple as it looked and there were all sorts of obvious and not so obvious unintended consequences of proposals. Cabinet had decided not to make a cut recently and decided that they would tolerate the pressure on budgets for the time being as they were waiting for the review of home to school transport from Welsh Government. He concluded that whilst waiting for that review it would not be wise for them to make any huge decisions on home to school transport which might have to be reversed if the criteria changed.

A Member expressed that they needed to be looking at safe routes to schools as they were paying for buses where there were no safe routes. She felt they needed to have a joined up one Council approach and look at the catchments.

A Member commented that the report was for Quarter 2, up to the 30 September, and that they were two months into quarter three, so they were to some extent just reflecting on the previous spend. He highlighted that paragraph 9.1 of the report stated, 'asking members to note the projected revenue position for 2021-2022.' But he thought perhaps it could have read 'note the current position of quarter two as they moved forward to the end of budget for 2021-2022 and the figures to date.' He referred to the considerable underspend and the report highlighting a number of budget pressures that could change that, so suggested it could have been outlined what the projected revenue position could be at the end of the year. He was aware it was an open question in uncertain times and as things were changing so rapidly, they had significant underspends in the short term but budget pressures in the long term. He concluded that it might be time to consider suspending the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) until they knew where they were, especially as they moved through the pandemic.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised that she could not overemphasise the difficulty in estimating where they might be at the end of the year. She expressed her gratitude for the support from Welsh Government and could not pretend that they would have survived easily through those difficult times without it. The difficulty was managing and dealing with it if it was short term and needed to be spent by the end of the year it would only be of a temporary nature and more than 75% of their budget was on people and staff and getting staff into place quickly. She explained that, in terms of timing, she did not think there was a huge delay and they had tried to bring up to date where possible the position that had changed. All the changes at that moment on the short term were increasing that underspend so they would have significant sums of short term funding, many that would inflate their underspend position. Undoubtedly by quarter three they would be saying that the year end position would depend on how successfully they had spent some of the money that had been received for the right purposes, so it would not be a case of just getting rid of money, it would all have a specific purpose and they had to carefully try and get themselves into a place where they can spend it successfully. She did not want to give the impression that they were not on top of it and was not something she thought they should consider in terms of suspending the MTFS. They still needed to plan and forecast where the significant pressures were, the underlying position and the accuracy on where they were was still intact, however, the huge amount of short-term funding for the different areas masked the position.

The Member advised that some members of the public believed the Council had substantial funding and suggested that it was an opportunity for them to discuss what earmarked reserves were and provide reassurance to members of the public that the Authority was prudent in its expenditure and management of reserves and not criticised for not spending money.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change explained that earmarked reserves in simple terms was money they could set aside for a specific purpose and carry that forward provided the money that they have available enables them to do so. Where they know they cannot spend it or they do not need it until the next year, or indeed in future years they are then able to set money aside, which is an earmarked reserve. She advised they are scrutinised by herself firstly, then the Team and through Corporate Management Board each month going through the detail and every quarter they report through the budget monitoring reports the position on earmarked reserves. She stressed that there was huge scrutiny of what was in there and conversations with Directors about what they needed for the future. They were also scrutinised by Audit

Wales who had given them a clean bill of health for the last few years and were content with their financial position.

The Chief Executive wished to build on a couple of points. Firstly, he advised that it was a public meeting, giving both members but also the public the opportunity to have a better understanding of the overall position. He advised they could not possibly suspend the MTFS as they need to plan and prepare for a range of scenarios, and it is almost certain they would have an underspend this year. Although what they did not know was the extent of that underspend, as they were receiving money which was difficult to spend in the way that they had to spend it because they could not always recruit staff. He advised they could not always commission work and could not spend the money in the timescale which masked the long term burdens that they had which was also difficult to represent to the public as well. He advised that they anticipated a time when the Welsh Government funding would stop which could be as soon as the end of March, and that they effectively had post pandemic a different pattern of demand on the Authority's services, increased expenditure, and uncertainty at that point about what the future settlements would be. All the forecasts he had seen in the longer term were that not only would inflation go up, but that settlements would go back to the sort of level they had been historically. They needed to plan for the fact that it was a misleading position at present, they had money to spend but for specific purposes and would not have the same level of money moving forward, which made it hard to get a common understanding both within the Council, Officers and Members, but also outside the Council as well.

A Member queried the provisions of additional learning needs for Heronsbridge School and whether they expected to recoup the funds from local authorities. He noted the number of primary schools in a deficit position and asked if they could outline the number of secondary schools that were in a deficit position as well. He acknowledged that the Council was satisfied with funding for the homelessness, and it may be a waiting game due to the uncertainty of the future settlement from the hardship fund and Central Government funding but asked was the intention if they did receive the funding to reallocate that budget. He concluded that recent announcements regarding the uplift in the living wage would have an impact on all staff within the Council, so it would be essential that central government funding was forthcoming otherwise they would have a significant impact on their Local Authority budget and wondered whether any assessment was being made.

The Corporate Director of Education and Family Support responded that with regard to additional learning needs for school budgets yes that was the case. It was a service they operated across local authorities where places become available and obviously other local authorities purchase places in Heronsbridge School and other facilities within Bridgend and vice versa. He advised that when places were predominantly filled with Bridgend learners there were not the places available to other local authorities, it was a demand led service. He advised that it was a difficult time for school budgets, but the last he had seen none of the secondary schools were in any significant deficit. However, a lot of the grants had come for a specific purpose in the main to deal with some challenges of the pandemic, schools were using the money now principally around staffing to support some of their need, but it was an ongoing challenge, which they would continue to monitor.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised they had pre-empted the significant pressure on the housing budget. They had successfully claimed back what they had spent but they were still not in the position they needed to be. She advised they were able to balance the budget in terms of keeping people in temporary accommodation which fulfilled part of the duty placed on them by Welsh Government, there had been a number of letters from the Minister regarding homelessness and

housing and the Welsh Government were committed to eradicating homelessness. She explained they had a temporary solution then which they could fund but did not know if it was sufficient to fund it going forward. The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change explained that they did not have sufficient accommodation but were working with their partners Valleys to Coast to explore what they could do in terms of void properties, as well as working with private landlords and had a number of policies in place to try and obtain accommodation. They were also looking at small developments through the Local Development Plan. She concluded that they did not have enough properties and although at that moment there was enough temporary accommodation, it could not continue as it was not a satisfactory solution.

The Deputy Head of Finance advised that it had been recently announced that the national living wage was going to increase from April 2022, from £8.91 to £9.50 which was a 6.6% increase and more than they had anticipated. The biggest impact for the Council would be the increase on their commissioned services in Social Services and also the impact internally within the Council as there would be knock-on effect on the pay and grading structure from bringing the bottom end pay grades up. In terms of the estimate for externally commissioned services, they were looking at nearly £1.5M, which was something they had brought into the MTFs as one of their pressures. Going forward for next year they would need to consider the increase in National Insurance contributions as the new health and social care levy that the Government was bringing in would have implications for the Council, both on employers and employees which was another pressure of over £1M, so there were a number of pay related pressures. What they did not know was whether they would get any separate / additional funding from Welsh Government towards any of it and would need to wait for the settlements at the end of the month to see what funding was included to meet some of the pressures.

A Member asked whether there would be an effect further up the line as well, if the pay was raised for the lower paid would they expand the levels further up as well. He fully supported being a living wage employer but wanted to make sure they had all the information.

The Chief Executive advised that moving forward it may be timely to have a look at the whole pay grading structure but that was not the immediate intention. He thought there was probably sufficient flexibility immediately to accommodate the real living wage proposal but moving forward due to the actual pressures in terms of workforce issues and recruitment retention, it could be the case that they needed to look at the pay and grading structure to remain competitive.

A Member asked whether they were seeing an increase in applicants for the council tax reduction scheme with furlough ending at the end of September, or would it be too soon to tell if it was making a difference.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised that over the last year there had been an expectation that they would, but the answer was probably no, not as significant as they had been anticipating however it was still early days, and they would be in a much better position towards the end of the year.

A Member referred to the increased demand upon the homelessness service, and the Welsh Government policy that required en-suite accommodation and asked whether they thought that would change or the provision would continue.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change informed the Chair there had been no indication that it would change, it was still a duty on them and was a complicated requirement. For temporary accommodation the regulations were quite

complex, and their ideal situation would be to get people into sustainable, more medium to long term accommodation.

The Cabinet Member for Communities advised that although Welsh Government had changed the Regulations with the removal of priority need, it had been something they had been looking at for some time but had been brought in a little quicker due to the pandemic. Welsh Government had looked at a variety of different options around suitable temporary accommodation going forward but it been impacted on by the fact the pandemic had happened, and they needed to get things in place to make sure they removed people from sleeping on the streets and putting them at greater risk of contracting Covid. He expected to see a lot more changes coming forward around what would be suitable, practical, and affordable temporary accommodation.

A Member felt that the Communities Directorate had taken the brunt of the cuts made over the years and that from talking to colleagues, the number of referrals received by the Communities Directorate far exceeded other areas. He wondered about the possibility of them looking in the future to improve investment in that area as they received a lot of criticism from members of the public regarding them paying their council tax and areas of their community not being cleaned, and though the challenges they had over the years needed to be recognised, these should be looked at as part of a longer term strategy.

The Chief Executive replied that he did not know whether the Communities Directorate had been disproportionately cut, but inevitably the Authority prioritised education and social care so there may have been a greater impact on some other services. He advised he had been in discussions regarding how they could improve the responsiveness of the Department to a range of issues, particularly in referrals but really to improve the responsiveness of frontline services. He believed there was to be a greater investment trying to address those issues, however ultimately it would come down as well to political choices and where to put their money and prioritising moving forward. He advised that he had heard the view the Member expressed from others, and it could be time to think about greater investment in some of the frontline services. The point he always made to Members was that it would generally require them to offset that against something else, so it would always require for them to think what they do not want to invest in.

The Corporate Director Communities supported what the Chief Executive had said and advised the Communities Directorate receives around 83-85% of all the Member referrals that came into the Council. They had a lean team and there were some referrals not ending with one response but multiple exchanges. She advised that they were working with the centralised business support team for the Communities Directorate and the Chief Executive's Directorate. They were looking at referrals to try and close those that had been open for the longest amount of time and also the new Member Referral System should be implemented shortly where there would be an element of self service, meaning they could focus on more complex enquiries and there should be information on the Members' portal for self-service for some of the easier queries. She clarified that work was ongoing to address the large number of referrals the Directorate received.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change reminded Members that with regard to investment, a few years ago they had put aside £2M for investing in Communities, it had been a capital fund and the year before last they put in a recurring budget of £2M for public realm, so there had been quite significant investment internally. She concluded there had also been some huge amounts of grant funding on issues such as highway maintenance and regeneration.

A Member added that complaints also going through to them would also make a big impact on the referrals in Communities.

The Cabinet Member for Communities replied that member referrals were in addition to the complaints system. He advised that sometimes referrals were not answered on time given the impact of the volume received within Communities, and further referrals chasing a response submitted caused duplication. Referrals could be repetitive and often a previous response had been received which applied to the same question being asked again in a new referral. Officers were spending more time answering referrals and the increase in Member referrals meant that they were reducing the amount of time that Officers went out. He advised that the new member portal being worked on could provide a more hands on approach and may potentially in some instances reduce the number of referrals.

The Member responded that he did not make the comments as a criticism of the Directorate and the staff as he recognised that the resources were not adequate to meet the demands and that this was the opportunity to try and address some of the issues going forward.

The Cabinet Member for Communities advised there had been some frank and honest discussions around the performance of the Directorate regarding responding to referrals. Staff reduction and increase in demand had put pressure on them and following discussions they were looking at how they could cleanse the member referral system so that they could take out some of the older ones. From an Officer point of view, he asked for more consciousness of the number of referrals that are being submitted, to which often the answers are similar.

A Member felt that there had been disproportionate cuts in the Communities Directorate, effects of those cuts was being seen and wanted to understand why those cuts were made. He referred to the capital investment made, whereas to address resilience in some sections of the Directorate and the impact on the backlog of referrals would need revenue investment, officers and staff.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change clarified that the Public Realm fund was a recurring revenue fund and the Investing in Communities Fund had been a one-off capital fund. These would be political priorities and the choice of what their budget was supporting, where they wanted to allocate money and where their political priorities were. Therefore, if they wanted to invest significant sums in Communities then the money would need to come from somewhere else.

A Member asked for clarification with regard to the discussions that there had been by Cabinet about whether they should roll back on some of those commitments to provide statutory services to be able to invest more money in the areas that had been highlighted. He was not sure whether the question was necessarily for this forum to be discussing but thought it would be discussed at a future point and wondered if they had any comments.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised that it was a political choice. Officers would put forward options, suggested reductions, and pressures and then it would be for Members to make their choices, including council tax and all the things that go into a balanced budget.

The Cabinet Member for Communities advised a lot of it had to do with statutory and non-statutory provision and so whilst an element of it is political, they needed to make sure that they continued to provide a balanced budget and continued to meet the needs of the statutory services that they are required to deliver. He advised that none of them

went into Council wanting to cut services and budgets and that people are impacted on things that are visual to them, so looked after children or care experienced children may seem less visual to people unless it impacted them directly. That was the careful balance and what they needed to look at every meeting and when they were discussing services.

The Deputy Leader advised that the budget setting process was a political choice, and they could only distribute what they had and that depended on the settlement from Welsh Government which also depended on the revenues that came from Westminster. They prioritised keeping people safe and where resources allowed, they included a public realm fund to recognise that spending in the community was important and was what the people looked for and noticed. He reinforced that they could only distribute the amount of revenue allocated, and the budget setting process was the forum to discuss those priorities. He concluded they had just had a public consultation and they would get a response from that in due course.

The Chair referred to Appendix 2, monitoring of 2021-22 budget reductions COM 1, page 42, and the statement that full savings had been achieved on the operative budget with the level of parks and playing fields being capped so they did not exceed the available budget and asked for clarification of whether this was part of the recovery fund or two separate budgets.

The Corporate Director, Communities advised it was two separate budgets, there had been a saving within Communities of £300k, in the main predicated on the Community Asset Transfer program which would be transferring assets to community groups, and they were looking at the generalised parks budget to see whether there had been any other savings achieved. At the same time, they were also implementing concessions on sports pitch fees during Covid, so they were not charging for the facilities and that income they had lost as a result had been recovered via the Covid recovery fund. There was a saving itself by transferring assets via community asset transfer, which they had achieved, and that income had been covered off separately.

A Member queried what had been achieved entirely through CAT transfer process and asked if the calculations could be shared.

The Corporate Director, Communities advised the main saving had been achieved via community asset transfer, and that the information could be provided.

A Member commented that while there had been a lot of text on page 34 of the report there was little financial detail, and no breakdown of the £7M that he thought would be useful for the public to see. He referred to the earmarked reserves on page 35 and commented that it may be unclear to the public what was being done with those reserves, and how it would have been originally calculated that much was needed. He understood that Capital Schemes could not be used on revenue, but there were figures in the report that had built up and stayed the same year on year. He thought the public should know how they had been calculated and what they were going to be used for.

The Interim Chief Officer, Finance, Performance and Change advised that when they were anticipating those sorts of settlements that they were projecting which were negative, and they were anticipating that they may have to reduce staffing numbers, restructure, and change the way they delivered services, they then had a couple of years of slightly better settlements. She advised they did not know what this year was going to bring up or the next few years as someone was going to have to pay for the pandemic and she would not predict that they would have good settlements for many years going forward, so it was set aside to allow them to reduce staffing numbers if they had to. She expressed that in the role of Section 151 Officer you were expected to be

prudent and not expected to spend every penny that you had. Audit Wales had asked them to be long-term in their thinking and so the earmarked reserves that were set aside would enable them to do that. She advised she was to review what they needed for the future in terms of change management as that was the issue facing everyone not just the public sector, in how they work, how they change, so those funds would be reviewed and as explained the earmarked reserves are looked at constantly. Her concluding advice would be that they did not remove the earmarked reserves.

The Deputy Head of Finance explained they had tried to present the information in the report, and they could have included more detail but then it was a balance between making it too detailed and difficult to understand. They tried to capture the main messages for example table six in the report, earmarked reserves summary, there were twenty lines, but in terms of the actual number of reserves they had about three hundred lines, meaning for each line of the report there were a number of schemes, projects and commitments behind them. Going back to the question regarding the Council wide budgets, she explained most of that was in respect of their pay prices and pressure budgets, which for this financial year they had not really paid out any pay awards yet as the teachers had only been agreed at the end of quarter two and they had still not got agreement on the non-teachers' pay award for the financial year. It was highly unlikely that it would be agreed during the financial year, so that budget could remain there until towards the end of the year. What they did not know was whether it was going to be enough as what had been set aside was based on an assumption and the unions had rejected the latest offer, so it could be higher than they anticipated.

The Deputy Head of Finance also advised they had a council wide contingency which they used to fund things like inclement weather during the during the winter period. She explained there were not a lot of separate budgets within that but what they had tried to set out in the report was the uncertainties, inflation as an example was changing every month. She advised there was one big provision and what they did not know at that moment what the call on all of them would be so had made assumptions as to what they thought they might need based on historical spend in terms of what they had funded and the projection. She concluded that anything could happen over the next few months, and it was difficult to give figures in those areas as there was so much that had not been determined for the year.

The Member gave thanks for the explanation but felt that the public perspective would only see the figure projecting an underspend and they would not accept or understand that it was made up of various elements, it would just be seen as £7M spare or underspend. He understood the difficulties and that they did not know the figures but felt there could have been more included in the section to show the public more positivity.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions for the invitees, thanked them for their attendance and advised they could leave the meeting.

Following consideration of the report and appendices, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

1. The Committee requested that consideration be given to the rescheduling of Budget Monitoring - Quarterly Revenue Forecast reports in the future to enable the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider reports first and its comments to be fed back to Cabinet to be considered along with the report.
2. The Committee requested that a breakdown of the £300k savings likely to be achieved for Budget Reductions Proposal COM 1, Appendix 2 - Monitoring of 2021-22 Budget Reductions, including the CAT Transfers that had taken place and to be progressed, be circulated to Members of the Committee.

49. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny advised that following on from the Committee's consideration of the Forward Programme at the previous meeting, the updated Forward Programme for this Committee was attached as Appendix A and the Forward Work Programmes for Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1, 2 and 3 were also attached as Appendices B, C and D, as this Committee had responsibility for coordination and oversight of the overall Forward Work Programme.

The FWP's had been updated to take account of the announcement at November Council that December Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting dates would be postponed to new dates in January, and extra meetings of COSC added on 19 Jan and 1 Feb, to accord with the timing of the Welsh Government budget settlement to local authorities.

She also advised that's the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations from previous meetings was attached as Appendix E.

There were no requests to include specific information in items for upcoming meetings and there were no further items identified for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and approved its Forward Work Programme in Appendix A; noted the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees following consideration in their respective recent Committee Meetings in Appendix B, C & D and noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings in Appendix E.

50. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 11:26

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2022 AT 09:30

Present

Councillor KL Rowlands – Chairperson

JPD Blundell	M Jones	RL Penhale-Thomas	RMI Shaw
A Williams	AJ Williams		

Apologies for Absence

DG Howells

Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Invitees:

Councillor Stuart Baldwin	
Councillor Huw David	Leader
Deborah Exton	Deputy Head of Finance
Councillor Jane Gebbie	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Councillor Dhanisha Patel	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Councillor Charles Smith	Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration
Nigel Smith	Finance Manager
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services
Councillor Hywel Williams	Cabinet Member Resources

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alex Williams declared a personal interest in the report on Council Performance against its commitments at Quarter 2, as a private landlord in the County Borough.

53. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE AGAINST ITS COMMITMENTS AT QUARTER 2 OF 2021-22

The Chief Executive introduced the report and advised that due to changing demands and priorities there were no longer the same baselines or the same opportunities for

national comparisons. He advised that while rolling out business grants to local businesses, test and trace, additional work in social care, assisting with the vaccination programme and ICT rollout would not appear in terms of those measurements, they had taken up a lot of resource, effort, and energy over the period. He reflected that one of the challenges had been to deliver those things in response to the global pandemic and public health crisis, as well as consistently run a good service set out within their planning mechanism.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for his introduction, following which Members of the Committee asked the following questions.

A Member asked how the Corporate Performance Assessment Panel operated and how performance was scored objectively. He noted the Panel invited Scrutiny Chairs and asked about the link between Scrutiny Chairs' views to the Panel and their Scrutiny Committees. With regard to the RAG status and narrative in the dashboards he thought there was an opportunity to emphasise that performance was assessed objectively.

The Chief Executive responded that the Corporate Performance Assessment process was a long-standing mechanism within the Authority and there had been various iterations. He advised it was about individual Directorates having their own sessions where they met up with Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Chairpersons with a challenge Member of Cabinet. He advised that its purpose was for each Director to take forward their dashboard and there was challenge and discussion to have a detailed explanation where something was not meeting its target, the reasons and the action being taken to improve things by the following quarter and year end. The process was supported by the Performance Team and information was presented consistently in the dashboards.

The Chairperson advised that she was content they had scrutinised performance throughout the year at the Panel and Committee and was aware that the other two Committee chairs received in-depth information on their Directorates to scrutinise the content.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 2 advised that she had attended Corporate Performance Assessment meetings to provide views on performance along with the other Scrutiny Chairs.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 3 advised that he had been invited to the Corporate Performance Assessment meetings which usually consisted of two Chairperson, two Cabinet Members and two Directors as well as the Chief Executive. He advised he had also had meetings with his Directorate to discuss any emerging issues for potential scrutiny by the Committee.

The Chief Executive clarified that the meetings for Quarter 2 were individual meetings focused on each Directorate and its performance rather than one large meeting for all the Council's Directorate performance at year end.

A Member referred to the original question of how do Scrutiny Chairs feed back to their Scrutiny Committee and seek views on the performance of the Directorates in their remits.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny advised that Scrutiny Chairs were invited to Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) meetings to challenge, following which the Directorate performance dashboards would be reported to the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee providing those Committee Members with the opportunity to scrutinise performance. Scrutiny Chairpersons would then be mindful of outcomes

and recommendations from Scrutiny to take back and provide challenge at the next Corporate Performance Assessment.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 3 added that following CPA and Scrutiny of Performance, something not performing well in a Directorate could be considered for adding to the Committee's Forward Work Programme as a future item for scrutiny, but that the timescales for requesting reports needed to be achievable.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 2 agreed that sometimes there was not enough time to change the agenda too close to a meeting and they needed to manage the timescales for additional reports.

The Chairperson agreed that it was about timing and the Forward Work Programme for the next round of meetings would focus on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget and advised that the outcome from CPA was the Dashboards reported to this Committee for scrutiny.

The Member responded that there was a lot of preparatory work that could be done before meetings. He welcomed the Corporate Performance Assessment Panel and thought that Scrutiny could look at the overall corporate performance of the Authority.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny advised that while it was sometimes too close to include a new topic report in the Forward Work Programme for the next meeting, generally there was an opportunity to reprioritise topics for future meetings. She advised, that although they were focussing on the scrutiny of the MTFs and draft budget proposals in the next round of meetings, there would be opportunity to reschedule or reprioritise topics early in the year or propose topics for consideration for the next forward work programme for the coming year.

A Member referred to Disabled Facilities grants (DFGs) and that it could take a year to process a grant for people with disabilities. He referred to the recently reported solution to bring the service in-house from its external position, which had not yet impacted on the wait for people receiving grants.

The Chief Executive responded that it was disappointing it had not improved but asked that judgement be reserved until the new process had been established and that it was a key priority moving forward. He advised that due to the pandemic it had been difficult to access people's homes, engage contractors and employ staff, but he hoped to see improvements from the changes made. He explained that there had been a reluctance from some homeowners to have people in their homes during that time. In terms of risk assessments, they had tried to keep their access to people's homes to essential work. It had been recognised that the service needed changing and the changes being made were a medium to long term solution.

A Member asked if the high number of days to deliver a DFG could be partially addressed by stopping the clock if awaiting information from another party, outside the Service's control.

The Chief Executive replied that some other authorities measured it differently but doing that was debatable as it improved how performance looked but would not change the amount of time for the resident or the outcome. He added that they had resisted doing that, for consistency and comparison purposes of performance over the years.

The Cabinet Member for Communities advised that while there had been no restrictions stopping them from going into people's homes, some of the people would have been vulnerable and shielding.

The Leader added that they had remodelled the DFG system and there would be an improvement to the indicator, but not straight away.

A Member asked as the offices had been closed during the pandemic and staff had been working from home, whether that had resulted in better and smarter use of resources.

The Chief Executive advised that the way the Council does business had changed, so in terms of smarter resources there had been savings, however there had been an increase in investment with people working from home in terms of IT kit for members of staff. It was an ongoing process, and the future service delivery model of the Council would change.

A Member referred to the percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days as in the previous quarters they had been achieving the targets and the impact on the public if invoices were not being paid as quickly as they hoped. She explained that during the pandemic they had heard of businesses closing and there being a shortage of money and asked whether the payment of invoices on time could be having an impact.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change advised she did not have the information to hand but could provide it and shared the Member's concern regarding the potential impact of slow payment of invoices on businesses in the area.

A Member referred to the empty properties indicator and the target to get seven empty homes a year back into occupation and into use and was concerned that only two had been achieved.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing explained there was a lot of work involved especially with long term empty properties. She knew that the Officers had been working with properties and private property owners during the pandemic and the cases that had been taken forward had been successful.

A Member suggested that some comments could be included in the report where there were no performance comments and while she understood Covid had impacted upon indicators, there were few other comments included.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing advised they would look at that for the next quarter.

A Member asked about the potential ability and opportunity to build local authority housing as other local authorities were doing.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing advised that a review of the housing and homelessness position was currently underway and understood that there had been fifty interviews to date with different stakeholders and service users.

The Chief Executive advised there were several strategies required, of which building homes may be a part, but it was a medium-term solution and there were short term problems. He advised that the Housing and Homelessness agenda was huge, and that going forward it would require several initiatives to respond to it adequately.

A Member requested that the inclusion of some comments on the target setting would be helpful for future reports.

A Member asked the Chief Executive if he felt he had sufficient human resources to deal with the issue of bringing existing properties back into the housing market, as they needed a robust system in place where they could benefit from those private landlords who did come forward and offer their properties.

The Chief Executive explained there were several parts of the organisation that could benefit from additional resource, but it came down to priorities and balance. Moving forward if he was asked to identify the areas of most significant pressure that would obviously include Social Care but also Housing and Homelessness and they may well need to consider and adapt their structures to respond to that. He advised there had been briefings to try to persuade private landlords to make their homes available but due to the market being buoyant people seemed keen on selling.

A Member referred to the performance indicator around Discretionary Housing Payments, he wondered if the increase in the time to deliver those payments had been a result of other performance indicators where comments had been made around self-isolation payments, the number of calls going into the Council to deal with other issues and the Warm Homes Payment from UK Government.

The Chief Executive advised that the staff had been under huge pressures as there were a plethora of other things they had been asked to deliver at short notice. He explained that they did not have additional staff or resources and during the year they had significant periods of staff sickness or isolating. It was a challenge he saw on a day-to-day basis as to how the Authority responded to all those challenges at a time when it faced significant issues, particularly workforce.

The Deputy Head of Finance responded that in terms of the Discretionary Housing Payments, they had been given additional funding that year so there had been more money to try and administer. They had also had several other additional grants to administer on behalf of Welsh Government; the Isolation Payments for example were complicated and needed a lot of information collected for each application so had taken up quite a lot of staff time and it was the same staff dealing with several different grants on top of their day jobs.

A Member referred to the target maintained at that level due to potential changes in the delivery mechanism and asked if they suspected it would move into a better position during the year.

The Deputy Head of Finance advised that in terms of the funding that they had available for the year, she could confirm they were targeting the people that they knew were eligible, and they wanted to maximise the use of the funding to those eligible.

A Member suggested the inclusion of a comment that staff were working on issuing payments for multiple other grants during the pandemic would be helpful, to explain why there had been an increase in the time to deliver payments over the past year.

The Chairperson referred to Appendix B - Communities Performance Dashboard and commented performance indicators were green but proposed that performance comments could be included as evidence.

The Corporate Director- Communities advised the dashboard was a line of sight overall to show where they were, what was more pertinent was when they got into the detail of the performance indicators behind those objectives where they should see a level of detail.

A Member referred to the green status rating, as for the number of vacant properties in town centres there was no target.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that the economic impact in some areas had been quite severe for Bridgend town centre and when looking at the global retail position quite a lot of companies had folded. She advised they wanted to baseline how many empty commercial properties there were as a result at the end of the pandemic and then use that as their starting point to work forward and see if they can assist people in getting those properties back in use. She advised what they had been doing and had not stopped during the pandemic was using the Welsh Government transforming towns monies to give out grants in their town centres. Work had not stopped behind the scenes and there was a lot of narrative behind it, that they needed to find a way to capture, which was why it was rated as green.

A Member asked if the Corporate Director - Communities was expecting that to change in quarter three.

The Corporate Director- Communities advised she did not think they would see any change this year and the important thing would be to get the baseline information correct and then look again from quarter one next year where they were and what they would like to get to in terms of property numbers as well as seeing an improvement as part of their Economic Recovery Plan.

A Member asked if this was in line with other local authorities and were they going back to a benchmarking position due to Covid.

The Corporate Director - Communities responded that a lot would have to be benchmarked against, but for them the important part post pandemic was to ensure that they were measuring the things that were impactful.

The Cabinet Member for Communities explained that if they owned the properties, they would have greater control over them, but the Authority owned no retail property in Bridgend town centre, and they were often dealing with landlords who were nationally or internationally based.

A Member queried the red in DCO 16.9 – Realisation of capital receipts targets.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised that it was their capital receipts target so when disposing of those properties they would get a receipt, and whilst it was showing as red in quarter two, by quarter four it would be green.

The Member asked if there was a plan why the indicator was red and not amber.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that if they were 10% below the target, they had to show it as red. She explained that compliance meant that all certification was in place, the property had been inspected and there were no faults on the system and that certification was uploaded. She explained the biggest areas of risks were electrical, gas, legionella, and fire risk so they would concentrate on those areas moving forward. She advised they were to introduce a new integrated work management system called Tech Forward which would give a global view of their system so they could see where each building was located and what equipment was in it. They would also be able to see what the compliance situation was, and contractors could also upload the certification to that source. She concluded that whilst it was categorised red it did not mean their buildings were not safe, but that their compliance was not where it needed to be.

The Member asked if it would be possible that safety also be included in the report so they could see the safety aspect in comparison to the compliance.

The Corporate Director - Communities responded that it would not be the appropriate place as safety would be part of Health and Safety meetings and regime which would be separate.

The Cabinet Member for Communities added where they had buildings that were closed there would be no staff or public access. He advised they had extensive discussions about how they were monitoring and reporting on compliance and safety.

A Member asked how long it would take to get closed premises set up and running again e.g. Newbridge Fields changing rooms.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that any facility that had water in it had to be Legionella tested and this could not be done until seven days prior to opening a facility and although they had a company to do the testing for them, they had to look at a priority order. She expressed what they could not do was be reticent when it came to health and safety and were not going to open the facilities until they knew they were safe, but she appreciated that might have been frustrating in some cases.

A Member referred to the Community Asset Transfers indicator which was green and queried why Coity Higher Community Council were on the list as she did not believe there were any outstanding. She also queried why there was no mention regarding the play parks as the importance and investment in play parks had been raised in a previous meeting, but it was not in the report to show how they were doing. Lastly, she referred to the high number of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD), including back and neck sickness days lost which she raised her concerns due to there being a lot of manual handling in Communities, and the potential for claims from a work-related injury.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised that the Community Asset Transfers should be green as things had moved on since the quarter one report. She praised the Community Asset Transfer Officer and his team for doing a wonderful job on having processed a significant number of transfers that year.

The Leader echoed the Corporate Director – Communities' comments and advised that a report was being prepared and there was a lot of interest and strong partnerships with Community Councils and Sports Clubs.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised regarding the sickness days and work-related injury question, they had a lot of manual workers and frontline services within the Communities Directorate, so they did have back and neck injuries and in the main these may be due to working circumstances, but they may not be due to work practices. In Health and Safety, they were looking at measures which would reduce the number of injuries and would ensure that their work methods were safe e.g., the use of monitors on mowing equipment to stop use at a set point due to vibration time and length. It was important to mitigate risk as far as possible.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that this year they had made a concerted effort to have a capital programme for playground improvement. One of the ambitions was to refresh and renew all play areas across the borough within the next five years. She advised that they needed a rolling programme of capital investment which was what they were working on now and a programme indicator so they could say how many they would like to target in that particular year and monitor the progress. At present they were working on that programme going out to tender.

A Member referred to PAM/010 on the report and the definition, which stated that the percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was at an admirable rate of 98.6% and asked what was that standard.

The Corporate Director- Communities advised she could not provide the exact definition but would ask the Group Manager of Highways and Green Spaces to respond to the Member with the detailed criteria.

The Member responded that although he had admiration for the team that worked in the Valley, however their street cleaning remit did not include removing things like leaves which then had a knock-on effect on the drains team when drains became blocked. He suggested that sweepers might be useful to clear the streets on his and other wards.

The Corporate Director - Communities responded that they had started recycling street waste litter collection, so the operatives were picking items that could be used for their recycling targets. That did not mean they could not clear those streets of other materials and she would speak to her team.

The Chair referred to Appendix C – Education and Family Support Performance Dashboard.

A Member asked what a 21st Century school would look like.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised Guidance had been issued from Welsh Government which specified the requirements around all new builds, regarding ecological developments and requirements for teaching and learning and availability to play areas, all specified by legislation. There were several key areas, to make sure environments were safe for users and sustainable and not just from decarbonisation and other aspects but financially sustainable for the Council.

The Member asked if the 21st Century School needed to be a new build as that would incur a long delay and could school money be used to improve the environment of existing schools rather than waiting to have to rebuild every time.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support explained that they had a School Modernisation Board which also benefited from representation from Communities Directorate, Central South Consortium and Health and Safety. Through that Board they make strategic decisions, then in consultation with elected Members of the Capital Improvement Programme that went to Council and then they deploy that at top need. He explained there are three tiers, first tier being Health and Safety requirements, the next level the Strategic Requirement and the third level additional teacher learning facilities within the schools. He concluded it went through a rigorous approach and it was not just the 21st Century Schools and colleges programme that the schools could benefit from.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration advised that that yes it would have to be a new building and follow certain specifications, but it was more complex than that and providing a new school did not necessarily provide a better school. What was important was that the staff, the pupils, the parents, and the governors worked together within that building.

The Leader advised that it was possible for the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme to redevelop existing schools but admitted one of the challenges with existing sites was that they were constrained and did not have the outdoor space which was fundamental.

The Member referred to DCH 2.1, point 11.1 and 2 and the percentage of surplus capacity in both primary and secondary schools which was important as it influenced school budgets and asked what the delay was in reconfiguring the catchment areas. He advocated giving secondary school and college children bus passes, so they have the freedom of travel.

Another Member asked for clarification on whether the indicators were red due to the number of spaces in their schools and questioned where these surpluses were.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised that regarding the catchment areas one of the challenges they had was parental choice. As far as surplus places were concerned there were certain areas within the local authority where they were pressed for places in certain year groups and other year groups had surplus places. Some schools had significant surplus places, especially in the secondary sector. They had looked at the Local Development Plan scanning for additional places. Additional work was ongoing through the School Modernisation Board to look at potential increases. There was a lot of work going on in the background, and subject to some Welsh Government funding.

Regarding the bus passes they were very keen especially with post sixteen learners to give young people the flexibility to attend courses where they needed to and increase their future life chances. A report was awaited from Welsh Government on the home to school transport position, as it made sense to align their long-term priorities with policy from Welsh Government.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration responded that it was a complex situation and there were a series of challenges. The longer-term key being to look at their Local Development Plan, and the Education Department of the Council were communicating with the Planning Department from the very beginning of the local development planning process. Regarding the 16 plus bus pass they had a wider ambition for a more general bus pass for young people, which they had been talking to First Cymru about, but legislation would need to come from Government about commissioning transport services.

A Member asked for reassurance on WBO3 point 2.5 with the adapting ways of using technology, she commented that although equipment had been rolled out to schools and the situation was ongoing, she had seen it reported to Childline that there had been a 40% increase in online abuse and whether that fell within remit of this indicator.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised it was not as the indicator related more to the deployment of technological systems. He expressed that the question raised was an important one and safeguarding was within all aspects of what they do. He explained they had 23,000 users plus 3000 staff in schools, and they needed to make sure they followed the appropriate policies.

A Member questioned the 'additional sickness absence by reasons' and asked if that included all staff, as they had said they had differentiated between school staff and the service area, and did the final table include all staff. She also wondered if when looking at the sickness absence reasons, if one of the main reasons was musculoskeletal injuries where they work related and accidents in schools, as it was a high number and there was not much manual handling in schools.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised he would need to check with Human Resources regarding the last two tables and figures. The first table had on the left-hand side their officers and the next one the 3000 school staff. As far as the cases and whether they related to the industrial injury, there seemed to be incongruent

as they were reporting low instances of industrial injury and higher with muscular skeletal issues, but he would check with HR.

The Chairperson referred to Appendix D - Social Services and Wellbeing performance dashboard.

A Member referred to care leavers and issues regarding accommodation and ensuring everyone was working together and asked for an update on the working group set up to close that gap.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing advised there would be a detailed workshop taking place between Housing and Social Services colleagues where they would be working through the baseline assessment which would be good practice around accommodation, care leavers and care experienced children. It had been developed a couple of years previous by Barnardo's and a report would be presented to the next Cabinet Corporate Parenting Committee to set out where they were, where their areas of good practice were, if there were any gaps and their priorities moving forward. She advised that most important was that care experienced children were getting the priority that they should for accommodation, but also that there were no perverse incentives for children and young people to declare themselves as homeless to get the support, and the detail would be worked through in the workshop.

A Member referred to the staffing structure and asked if there was an update.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing explained the workforce was a significant issue and a top priority. She explained there were two key areas of challenge in terms of workforce, one being the domiciliary care workforce, in which there were several actions in place. The other key area for them in terms of workforce was around children's social work, she advised they had been through two restructures within their children social work teams which had resulted in a different structure in terms of pay, where experienced children social workers sit within their job of valuation, and where to place adverts at those higher grades. If they were not successful, they would look at a range of other support mechanisms for their social workers and may need to consider an application through the market supplement policy which had been approved by Council.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help advised they advertise all their social work and care posts through recruitment drives across the County Borough and would appreciate all Members sharing this information and encouraging people to take up these roles.

A Member asked whether there was an indicator for the number of statutory home visits for children.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing responded that it was one of their key performance measures and one of the national measures in terms of statutory visits to children on the child protection register. She explained at the start of the pandemic they worked in a risk assessed way but for some time and in accordance with Welsh Government operating model the visits had been face to face, the risk of not visiting having been considered higher. She advised the challenges they faced on performance against statutory visits and those performance measures were looked at on a weekly basis within the Children Services Management Team and monthly basis within the Directorate Management Team.

A Member referred to the number of people aged 65 plus referred to the Community Resource Team and given the context they had been working in the last two years, it had been much lower. There had been a lot of conversation around workforce, and he

assumed that those referrals would increase, possibly in quarter three, in quarter four and into next year, and asked if they had the capacity to deal with what could be a significant influx.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing advised the concern was that their whole system was under pressure which meant they had numbers of people who had delays in their transfer of care in the Community Resource Team and there would be people who had their care needs met and benefit from long-term domiciliary care packages but without having had that opportunity to be reenabled. Supporting people to retain and regain independence took more of their long-term care which was a very scarce and valued resource, so it was significant concern and something which they were to pick up around planning for the needs coming through working with their colleagues in the Health Board.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions from Members of the Committee for the Invitees for this report, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that any Invitees not requested to attend for the next report may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee endorsed the report.

54. **CORPORATE PLAN 2018-2023 REVIEWED FOR 2022-23**

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change introduced the report, upon the Corporate Plan which had been updated for 2022-23. She explained the process had included Chief Officers and Management Teams, enabling them to look at what priorities there were going forward. She advised what they saw in the updated programme was the revised plan for the coming year and performance against the Plan would be monitored by this Committee as well as some aspects being monitored by the Governance and Audit Committee, so there would be opportunities for Members to look at progress against the Corporate Plan.

A Member asked the Leader if he believed the Corporate Plan would be ambitious enough going forward as they moved out of the pandemic.

The Leader responded that it had been difficult with the pandemic to be as ambitious as they would have liked but it had not gone away and was still the biggest challenge they faced. However, they would be looking to review the Corporate Plan and make it as ambitious as possible. He wished to make a point though that some of these challenges were long standing and not simply going to go away when the pandemic became an endemic.

The Chief Executive wished to add that it was the last review of the five-year Corporate Plan and one of the things that they would be doing post-election, whilst many of the challenges and priorities may remain the same, there may be a different focus which would feed into the new Corporate Plan. He explained that in some respects you would not expect the last year of a plan to deviate too far from what they had been doing over the last few years and agreed with the Leader that Covid had created a level of uncertainty which made it difficult to move forward. He advised they had additional pressures and changes to the way that they delivered some services which would need to be reflected on and become part of the assessment for the development of the new Corporate Plan moving forward.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions from Members of the Committee for the Invitees for this report, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that any Invitees not requested to attend for the next report may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee endorsed the report.

55. **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022-23 TO 2031-32**

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change introduced the report and explained the capital expenditure and investment undertaken by local authorities was governed by legislation. One requirement was that all local authorities had to have a Capital Strategy in place, and it should evidence that the plans were both affordable and sustainable. The Capital Strategy was updated on an annual basis to take account of change in plans and changing guidance and then the strategy had to be approved by full Council.

The Chairperson asked the Members to consider the recommendations and add any suggestions or comments on the report itself. As there were no comments or questions, she thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee endorsed the report.

56. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer, Scrutiny advised that following on from the Committee's consideration of the Forward Programme at the previous meeting, the updated Forward Programme for this Committee was attached as Appendix A. The Forward Work Programme for Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1, 2 and 3 were also attached as Appendices B, C and D, she explained as the Committee had responsibility for coordination and oversight of the overall Forward Work Programme.

The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations from previous meetings was attached as Appendix E.

There were no requests to include specific information in items for upcoming meetings and there were no further items identified for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and approved its Forward Work Programme in Appendix A; noted the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees following consideration in the respective Meetings in Appendices B, C & D and noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings in Appendix E.

57. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 11:43

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2022 AT
09:30**

Present

Councillor – Chairperson

JPD Blundell A Williams AJ Williams

Apologies for Absence

NA Burnett, HJ David, DG Howells and KL Rowlands

Officers:

Lucy Beard Scrutiny Officer
Meryl Lawrence Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Invitees:

Councillor Stuart Baldwin	
Debra Beeke	Group Manager – Human Resources and Organisational Development
Councillor Jane Gebbie	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help
Lindsay Harvey	Corporate Director Education and Family Support
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Councillor Dhanisha Patel	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Councillor Charles Smith	Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services
Councillor Hywel Williams	Cabinet Member Resources

65. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny advised that the Chair was unable to attend the meeting, so in accordance with the Council's Constitution requested nominations from the Committee for a Chairperson for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Blundell be nominated as Chairperson for the meeting.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

67. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meetings of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 19 Jan and 1 Feb 2022 be approved as a true and accurate record.

68. **BUDGET MONITORING 2021-22 - QUARTER 3 REVENUE FORECAST**

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change presented the report which provided the Committee with an update on the Council's revenue financial position at the end of 31 December 2021. She drew the Committee's attention to the fact that the report did not reflect potential impact on reduction in council tax income, as people had suffered financial hardship and measures had been put in place to support those who had faced difficulty in paying their council tax. However, it was still likely to be a lower collection rate than usual, and this will continue to monitor as the year progressed. She advised that along with the impact on council tax, the ending of the furlough scheme and the potential for new restrictions to address the Omicron Covid variant could both manifest themselves with an increased eligibility for council tax support, but this would be monitored by themselves and Welsh Government. She concluded by referring to the recommendation as detailed in section 9 of the report.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change for her presentation, following which Members of the Committee asked the following:

A Member commented that the report had been written in advance of January Cabinet up to the end of quarter 3 and it seemed late for it to be considered by Scrutiny in this meeting. He asked that the Authority consider in future the Committee receiving the report at an earlier stage, to enable Cabinet to consider recommendations going forward.

A Member stated it would have been better if they were looking at Quarter 4 rather than retrospectively looking at Quarter 3. He thought scrutiny could be more impactful and supportive to Cabinet if they could provide views, and representations when Cabinet received the report.

A Member proposed that the reports could be timed with Cabinet to enable pre-decision scrutiny, to make recommendations upon performance and finance reports.

The Chief Executive advised that he understood the idea in principle of having up-to-date information, but it may have been more down to the practicality of logistics.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change agreed it was something they could take forward and look at what period they reported to the Committee on the financial position.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.1.4 of the report regarding home to school transport and the additional budget pressure from the year before, but that it could not be sustained. He asked about the link to school catchment areas and where they stood moving forward with long term planning and review of school catchment areas and the timeline.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised that work had been undertaken by the Directorate on this and it was an issue that all local authorities were wrestling with. He advised they had looked at a variety of methods of reduction, such as effective tracking of vehicles to make sure the routes are minimised as well as working with parents to see whether they can support more individual transport routes to take

their children to school. He explained the biggest pressure recently was the financial pressure put on the transport providers had gone directly to them and they would be seeing over the next couple of years uplifts in the costs of providing drivers and transport within those transport areas. Regarding the catchment areas, he advised they needed to think strategically as making one change would affect another area. It was a complex matter, he explained, and as with any changes they made regarding home to school transport policy would not happen immediately.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration advised it was a long-term problem which was beyond the scope of powers of an individual Council Education Authority but the long-awaited review of home to school transport by Welsh Government would assist. He stated that reviewing catchment areas would not in itself resolve home to school transport.

A Member asked that given the budgetary pressure in that specific policy area, whether the generous provision that they had in Bridgend was sustainable going forward.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support explained one of the things the policy did was to provide protection for siblings and learners in different phases of education. As learners moved from phase to phase, they would naturally see less being eligible for free home to school transport. He explained the tapering exercise would lower the impact in the long-term on home to school transport budgets. He agreed Bridgend had a generous policy, but it would become eligible to less pupils as that policy tapered. The biggest issue he advised was the inflationary pressures that they dealt with when going to market. What they were keen to do he explained was to see what came out of Welsh Government regarding the Guidance and then it would be a decision for Cabinet to make on whether or not to change the policy.

A Member expressed that they needed to look at catchment areas when new schools were being built otherwise it was going to cause problems. She stated that the process would not move forward if they were not looking at it and listening to local Members who knew their wards. She gave an example of paying for buses in Coity for children who did not have a proper pavement to be able to get to the school even though they could see the school from where they lived, and they continued paying for the buses while there was no pavement in place. There needed to be movement on these areas as soon as possible.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised that one of the challenges with changing the catchment areas was although it would solve some issues it could then present others. He advised that they did not want to put on additional buses if they could prevent it, one of the challenges they had was if there was an existing bus used by existing pupils on another route, they obviously would exploit that and make sure that they gained access, so it would not be an additional bus, but making sure they use that particular asset for that route. He agreed to meet with the Member to provide an update.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration advised they should be incredibly careful with catchment areas as there were knock on effects. He advised that all Councillors keep a close eye on the forthcoming new Local Development Plan (LDP) and how that was going to affect travel to school.

A Member referred to the budget growth in paragraph 4.1.6 and it potentially being insufficient to meet increasing quantity demand to tackle homelessness and asked whether any projection had been made on what would be sufficient or is it an unknown quantity as they do not know how many people are going to present as homeless.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing explained they did not know, but that numbers were stable at around 300. She advised that they were seeing an increase in families and some single parent families with one or two children, but it was a mix and impossible to predict.

A Member referred to the addition of the £3M earmarked reserves in paragraph 4.1.8 and asked how the Council's level of reserves compared with other local authorities.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change explained she was unable to do a comparison with other local authorities at this time, being part way through the year. However, during the pandemic all local authorities would have seen an increase in their reserves and some of that was due to late monies coming through from Welsh Government. She did not think their reserves were particularly high compared to other local authorities as she thought they were all facing increasing in reserves, but they had all been earmarked for specific pieces of work.

A Member asked for clarification on whether the £3M addition to the unallocated capital reserve to be utilised against projected capital pressures was included in the overall £9M unallocated capital reserve.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change confirmed that it was included in that reserve and unallocated.

A Member referred to point 4.1.10 and asked which were the volatile budgets for the Directorates, particularly as far as their budgetary management was concerned.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing advised that Children's Services was a volatile budget as it was demand led and they sometimes had to make individual residential placements, which could be very costly and impact on the budget, and difficult to predict in budgetary terms. She also advised the Adult Social Care budget had become increasingly unpredictable post Covid as they had seen an increase in need.

The Chief Executive advised that the homelessness budget was particularly volatile and uncertain with many variables, as well as less obviously some of the support budget was impacted. Across the Council generally energy budgets were incredibly volatile and uncertain, so moving forward it would be difficult to predict exactly what that might cost over the course of the year.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised that tenders for work being undertaken right across the Directorate, from Highways, Transportation works to some capital projects, were coming in significantly higher than expected.

The Chief Executive referred to workforce challenges and the challenge that in order to fill specific necessary roles for the Council to carry out their statutory responsibilities, they would see over time an increase in agency costs and the need to commission people and services in order to ensure that they carry these services out.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised there were capital pressures regarding the School Modernisation Programme, similar volatility to the demand led nature referred to in Social Care above, recruitment issues, out of county placements and home to school transport.

A Member questioned how they could reach out across the Borough to better inform what the budget pressures were, the cost of providing services and what was being done. He asked whether they could review their communication with the county borough to provide an update on where their money was going.

The Chief Executive agreed that it was about how they better engage and communicate a better understanding of what they Council does and some of the challenges it faces. They were considering, but had not yet finalised, trying to produce an infographic, which could potentially go out with future council tax bills or if not be available online, to set out in a much clearer way where money is spent. The challenge was that not every member of the public will regard it as the right way to spend the money, depending on the services that they used themselves, but he recognised the need to address.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration agreed it would be useful to insert some charts showing where the Council budget is spent and also the distinction between revenue and capital spending, to try and give clearly demonstrate the magnitude of the budget.

A Member referred to point 4.1.15 where it stated that the Council had taken proactive decisions during the 2020-2021 year regarding the Covid-19 recovery fund and asked whether any work had been done on quantifying the success of those measures taken in that particular financial year.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained it was important to note that they had made a real attempt to bolster their business communities and the visitors into their town centres. The pandemic had been hard so they had full and comprehensive support packages that went over and above to try and do as much as they could to provide protection. Regarding how effective those measures had been, it was incredibly difficult she explained as they were in a global pandemic and the support packages they put in place would not necessarily in themselves prevent businesses from dissolving or ceasing to trade, as Welsh Government had given a significant number of business grants, and assistance with business rates. She advised there was no doubt their packages had assisted but it was difficult in isolation to see whether it was the measures they had put in would have been successful and effective on their own without Welsh Government and to some extent some of the decisions that Central Government had made as well.

The Chief Executive advised that they were in extraordinary circumstances with lockdowns and COVID rules which had meant it was difficult to establish whether each of their individual measures had defined and measurable effect. They had wanted to very quickly and visibly demonstrate their support to local businesses in town centres and did so e.g., with rental holidays and free car parking. The challenge moving forward was that not all those kinds of things were sustainable on a long-term basis and therefore they needed to work with the other stakeholders, including the traders, sports clubs and other people and come up with more sustainable recovery methodology moving forward, which would for example bring additional footfall to town centres.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.1.15 in which stated the balance was being carried into 2021-22 to support those free car parking fees, rental income, and the waiver of sports fees for the remainder of the 2021 season and asked should it state the remainder of the 2022 season.

The Chief Executive confirmed that it was for the remainder of this financial year.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.1.17 asked if the WG Free School Meal Panel had meet and reviewed the claim of the cost of free school meals since this report had been written and if so, what had been the result.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change advised that since the report had been written the Council has received some of the funding due in relation to that item.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.1.22 regarding ICT not being able to recover fixed costs of printers and photocopiers and asked was that a result of contractual arrangements.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change explained it was an internal recharge issue as ordinarily the costs would be picked up by the department and those costs are sent back to ICT so they can pay the contract. The issue had been departments were not printing or using those facilities therefore it was a budget virement between the service accounts and ICT for the year.

A Member asked for clarification on the current position that directors had identified for the specific purposes which they were going to use any underspends, how they were going to mitigate any overspends and had Directors identified the specific purposes in which they were going to use those earmarked reserves.

The Chief Executive explained what they had asked the Directors to do was identify any potential earmarked reserves on a revenue basis for a specific purpose. Additionally, there was the opportunity to move some of the underspend into the capital programme and consequently there were a range of capital bids but insufficient money to fund them all, and that it was an ongoing process.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change added the process for putting capital bids forward had quite a long lead time as the schemes needed to be well planned, they needed to be sure they could be delivered and the timescales over which they would be delivered. She added that the new factor that needed to be considered was around increasing costs on a lot of that capital expenditure.

A Member referred to the outstanding prior year budget reduction of £100k in COM19 relating to the Permitting Scheme for road works that had been in the budget for some time and was awaiting Welsh Government decision and asked that if Welsh Government did not decide to progress the Permitting Scheme, then would pressure be on other areas of the Highway budget.

The Corporate Director - Communities confirmed that this was for the street works to permitting scheme that they had been trying to introduce and it was something used regularly in England where permits are issued to contractors when they go to work on the street and includes all the conditions, so they did not have to continually inspect. This would enable to make a saving against the staff that go out and check on the schemes. She advised that if there was no appetite for the permit scheme, they would need to speak to their Welsh Government colleagues and look at withdrawing it and saving in another way.

A Member referred to where it stated in the report that they were losing income due to the number of children within the borough attending their special needs schools and that surely, they would want their special needs children to be schooled in their area rather than filling up spaces from out of area. She explained the report suggested that the children had a value on them and did not like the way it was potentially worded.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support agreed they were keen to provide the best possible care and support for learners within the county borough, one of the challenges was when they did not have places within their own schools to effectively provide to other local authorities, which came at a cost, but they would endeavour to make the narrative clear in the next report.

A Member asked for clarification regarding the Council-wide budget capital financing figures, what where the cost savings based on that additional spend and how would those decisions be arrived at.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change explained that the rationale behind it was they were paying off some of their loan debt so that they did not have the debt charges coming through in future years. She advised she did not have the information to hand regarding the revenue saving but could provide this to Committee Members.

The Member clarified that the information he was requesting was the difference in spending that million-pound capital project, and the revenue saving, and the decision process.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change explained it was the revenue budget, the money that they had aside to finance their capital spending and on their debt, so they had an underspend that year and were able to make a voluntary additional payment into their minimal revenue provision, so they reduced their long-term debt. She explained it was part of their underspend they were using to offset some of their future debt costs.

A Member referred to table six and the earmarked reserves, he questioned where the unallocated reserves were, so they could see the whole picture.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change advised that it just referenced the earmarked reserves and that they could look at the content of the table and the way it was presented for future reports.

A Member referred to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process in COM 1 and the narrative regarding the level of funding would also dictate the standard green space maintenance and may result in further reduction of grass cut areas if football teams are not forthcoming through the assets transfer process and queried whether this was the right approach as they should be setting the standards and the budget accordingly for the standard they require.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that they had achieved the saving via CAT, and she did not think it would come to the point where they would be looking at other areas such as open space maintenance. She advised they were looked at a fundamental review of which one of the things they wanted to do was look at Mow and No Mow Areas in order to look at improvement by diversity and contributing to their 2030 Net Zero Carbon Agenda. She thought as part of that they would have a more robust narrative on how they maintain their open spaces going forward but assured the Member they had not reduced any standards on cuts and COM 1 had been achieved fully on the community asset transfer process.

The Member agreed that mowing areas did need to be reviewed and it would be a culture change with maintenance of areas not being done universally in one way, but it could be done.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised that was the intention and welcomed comments on that when they got a proposal together.

The Chairperson suggested it may be something that could be a proposed topic for Scrutiny on the FWP for the future.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions from Members of the Committee for the Invitees for this report, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that any Invitees not requested to attend for the next report may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee made the following recommendations:

1. The Committee recommended that Finance and Performance reports be reported earlier to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) to ensure timely monitoring of quarterly / six monthly reports on up to date information, COSC meeting dates in the Annual timetable of meetings be scheduled accordingly, and that consideration be given to reporting these reports to COSC before Cabinet to enable Scrutiny comments to be forwarded to the Cabinet to consider along with reports.
2. With regard to the Home to School Transport Budget Pressure and the unintended consequences of planning for development under the Local Development Plan, the Committee requested a timeline on what work has been done on school catchment areas planning, how it is done, what is the timeline, and consideration be given to including it as a potential scrutiny topic for inclusion in the next draft Annual Forward Work Programme.
3. The Committee recommended that the Council be requested to write to the Welsh Government to seek clarity regarding when the awaited report upon Home to School Transport including statutory walking distances can be expected from WG, given anxious correspondence to Members from constituents, parents, and grandparents.
4. With regard to the difficulty of quantifying whether the budget for Homelessness would be sufficient, due to the uncertainty of the number of people who would present as homeless during the financial year, the Committee requested an estimated projection based upon previous years' demand due to concern that sufficient funds are in place to tackle this important issue.
5. The Committee requested that the unallocated reserves be included in the information within Table 6 in future reports.
6. The Committee recommended that communication with residents of the County Borough be reviewed and the development of a clear infographic advising council taxpayers to better inform what the pressures are including distinction between capital and revenue spending, scale of the budget, and including with future Council tax demands.
7. That the waiver of sports fees for the remainder of 2020-21 season should be corrected to 2021-22 in Paragraph 4.1.15 of the report.
8. With regard to the outstanding prior year budget reduction, COM 19 – Streetworks Review (£100k) on page 21 of the report, the Committee recommended the Council write to Welsh Government to ascertain whether there is an appetite for the Permitting Scheme which could be an efficiency for the whole of Wales and if there is no appetite, then it is recommended that the efficiency is removed from the Communities Directorate Budget.
9. With regard to support for ALN learners on page 23 of the report, the Committee requested the narrative regarding the funding be reviewed and amended by the

Corporate Director – Education and Family Support for the next report to reflect more positively the provision of the best support to learners in the County Borough, and not the lack of places available to other Local Authorities.

10. The Committee requested that the Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change circulate the information requested at the meeting to understand the rationale for the Council Wide Capital financing Projected capital borrowing cost savings and how this is arrived at. (Paragraph 4.3.5 Page 31 of the report refers.)

The Committee requested that a report upon the topic of Future Grass Cutting be added to the FWP for Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 for 2022-23, including consideration of future grass cutting, mow and no mow areas, biodiversity, etc. and the implications for a change in culture.

69. **EMPLOYEE WELLBEING**

The Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy introduced the report and asked the new Health and Wellbeing Officer to introduce herself and some of the initiatives she had introduced.

The Health and Wellbeing Officer introduced herself to the Committee advising she had joined the Authority following recommendations that health and wellbeing needed to be more cohesive across the Authority, as there had been lots of good practice, but having somebody to head it up and promote the resources that they had within the Council to support the staff. She gave an overview of her background in occupational health and experience to date. She had started to familiarise herself with how the Authority worked and had made a few changes to some of the procedures to support managers with sickness absence. She had been involved with Human Resources surgeries on managing absence and had looked at introducing more guidance for the stress risk assessment. She advised she was currently engaged with Halo Leisure in looking at the Halo at Home app as a pilot study for the newly formed Health and Wellbeing Group. She explained they were also trying to look at how they could develop the intranet so that they could collate all the health and wellbeing resources in one place and provided wellbeing information to promote wellbeing when recruiting, as she thought pay was not always the issue when people were looking for a job, it was actually the services that support you in the workplace. She had also engaged with the Employee Assistance Programme, provided by Care First where they had a lot of quantitative data but not a lot of qualitative data which more information was needed. Lastly, she advised she was going to engage with employees who are non-office based to provide wellbeing support and information/advice. She concluded that they had an action plan in place which they were addressing some of which some would be quick wins and others would take longer to provide.

A Member referred to sickness absence monitoring over the year, that non-work-related absence due to stress had been higher in the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and in Schools and queried why non-work-related absence would not be similar across all Directorates. He also referred to a newly published report on a Future Fit for Wales and a road map to a shorter working week and advised that they were looking for organisations for a pilot and he thought maybe that was something the Council may start to consider looking at for the future.

The Group Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development advised the reports on stress related absences were provided following a previous report to the Committee looking at absence across the Council and as a direct recommendation from this Committee, they had started recording the information differently and took it back to the beginning of the financial year. She was confident that the information was being

input correctly and advised they had mechanisms to check that was the case, but she would need to comment further outside the Committee when she had the graphs in front of her. Regarding the working week, it would mean people not losing pay which would be a subject for some discussion at the next Public Service Board meeting, but the report had only been recently released, so no doubt there would be more information to follow.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help expressed a four-day working week would give them the opportunity to further develop specific workforce, but that the conversation that needed to be had was how they would do it without reducing anyone's pay.

A Member referred to the staff survey and only 14% saying they would want to be part of the Staff Network Group and asked how they were going to address the disengagement. He also asked for the number of people who took part in the learning and development programme and the workshops in the report.

The Group Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development advised that they continued to do all they could to ensure that staff feel they are able to engage with the Authority and respond in a range of ways through local management arrangements, staff surveys and trade union colleagues. The staff survey feedback report, she explained was being considered by a Heads of Service Group and an Action Plan had been developed. The 14% was quite a number given the number of responses, but she advised it was important that they progressed with it. In terms of the learning and development attendance numbers, they could provide information but did not have it to hand.

A Member asked for clarification on the care first usage, as the information in the first table captured usage between April 2021 and December 2021 and suggested that it was higher in quarter one than in quarter two and three. The second table however, suggested that the new clients had increased in quarter three, so she wondered why the usage seemed lower but the new clients by directorate seemed higher in quarter three.

The Group Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development advised that they were two different views, the first table talked about the number of sessions or the nature of the contact, which could be for the same person, whilst the second table was about how many new people had accessed this service during the reporting period.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions from Members of the Committee for the Invitees for this report, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee made the following recommendations:

11. The Committee welcomed the positive developments following the appointment of the new Health and Wellbeing Officer from August 2021 and the new approach of toolbox talks, and engagement with staff in different parts of the front line of the Council.
12. With regard to the four day working week report from the Future Generations Commissioner, the Committee recommended that the Authority considers being part of a future pilot project.

13. The Committee requested that the numbers of people who took part in each Workshop and Course be circulated, in preference to percentages included in the report.

70. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 11:38

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JUNE 2022

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

CALL-IN OF CABINET DECISION: RECYCLING AND WASTE SERVICE POST 2024

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Committee to consider the decision of Cabinet of 14 June 2022 in relation to the report on Recycling and Waste Service Post 2024.

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 health 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 In accordance with Rule 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution, 3 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and a Scrutiny Chair, have requested that an Executive decision made by Cabinet on the 14 June 2022 be Called-In.
- 3.2 For the purposes of informing the Committee more fully regarding the reasons for Call-In, the following appendices have been attached:
- **Appendix A** – Cabinet Decision Record of 14 June 2022;
 - **Appendix B** – Notice of Call-In Form;

- **Appendix C** – Report of the Corporate Director - Communities: Recycling and Waste Service Post 2024 to Cabinet on 14 June 2022.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The role of Councillors exercising Overview and Scrutiny is, amongst other things, to ensure that the development of the Council's policies and the way they are being implemented reflect the needs and priorities of local Communities in the County Borough. As such, in holding to account the Cabinet for the efficient exercise of the executive function, the Overview & Scrutiny process aims to strengthen accountability for the decisions and performance of Bridgend County Borough Council.
- 4.2 Three Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and a Scrutiny Chair have requested to Call-In the Cabinet decision of 14 June 2022.
- 4.3 The role of the Committee within the Call-In process is to consider the proposed decision taken by Cabinet including the reasons for the decision, factors taken into account by Cabinet when making the decision and whether the decision is in line with corporate priorities and policies. Further details as to the reasons for Call-In are provided at **Appendix B** and set out below:
- The report presented to Cabinet did not contain sufficient information for Cabinet to make a fully informed decision nor did they seek additional information through questioning.
 - There was no presentation of the alternative options that could be considered, for example the service could be brought in-house and managed directly rather than procuring a 'short-term' interim contract between 2024 & 2026.
 - There was no indication of the procurement costs that would be incurred. Neither was there a cost benefit analysis between a short-term contract and an in-house option (because the in-house option hadn't been considered).
 - The paper did not consider alternatives to procuring the plant and existing fleet from Kier. No consideration was given to alternative options such as procuring an 'all in contract' or leasing an alternative fleet (potentially a low emission fleet for example).
 - Aside from the estimated additional cost of 'HVO' fuel the cabinet made a decision without a full understanding of the costs.
 - There was insufficient scrutiny or questioning of the decision to proceed with HVO fuel despite an additional revenue cost of £75k pa. Given the current cost of living crisis such an increase in revenue expenditure without any obvious direct benefit should have been given much further scrutiny. The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing did ask if the HVO would be from primary or recycled sources, but the Director for Communities was unable to answer.
 - In summary, the paper was presented as a fait accompli, the Cabinet failed to challenge the assumptions made in the paper. There was no consideration of alternative options in either the paper or the Cabinet's deliberations. There was no financial information within the paper for the Cabinet to understand the financial implications of their decision nor did they request it. The Cabinet did not properly consider budgetary implications of the HVO fuel proposal against a

backdrop of a wider cost of living crisis and further budget pressures. The Director of communities was also unable to confirm the source of the 'HVO' fuel.

- The decision has not been properly considered and requires further scrutiny.

4.4 If, having considered the decision, the Committee is still concerned about it, then it may refer it back to Cabinet for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns. If referred to the Cabinet, it must be reconsidered by Cabinet within a further 7 clear working days, amending the decision or not, before adopting a final decision. If the Committee does not refer the matter back to the Cabinet, the decision may be determined on the date of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

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.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The equality implications are outlined in Section 6 of the Cabinet report attached as **Appendix C**.

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

7.1 An assessment under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been made and is outlined in Section 7 of the Cabinet report attached at **Appendix C**.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The financial implications are outlined in Section 8 of the Cabinet report attached as **Appendix C**.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the Cabinet decision of 14 June 22 relating to Recycling and Waste Service Post 2024 and to determine whether it wishes to:

- i) refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns;
- ii) decide not to refer the matter back to the Cabinet.

Kelly Watson
Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy
24 June 2022

Contact Officers: Meryl Lawrence
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Lucy Beard
Scrutiny Officer

Jessica McLellan
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643515 / 643613 / 643263

Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

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

Background documents: None

CABINET DECISION RECORD – 14 JUNE 2022

Title of Report	REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2021-22
Decision Made	Cabinet noted the revenue outturn position for 2021-22 and recommended that Council approves the virements between £100,000 and £500,000 as outlined in paragraph 4.1.15 of the report.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	As part of the Performance Management Framework, budget projections are required to be 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.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE
Decision Made	That Cabinet agreed that the revised Capital Programme (Appendix A to the report) be submitted to Council for approval.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	Capital investment in the Council's assets is a key factor in meeting the Council's well-being objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan. The report is seeking approval for the inclusion of new capital schemes within the capital programme that was previously approved by Council in February 2022
Personal Interests Disclosed	Cllr JP Blundell declared a prejudicial interest in this item as he is a LEA Governor of Bryntirion Comprehensive which is mentioned in the report and withdrew from the meeting for consideration of this item.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	RECYCLING AND WASTE SERVICE POST 2024
Decision Made	That Cabinet: (1) Authorised officers proceeding to seek invitation of tenders for the provisions of the short duration waste contract from 2024 to 2026.

	<p>(2) Delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Communities in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, Human Resources and Corporate Policy to negotiate with Kier and agree the final cost for the acquisition of the vehicles and plant and equipment from Kier required to perform the recycling and waste service.</p> <p>(3) Delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Communities in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, Human Resources and Corporate Policy to negotiate terms with Kier to change fuel supply for the existing fleet of recycling and waste vehicles and plant to a HVO - hydrogenated vegetable oil derived fuel.</p> <p>(4) Noted that future financial implications will be reported back to Cabinet and Council in due course.</p> <p>(5) Authorised officers to commence work on the future waste service model, commission specialist advice if required and report back to Cabinet on the new service model as developed.</p>
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	In order to provide an update on the future direction of the Council's recycling and waste service.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	LEVELLING UP FUND PRIORITY PROJECTS
Decision Made	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the overview and update on the application process associated with the LUF. • Endorsed the projects proposed by officers to be submitted in round two of the LUF programme. • Delegated authority to the Director of Communities to liaise with the Section 151 Officer to agree the total project costs to be submitted within the applications

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved that future financial implications will be reported back to Cabinet and Council in due course prior to acceptance of any grant funding. • Receives a future report on the development of a bid for the Ogmore Constituency.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022.
Reasons for that decision	The LUF will invest in local infrastructure and capital projects that have a visible impact on people and their communities. This includes a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes, urban and economic regeneration projects and supporting cultural assets to benefit the public.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	BRIDGEND NET ZERO CARBON - HYDROGEN TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATOR
Decision Made	<p>That Cabinet:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted the progress to develop; Bridgend Net Zero Carbon – Hydrogen Demonstrator Project 2. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Communities, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change and Chief Officer - Legal and Regulatory Services, Human Resources and Corporate Policy, to work with the Marubeni Corporation to develop the Hydrogen Demonstrator Project and to negotiate the terms of the MoU and enter into the document. 3. Delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Communities, in consultation with the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change and Chief Officer - Legal and Regulatory Services, Human Resources and Corporate Policy, to commission specialist advice utilising resources that will be made available from the Communities Directorate Earmarked Reserve (EMR) 2022-23 for implementing Bridgend 2030 Decarbonisation Strategy from the Communities Directorate budget as required and to report back to Cabinet on the full project proposal.

	4. Noted that a further report shall be received following the end of the MoU period to consider detailed viability of the project.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	If fully pursued the Project will provide local green hydrogen that support decarbonisation of the Council's assets and the wider region.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS
Decision Made	That Cabinet approved the appointments detailed at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of the report.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	School governing bodies have a strategic role in running schools and ensuring that all pupils are supported to learn and achieve so that they can access opportunities for further learning and employment, know how to maintain their wellbeing, can play active roles in their communities and can contribute positively to society as a whole.
Personal Interests Disclosed	Cllr H Williams declared an interest in this item as he was an applicant for one of the vacancies at Abercerdin Primary School in the report and withdrew from the meeting for consideration of this item. Cllr N Farr declared an interest in this item as she was in competition for one of the vacancies at Porthcawl Comprehensive School in the report and withdrew from the meeting for consideration of this item.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME - MYNYDD CYNFFIG PRIMARY SCHOOL OUTCOME OF PUBLISHED STATUTORY NOTICE
Decision Made	Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the outcome of the published statutory notice in respect of the proposed enlargement of Mynydd Cynffig

	<p>Primary School as detailed in the Objection Report (Appendix A to the report refers);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gave approval to publish the Objection Report; • Determined to implement the proposal with effect from the beginning of the autumn term 2025; • Gave approval to issue and publish a decision letter.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	In order to further progress the amalgamation and enlargement of the school subject of the report.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – HERONSBRIDGE SCHOOL OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION PROCESS
Decision Made	<p>Cabinet :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the outcome of the consultation with prescribed consultees, as detailed in the attached Consultation Report and appendices; • Approved the Consultation Report (Appendix A to the covering report) for publication; and • Authorised the publication of a statutory notice in respect of the proposal.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	In order to progress with alterations to the school in question, including its relocation.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME – YSGOL GYMRAEG BRO OGWR OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION PROCESS
Decision Made	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the outcome of the consultation with prescribed consultees, as detailed in the attached Consultation Report and appendices; • Approved the publication of the Consultation Report (at Appendix A to the report); • Approved the publication of a statutory notice in respect of the proposal.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	In order to progress further proposed alterations to the school.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Title of Report	OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION TO OPEN PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) ESTABLISHING A LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC) FOR PUPILS WITH MODERATE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (MLD) AT YSGOL CYNWYD SANT
Decision Made	Cabinet : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the outcome of the consultation with interested parties as detailed in the attached consultation report (Appendix A referred) and appendices; • Approved the consultation report (at Appendix A) for publication • Authorise the publication of a statutory notice in respect of the proposal.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	In order to cater for further learning provisions for pupils with ALN, LRC and MLD at the school.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None.
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None.

Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member.
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Title of Report	OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION TO OPEN PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) ESTABLISHING A LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC) FOR PUPILS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) AT TREMAINS PRIMARY SCHOOL
Decision Made	That Cabinet : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Noted the outcome of the consultation with interested parties as detailed in the attached Consultation Report (Appendix A to the report refers) and appendices; (2) Approved the Consultation Report (Appendix A to the report) for publication; and (3) Authorised the publication of a statutory notice in respect of the proposal.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	In order to cater for further learning provisions for pupils with ALN, LRC and MLD at the school.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member

Title of Report	PROPOSED DATES FOR MEETINGS OF CABINET, CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES AND CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING
Decision Made	That Cabinet approved the Programme of meeting dates for Cabinet, Cabinet Committee Equalities and Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting, as outlined in paragraph 4.1 of the report.
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	The approval of the programme of meetings of Council, Cabinet and their Committees is required in accordance with the Council's Constitution and allows for the public to be able to access the decision-making processes of the Council made at its Committees cycle.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None

Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member

Title of Report	REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND JOINT COMMITTEES
Decision Made	That Cabinet appointed the requisite number of Members to the joint committees and other outside bodies as listed in Appendix 1 to the report (names of individual representatives to be added to the list and when complete, the list to be circulated to all Members and published).
Date Decision made	14 June 2022
Reasons for that decision	The Authority's continuing partnership, working with a wide range of organisations within the County Borough, contributes to the achievement of its corporate well-being objectives.
Personal Interests Disclosed	None
Dispensation Granted by the Council's Standards Committee	None
Consultation undertaken prior to the decision	Legal, Finance and the relevant Cabinet Member

Notice of 'Call-In'

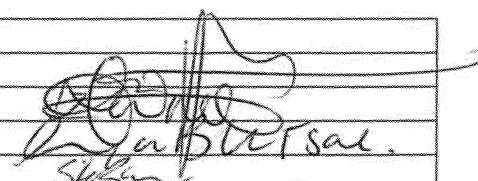
Committee: Overview & Scrutiny Committee

1. Decision Subject To Call-In:

Title: Details inc date
 RECYCLING AND WASTE SERVICE POST 2024 14th June 2022

2. Member(s) of the Committee Wishing to Call the Decision In

Name
Councillor Martin Williams
Cllr Amanda Williams
Cllr Freya Bletsoe – Chair Scrutiny Committee 2
Cllr Steven Bletsoe



3. Reasons for the Call-In

Various Reasons See Below:

- The report presented to cabinet did not contain sufficient information for Cabinet to make a fully informed decision nor did they seek additional information through questioning.
 - There was no presentation of the alternative options that could be considered, for example the service could be brought in-house and managed directly rather than procuring a 'short-term' interim contract between 2024 & 2026.
 - There was no indication of the procurement costs that would be incurred. Neither was there a cost benefit analysis between a short-term contract and an in-house option (because the in-house option hadn't been considered).
 - The paper did not consider alternatives to procuring the plant and existing fleet from Kier. No consideration was given to alternative options such as procuring an 'all in contract' or leasing an alternative fleet (potentially a low emission fleet for example).
 - Aside from the estimated additional cost of 'HVO' fuel the cabinet made a decision without a full understanding of the costs.
 - There was insufficient scrutiny or questioning of the decision to proceed with HVO fuel despite an additional revenue cost of £75k pa. Given the current cost of living crisis such an increase in revenue expenditure without any obvious direct benefit should have been given much further scrutiny. The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing did ask if the HVO would be from primary or recycled sources, but the Director for Communities was unable to answer.

- In summary, the paper was presented as a fait accompli, the cabinet failed to challenge the assumptions made in the paper. There was no consideration of alternative options in either the paper or the cabinet's deliberations. There was no financial information within the paper for the cabinet to understand the financial implications of their decision nor did they request it. The cabinet did not properly consider budgetary implications of the HVO fuel proposal against a backdrop of a wider cost of living crisis and further budget pressures. The Director of communities was also unable to confirm the source of the 'HVO' fuel.
- The decision has not been properly considered and requires further scrutiny.

4. Date of Call-In: 21st June 2022

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

14 JUNE 2022

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

RECYCLING AND WASTE SERVICE POST 2024

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the future direction of the recycling and waste service and to seek Cabinet approval: -

- To proceed to tender, for an interim contract for the recycling and waste collection / community recycling centre management contract, for upto a two-year duration
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Communities to negotiate and finalise acquisition fees for the existing vehicles, plant and equipment utilised in the provision of the current service with Kier Services Limited.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Communities to negotiate terms with Kier to change fuel supply for the existing fleet of recycling and waste vehicles and plant to a hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) derived fuel, in the period upto the end of the contract in 2024
- To commence work on the future service provision post 2026, including looking at decarbonisation of the waste fleet and additional material streams for recycling with the aim of being the best performing waste & recycling Local Authority in Wales.

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

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

- **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 deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

3.1 The Council has outsourced its recycling and waste contract to a commercial contractor since 2003. The contract has been renewed every 7 years and the Council has had three contractors fulfil that service. The current outsourced waste contract was awarded to Kier Services Limited in April 2017. This contract will end on 31st March 2024.

3.2 There is no doubt that overall this current contractual arrangement has been successful in terms of relative cost and also meeting and exceeding recycling targets, the Council continues to be consistently in the top performing Local Authorities in Wales, with 70% of our waste being recycled. The Council now has

the ambition of providing the best recycling and waste collection service in Wales. A key part of this ambition is to look to increase the number of waste streams that can be recycled, including from the kerbside collections and within the Community Recycling Centres (CRC's) across the Borough. To ensure community re-use shops provide extended life to unwanted items that are still in good and working condition. Also, of significant importance, if the Council is to meet its Net Zero Carbon target by 2030, it must decarbonise the Refuse Vehicle Fleet by switching to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV). The Council is considering both Electric and Hydrogen fuel applications for this currently. However, for large goods vehicles, high costs and a developing marketplace, which contains both purely electric powered and hydrogen powered vehicles, means commitment to a fleet type is difficult to determine currently.

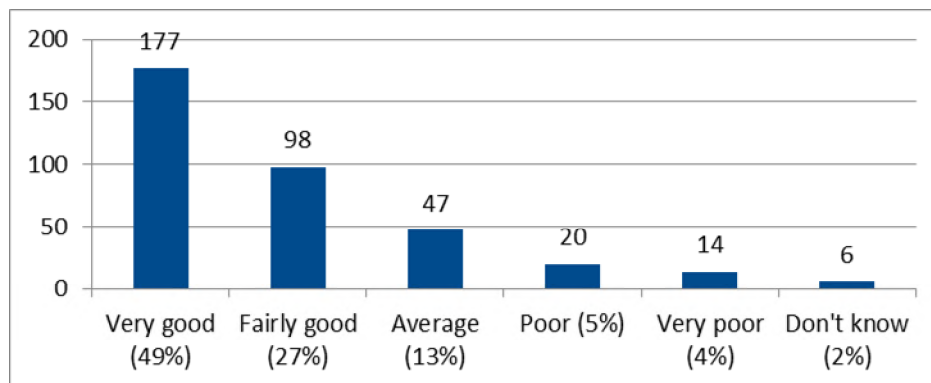
- 3.3 It is also clear that a great deal of uncertainty exists with regards to the methodology and targets for the future recycling and waste service model. This is because the Welsh Government (WG) targets for recycling post April 2024 are not yet known. There is also increased uncertainty with regards to the future effect that planned changes in legislation in relation to Deposit Return Schemes and Extended Producer Responsibility, will have on recycling tonnages presented at the kerbside for collection. Therefore, it is these factors combined with the market issues surrounding the current availability and cost of a new and innovative decarbonised refuse fleet, that make deciding exactly what a new model of contract/service would need to look like from 2026 and onwards currently difficult.
- 3.4 It is for these reasons that the Cabinet is strongly recommended to make a decision to put a short-term interim contract into place, of no more than two years, to cover the period from 2024 to 2026. This contract would use the existing fleet of vehicles, with minimum service changes. This would also allow for achievement of the next Welsh Government recycling target in 2024. This short contract period would also allow time for the development of the ULEV marketplace, such that a clear best way forward with vehicle types would become apparent and financially sustainable. Welsh Government recycling targets and relevant forthcoming legislation would also be published, and future service configurations would be able to be tailored to achieve the set targets.
- 3.5 In summary, the short interim contract period would allow time for the development of the complex future waste collection model post 2026, including the key decisions around how the service is provided, to be made at a time when there would be less uncertainty. This would ensure that the most cost-effective service and innovative technology is deployed, which is critical if the Council is to achieve its ambition of being the best recycling and waste service in Wales. The Council will work on the interim contract and in parallel use this time to look at all service delivery options available, including a new contractual arrangement or bringing the service back in-house, possibly via an arm's length arrangement.

PERFORMANCE OF THE CURRENT CONTRACT

- 3.6 It is now recognised that the lead in time to secure robust service continuation arrangements for the provision of a large-scale recycling and waste services contract are both complex and substantial. The current recycling & waste service overall performs very well, and it will be important to improve on this position if the Council is to achieve its ambition of being the best in Wales. In July 2021, officers presented a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 (OVSC 3) on the

good performance of the current waste services contract and also considered the issues outlined above, that is, the option and risks of progressing with a new contract post 2024 with so much uncertainty. In addition, a Citizen's Panel Survey from 2021, also demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the existing waste service contract. The graph below shows that 76% of respondents rated the kerbside collection as good or fairly good, with only 9% rating it as poor.

Overall, how would you rate the kerbside collection service 2021?



- 3.8 Another key indicator of good performance is the rate of Missed Collections. These are used as a standard industry measurement of service performance for recycling and waste collections. Put simply, it is the number of collections reported as missed during service. Service standards of 80 misses or less per 100,000 collections undertaken for fortnightly collections and 50 misses per 100,000 or less for weekly collections are considered to represent excellent standards of service. The latest recorded monthly figures for missed collections across all collection services available are for April 2022 in Bridgend and stand at 39 misses per 100,000 collections undertaken. Expressed in percentage terms reported missed service collections occur on 0.039 % of the collection service occasions. This shows that overall, an excellent service is provided. It is recognised that there remain isolated cases of concern, as there are with all waste contracts, however they are managed and delivered, including some issues with communal waste collections which will be reviewed where possible.
- 3.9 There have been significant increases in recycling performance levels in recent years. WG has developed a future strategy and implemented national targets for annual waste reuse/recycling/composting. At the last formal reporting of recycling performance given at the Scrutiny meeting on the 19 July 2021 a recycling level of 67.58% for Bridgend was recorded for the 2019/20 year, exceeding the current 64% Welsh Government statutory target. Whilst still provisional, the expected 2021/22 recycling performance is anticipated to be 72.97%, a potential all-time best for the authority and a result exceeding the next 70% statutory target that will come into place for the 2024/25 year, three years ahead of target. This will mean that Bridgend will be amongst the top Local Authorities for recycling in Wales, and therefore by default one of the best in the world as Wales is a world leading country in this regard.
- 3.10 Also of importance to note here is that our current waste contractor, Kier, have implemented the Real Living Wage with the workforce and also applied a number of improvements to payment terms for LGV drivers. The latter improvements were made in response to a national LGV driver shortage and an increasingly competitive

marketplace to ensure continuity of collections service for the authority. These costs have been absorbed by Kier as the contractual arrangement has protected the authority from these cost pressures and will continue to do so until 31 March 2024.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The recommended way forward in this report is to procure a new short term interim waste contract for a period of upto 2 years, between 2024 and 2026. This will use the existing collection methodology and waste vehicle fleet and allow the Council the time required to look at a new model of service provision post 2026, with a decarbonised fleet, additional material streams recycled, against the backdrop of certainty of WG targets and new environmental legislation. All with the ambition of the Council being the best performing waste and recycling Local Authority in Wales.
- 4.2 Following confirmation from Kier that they were exiting the waste market and that a contract extension would not be available, officers comprising Communities' operational management staff, legal officers and procurement officers have considered the future options for the service post 2024. In addition, further strategic discussions took place at Corporate Management Board to consider what might be achievable and deliverable in the timescale and in the circumstances.
- 4.3 These internal discussions explored service continuation models and determined that as a preferred option officers pursue preparations for procurement of a short-term contract for a period of upto 2 years. This would engage a contractor to utilise the existing fleet (requiring acquisition of the existing fleet and equipment) and provide a service aligned to the current provision. In effect, procuring a short duration new contract that would provide the same service and advantages to the decision-making timeline that would have been provided had a short contract extension be entered into with Kier. In the intervening months officers have progressed with the preparations putting together tender documentation regarding a two-year continuation contract which is obviously considerably easier and quicker to develop and procure than an entirely new contract, with new collection methodologies, which would also require public consultation.
- 4.4 Officers are now nearing readiness to go out to tender and are seeking the formal approval of Cabinet to progress to tender stage. As the contract will provide virtually the same service as present to the public, no public consultation is required to proceed and the process of switching from one provider to another should be relatively seamless and without some of the issues that sometimes occur when a new contract with entirely new collection methodologies and routes are implemented. There may be an opportunity however, to review and improve the position with some minor areas such as communal bin collection, albeit the team are currently working on this issue currently to improve recycling rates and general cleanliness.
- 4.5 In order to proceed with the approach outlined above the Council will need to purchase the current vehicles, plant and equipment utilised by Kier in the provision of the service at the end of the contract, in order for the new contractor to continue to use these items. The current contract provides Bridgend Council with the exclusive right to acquire the plant and equipment at set individual unit values. It is envisaged negotiation will be required, as the exact list of vehicles and equipment now in use in the performance of the contact is somewhat varied from the original

prediction. Delegated authority for the Corporate Director of Communities will be required to negotiate and finalise a value for the acquisition of the Kier assets and Council approval will be required to acquire these assets through the Capital Programme or an EMR

- 4.6 When the value of the plant to be acquired is finalised, approval will be sought in a future Council Capital Programme report prior to the required purchase in March 2024.

IMMEDIATE CARBON REDUCTION OPPORTUNITY

- 4.7 It is recognised that in the medium to long term the highest environmental benefit in terms of fleet provision will be a change to ULEV Electric/Hydrogen powered vehicles that produce zero emissions in use. If these are fuelled by a renewable energy supply, they will represent the cleanest possible method of recycling and waste collection. An interim step has been being explored and discussed between Kier and Council officers, namely the introduction of Hydrogenised Vegetable Oil (HVO) derived fuel vehicles. Kier have undertaken investigations and confirmed that the existing fleet is able to be run using this fuel type.
- 4.8 A switch to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil fuel can bring a reduction of circa 975 tonnes of CO2 emissions per annum to the current carbon footprint of the waste and recycling operations - this represents a 93.54% carbon reduction. The change to HVO fuel would however cost more than standard diesel. The additional cost of fuel purchase is anticipated to be in the region of £75,000 per annum. This would benefit both Bridgend Council in its carbon agenda and Kier who also wish to lower their carbon footprint. Officers recommend that, as this would represent a very positive carbon reduction change for a relatively low cost, we proceed with the proposal and authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Communities to negotiate and agree a shared cost with the existing contractor to implement this change as an interim measure on our journey to a carbon zero 2030. The Council's share of the cost would be funded from within existing Communities Directorate budgets.
- 4.9 In addition to proceeding to tender with a short-term waste contract, it is also imperative that work is now commenced on determining the direction of waste services post April 2026. This will be both complex and lengthy and will need to be resourced appropriately to build on the already high performing service. There will be a number of key decision areas for the Council to consider in its post 2026 future waste service. It is proposed these will form part of future Cabinet Reports.
- 4.10 Key decision-making areas will include:
- The future waste fleet configuration in regard to decarbonisation, that is the ULEV needs whether electric or hydrogen vehicles.
 - The changes to the service provided and collection methodology to ensure future recycling targets continue to be met and exceeded.
 - The impact that new legislation or material waste streams will have on collections and recycling rates.
 - The Model of service provision to be utilised in future. This could be continued outsourcing to an external contractor ,a shared service with a neighbouring local authority with the same collection methodology, a

Bridgend Council provided service, or a service provided via an arm's length Bridgend Council owned company.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 This report has no effect on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

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

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment based on the 5 ways of working and any requisite mitigating measures have been set out in.

The proposed short duration recycling and waste contract together with the proposed more immediate change to HVO fuel. Demonstrate the sustainable development principle by ensuring that by meeting the needs of the present they do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is evidenced through the 5 ways of working as follows:

- Long-term: The proposed contract allows for consideration of not only the current targets and issues in the service area, but also those that are considered to be issues in the future. The proposal allows for appropriate time to be given to seek to put in place a more fit for purpose recycling and waste solution in the long term with decisions being able to be made in this regard, at a time when more information is available.
- Prevention: The proposed change to HVO fuel will generate immediate carbon footprint reductions, preventing further harm to the environment and protecting the environment for future generations.
- Integration: The proposed recycling and waste contract will be undertaken to ensure that future services and their implementation integrates with current and future recycling and environmental objectives.
- Collaboration: The process for providing the continuing service will be undertaken through a partnership approach between BCBC and service providers.
- Involvement: The long-term future direction of the recycling and waste contract beyond the short-term contract proposed will require changes to the service provided to the public. This will be subject to a future full public consultation.

8. Financial implications

8.1 A competitive tender process with an emphasis on value for money will ensure all bidders competing to win the contract keep costs as low as possible, however,

APPENDIX C

significantly increasing national and global fuel costs, increasing wage costs particularly for implementing the real living wage, enhanced LGV driver payments to compete in the jobs market for drivers during a time of national shortage combined with the current inflationary pressures and housing growth will impact on the future cost of the provision of waste and recycling services. The outcome of the tender exercise will have to be considered by Cabinet as part of the future Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- 8.2 Changing to HVO fuel will bring an additional cost in the region of £75,000 per annum, anticipated to be shared between the existing contractor and Bridgend County Borough Council during the current contact term. The Council's share of the cost would be funded from existing Communities Directorate budgets.
- 8.3 Subject to negotiations with Kier, it is proposed that the Council acquire all Vehicles, Plant and Equipment associated with the running of the contract. This is anticipated to vary dependant on the exact configuration of vehicles and plant currently deployed in the delivery of services, and any subsequent funding required for this will be through approval from Council.

9.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to: -

- 9.1 Authorise officers proceeding to seek invitation of tenders for the provisions of the short duration waste contract from 2024 to 2026.
- 9.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Communities in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, Human Resources and Corporate Policy to negotiate with Kier and agree the final cost for the acquisition of the vehicles and plant and equipment from Kier required to perform the recycling and waste service.
- 9.3 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Communities in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer Legal and Regulatory Services, Human Resources and Corporate Policy to negotiate terms with Kier to change fuel supply for the existing fleet of recycling and waste vehicles and plant to a HVO - hydrogenated vegetable oil derived fuel.
- 9.4 Note that future financial implications will be reported back to Cabinet and Council in due course.
- 9.5 Authorise officers to commence work on the future waste service model, commission specialist advice if required and report back to Cabinet on the new service model as developed.

Janine Nightingale
CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
June 2022

Contact Officer: Zachary Shell
Head of Operations – Communities
Telephone: (01656) 643403

E-mail: zak.shell@bridgend.gov.uk
Postal Address: Bridgend County Borough Council
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Background Documents:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 Report on Waste Provision post 2024 dated 19th July 2021

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JUNE 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2021-22

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the Council's revenue financial performance for the year ended 31st March 2022.

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 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 to 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. Background

- 3.1 On 24th February 2021, Council approved a net revenue budget of £298.956 million for 2021-22. 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. Current situation/proposal

4.1 Summary financial position at 31st March 2022

- 4.1.1 The 2021-22 financial year has continued to be a complex year in managing the financial position of the Council, primarily as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Significant changes have occurred throughout the year as circumstances altered and services were supported in different ways to deliver outcomes in the best way possible.

The Welsh Government (WG) allocated £206.6 million in its budget to the Hardship Fund to support local government for the first six months of 2021-22. In addition, £23.3 million was allocated to support free school meals during the school holidays. WG subsequently confirmed a further allocation of £97.5 million for the remainder of the 2021-22 financial year with revised principles for claims and tapering of support for social care uplifts and void payments. Finally, three new allocations were added to the Hardship Fund in quarter 3 - £38 million for winter fuel support, £600,000 for community hubs and £2 million for homelessness support. The process for drawing down the money continued to be the submission of complex claims, covering a wide range of costs and loss of income without knowing with any certainty whether those claims would be successful.

The outcome of these claims have been reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis and have impacted favourably on the end of year position. Our claims against the WG Hardship fund totalled £16.510 million, of which only £66,000 were disallowed.

Furthermore, once again significant grants were received in the last quarter of the financial year, £3.341 million of directorate grants and £6.041 million for schools, resulting in a change in the financial position between quarter 3 and quarter 4. These will be spent in 2022-23 in accordance with the conditions applied to the grants and will be closely monitored to ensure their effective use.

The other significant changes between quarter 3 and quarter 4 were:

- the £1.151 million contribution from WG in March 2022 in recognition of the reduced council tax collection rates experienced by Councils in 2021-22, as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, and;
- the one-off increase to the Revenue Support Grant of £2.703 million against the context of inflationary and service pressures, the ending of the WG Hardship Fund as well as continuation of decarbonising services and responding to the climate and nature emergency, increasing the Council's net budget from £298.956 million to £301.659 million for 2021-22 (Table 1).

Given the changes that have occurred which have resulted in a better financial position at the end of 2021-22, the Council is able to apply some of this funding to investments to support its residents. A more detailed review of Earmarked reserves is provided in section 4.4 of the report and **Appendix 4** and another report on the Cabinet agenda on 14th June and the Council agenda on 15th June to seek approval for a range of capital schemes to be funded from this year's under spend.

4.1.2 The Council's net revenue budget and final outturn for 2021-22 is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Comparison of budget against actual outturn at 31st March 2022

Directorate/Budget Area	Original Budget 2021-22 £'000	Current Budget 2021-22 £'000	Final Outturn Q4 2021-22 £'000	Final Over / (Under) Spend 2021-22 £'000	Projected Over / (Under) Spend Qtr 3 2021-22 £'000
Directorate					
Education and Family Support	127,055	128,292	128,119	(173)	1,019
Social Services and Wellbeing Communities	74,043	75,239	69,848	(5,391)	(1,093)
Chief Executive's	28,137	28,654	28,456	(198)	90
	21,304	21,801	18,731	(3,070)	(2,088)
Total Directorate Budgets	250,539	253,986	245,154	(8,832)	(2,072)
Council Wide Budgets					
Capital Financing	7,329	7,329	8,447	1,118	1,000
Levies	7,783	7,797	7,775	(22)	(22)
Apprenticeship Levy	650	650	682	32	23
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	15,654	15,654	15,239	(415)	(150)
Insurance Premiums	1,363	1,363	2,840	1,477	62
Repairs & Maintenance	670	506	37	(469)	(150)
Pension Related Costs	430	430	426	(4)	0
Other Council Wide Budgets	14,538	11,241	2,094	(9,147)	(8,220)
Total Council Wide Budgets	48,417	44,970	37,540	(7,430)	(7,457)
Accrued Council Tax Income			(2,463)	(2,463)	0
Appropriation to Earmarked Reserves	0	2,703	21,097	18,394	7,004
Transfer to Council Fund			331	331	
Total	298,956	301,659	301,659	0	(2,525)

4.1.3 The overall outturn at 31st March 2022 is a net under spend of £331,000 which has been transferred to the Council Fund, bringing the total Fund balance to £10.103 million in line with Principle 9 of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Total Directorate budgets provided a net under spend of £8.832 million, and Council Wide budgets a net under spend of £7.430 million. As a result of effective financial management across the Council through the pandemic, along with ensuring that eligible monies have been claimed from the WG Hardship and Loss of Income funds, and additional one-off funding from WG to support pressures in Social Services and Wellbeing and Council Tax, the Council is in a position to invest in services and facilities for its residents and to mitigate future risks and expenditure commitments. The outturn position also takes into account a net under spend of £2.463 million on council tax income during the financial

year (see paragraph 4.1.7 for detail) and additional RSG income of £2.703 million (see paragraph 4.1.8 for detail).

4.1.4 Table 1 highlights a £6.760 million movement since quarter 3 on total Directorate Budgets. Table 2 below highlights the main reasons for the change, including additional funding received by the Council since quarter 3, that support the changed outturn position. Since quarter 3, the Authority has successfully claimed £1.095 million of Hardship funding to support additional expenditure and loss of income experienced by the Authority as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 2 – Movements since quarter 3 2021-22

Directorate/Budget Area	Rebates from Regional Service	WG Hardship Claims	Reallocation of Existing Grants	Additional Grants
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Education and Family Support	0	26	418	400
Social Services & Wellbeing	0	411	1,824	3,031
Communities	0	240	0	0
Chief Executives	129	418	354	0
Total Directorate Budgets	129	1,095	2,596	3,431
Revenue Support Grant (see Earmarked Reserve line in Table 1)	0	0	0	2,703
Council Tax	0	0	0	1,151

4.1.5 The outturn position has also been impacted by unexpected grant funding and maximisation of grant funding streams since quarter 3 in Directorate budgets of over £6.027 million and £2.703 million in Council Wide Budgets - £8.730 million in total. It is important to note that the Authority would not have been aware of these funding streams when setting and approving its 2021-22 budget and the majority of the additional grants are one-off as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.1.6 Further detail is provided on the movements since quarter 3 at individual directorate level and on Council wide budgets in section 4.3.

4.1.7 The outturn position also takes into account the net under spend on council tax income of £2.463 million during the financial year. The end of year position on council tax comprises £1.312 million of additional council tax income collected along with a contribution from WG of £1.151 million in March 2022 in recognition of the general reduced collection rates experienced by Councils in 2021-22 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 4.1.8 The net position also takes into account a one-off increase to the Revenue Support Grant for 2021-22 from WG of £2.703 million, provided to give support to manage budgets more effectively over the period 2021-22 to 2024-25 against the context of inflationary and service pressures, and the ending of the Local Government Hardship Fund, as well as helping to continue work to decarbonise services and respond to the climate and nature emergency.
- 4.1.9 The under spend on the Council budget significantly masks the underlying budget pressures in some service budgets which were reported during the year and still persist. The main financial pressures are in the service areas of Social Services and Wellbeing, Homelessness, Waste and Home to School Transport (HtST). It should be noted that these budget areas can be volatile and small changes in demand can result in relatively high costs being incurred.
- 4.1.10 It is forecast that the long-term impact of Covid-19, alongside the already known pressures of an ageing population, increasing dementia rates and more complex and challenging needs is going to result in increasing demands on already pressurised services in the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate. The underlying pressure on the budget is masked by one off grant funding of £5.581 million from WG, £770,000 contribution from the WG Hardship fund supporting BCBC social care core budgets, maximisation of Housing Support Grant (£717,000) along with under spends on staffing budgets due to difficulties in recruitment, which subsequently impacts on the ability to meet demands for packages of care.
- 4.1.11 Whilst budget growth of £2.192 million was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) budget setting process in February 2021, to continue the commitment to focus support for homeless individuals, the Council has seen a significant increase in the provision of temporary accommodation. Welsh Government has confirmed support for the first six months of 2022-23 to support homeless individuals but given the increase in provision the budget growth might be insufficient to meet the increase in demand going into 2022-23 and will require close monitoring.
- 4.1.12 Waste tonnages increased in 2020-21, primarily due to lockdowns and more residents working from home in general, and this trend has continued into 2021-22. Support was received in 2020-21 and in the first half of 2021-22 from the WG Hardship Fund towards these increased costs. Support continued for the second half of 2021-22, albeit that funding was reduced to 50% of the increased costs. As the Hardship Fund will not be in place beyond the 31st March 2022, Council approved a budget pressure of £387,000 as part of the MTFS 2022-23 to 2025-26 to support the continuing increase in disposal costs of Kitchen Waste, Street Litter and Blue Bag waste.
- 4.1.13 There is an over spend on Home to School Transport (HtST) of £948,000 in 2021-22. This is on top of the underlying pressure on the HtST budget which has been supported in 2021-22 by a one-off MTFS Budget Pressure of £1.210 million that was approved by Council in February 2021 to support the increased costs of HtST and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs. An MTFS Budget pressure of £2.472 million was approved by Council in February 2022 to support the ongoing pressures on the HtST budget.

4.1.14 In addition, given the potential for significant funding being required to meet pay and price costs in 2022-23, along with any ongoing budget pressures arising as a result of the pandemic, uncertainties around the end of the Brexit transition period and soaring inflationary levels for 2022-23 any uncommitted funding in 2021-22 will be required to meet these pressures in the new financial year. There are also potential pressures on council tax collection and an increase in eligibility for council tax support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (see paragraph 4.3.5) with no ongoing support from WG confirmed for 2022-23. Therefore, any uncommitted funding from other council wide budgets will be carried forward to meet those pressures in the new financial year.

Budget virements/technical adjustments

4.1.15 There have been a number of budget virements and technical adjustments between budgets since the quarter 3 Revenue Forecast was presented to Cabinet in January 2022. The outturn position is reported on the assumption that these virements will be approved. The main virements and technical adjustments in quarter 4 are outlined below:

Budget Virements

Service vired from / to	Amount
A centrally retained allocation for the provision of additional 1:1 support in special schools has been transferred from Schools to the Education and Family Support Directorate budget (Recoupment) in line with the responsibility for the provision of this specialised service.	£185,000

Technical Adjustments

Service vired from / to	Amount
Allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of NJC pay award 2021-22 - confirmed in March 2022	£1,826,134
Allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of JNC pay award 2021-22 for Chief Officers - confirmed in March 2022	£33,890
Allocation of funding retained centrally in respect of Soulbury pay award 2021-22 - confirmed in March 2022	£8,440
Allocation of corporately held funding for Feasibility works in line with spend	175,824
Allocation of corporately held funding for Revenue minor works in line with spend	64,152

4.1.16 The net budget for the financial year was set assuming full implementation of the approved budget reduction requirements across the Council's budget, which amount to £1.760 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. These are set out in paragraph 4.2.4.

Covid-19

4.1.17 When the UK was put into lockdown WG established a Covid Hardship Fund to give special financial assistance to local authorities to meet the additional costs incurred as a result of the pandemic which the Council was able to draw on for financial support. Bridgend successfully claimed over £15 million in expenditure claims and over £5.5 million in loss of income claims in 2020-21. The WG allocations to the Hardship Fund in 2022-23 are set out in 4.1.1.

4.1.18 The Hardship Fund was established to meet the additional costs and loss of income arising from Covid 19 ended on the 31 March 2022. However local authorities continue to administer three elements that were paid through the Hardship fund on behalf of WG – Self Isolation Payments (to end of June 2022), Statutory Sick Pay enhancement scheme (to end of June 2022) and Free School Meal payments (to end of summer 2022 school holiday).

4.1.19 Cabinet and Corporate Management Board (CCMB) agreed to establish a £1 million Covid-19 Recovery Fund in 2020-21 to provide funding for conscious and proactive decisions aimed at boosting recovery that were unlikely to be paid for by WG. The recovery fund was utilised in 2021-22 to support a phased return to historic rental income levels for Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) owned premises following the rental holiday periods supported during the pandemic. The balance of £443,865 on the Covid-19 Recovery Fund will be carried into 2022-23 with further proposals to boost recovery considered by CCMB.

Cost of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic

4.1.20 Welsh Government has provided specific eligibility criteria for each of its funding streams, and all directorates were made aware of them, and captured costs accordingly. Covid-19 costs which were not reimbursed by WG have been funded from the normal service budgets or established earmarked reserves. WG Hardship Expenditure claims submitted to Welsh Government in 2021-22, and the outcome of these claims, are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Covid-19 expenditure claims 2021-22

Specific Hardship Fund	Claimed	Paid	Disallowed	Movement since Qtr 3 – excl disallowed
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General	752	687	65	186
Homelessness	2,794	2,794	0	178
Free School Meals	1,182	1,182	0	368
Schools	1,515	1,514	1	692
Adult Social Services	4,483	4,483	0	877
Visitor Economy	86	86	0	2
Winter Fuel	1,820	1,820	0	1,820
Self Isolation Payments (SIP)/ Statutory Sick Pay Enhancements (SSP)	2,116	2,116	0	1,258
Total	14,748	14,682	66	5,381

- 4.1.21 The majority of the disallowed expenditure (£55,334) related to the fact that WG only supported 50% of the increased costs associated with increased waste tonnages for the second half of 2021-22. £9,701 was also disallowed as it related to costs incurred by the Council in continuing to support 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. Again, a contribution of 50% was agreed to be funded by WG.
- 4.1.22 The overall increase in claims paid since quarter 3 of £5.381 million does not all relate to reimbursement of expenditure incurred by the local authority, and therefore does not fully match the figures in Table 2. For example, adult social services mostly represents claims made by independent and third sector providers to meet the additional costs of providing care and support for voids in care homes and the Winter Fuel and Self Isolation Payments/Statutory Sick Payments (SIP/SSP) are administered by local authorities on behalf of WG.
- 4.1.23 The Council has also submitted claims for loss of income to Welsh Government in 2021-22 totalling £1.762 million as shown in Table 4. £608,000 of the claims were paid in quarter 4.

Table 4 – Covid-19 loss of income claims 2021-22

Directorate	Claims 2021-22	Paid	Main areas funded
	£'000	£'000	
Education and Family Support	74	74	£74k - School meal income
Schools	155	155	£97k - school meal income, £58k - loss of income from hire of school premises
Social Services & Wellbeing	1,034	1,034	£1.007m – contribution to Council's leisure service provider, £27k – dual use sites where facilities are managed for community use outside of school hours
Communities	344	344	£216k - Car Park Income, £45k pitch and pavilion hire, £67k – civil enforcement income
Chief Executive's	155	155	£85k – Legal, democratic and regulatory services £41k – Housing £14k - Finance
Total	1,762	1,762	

- 4.1.24 All of the loss of income claims in 2021-22 have been approved by WG.

Ongoing impact of Covid-19 pandemic in 2022-23

- 4.1.25 The Local Government Hardship fund, established to meet the additional costs and loss of income arising from Covid-19, ended on the 31 March 2022. However, as noted in 4.1.18 local authorities continue to administer three elements that were paid through the hardship fund on behalf of Welsh Government – Self Isolation Payments, SSP enhancement scheme and Free School Meal payments. No commitment for support from WG beyond this period has been given at present.
- 4.1.26 As part of the MTFBS Budget setting process 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022, Council approved a budget pressure of £1 million following the end of the WG Hardship Fund. This has been set aside to meet any ongoing pressures as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, both in respect of additional cost pressures and ongoing loss of income. The budget pressure will be allocated out during the 2022-23 financial year in line with need and will be reviewed annually to determine whether or not it is still required.

4.2 Monitoring of Budget Reduction Proposals

Prior Year Budget Reductions

- 4.2.1 As outlined in previous monitoring reports during the year there were still £2.376 million of outstanding prior year budget reduction proposals that had not been met in full. Directors have been working to realise these savings during the 2021-22 financial year. A summary of the latest position is attached as **Appendix 1** with a summary per directorate provided in Table 5. Of the £2.376 million of prior year budget proposals outstanding, £2.276 million has been realised, leaving a balance of £100,000.

Table 5 – Outstanding Prior Year Budget Reductions

	Total Budget Reductions Required	Total Budget Reductions Achieved	Shortfall
DIRECTORATE /BUDGET REDUCTION AREA	£'000	£'000	£'000
Education and Family Support	344	344	0
Social Services and Wellbeing	185	185	0
Communities	1,847	1,747	100
TOTAL	2,376	2,276	100

4.2.2 The proposal still not achieved is:

- COM19 – Streetworks review (£100,000) – the final business case was submitted to WG in quarter 3 of 2021-22. The service area has linked in on several occasions with WG who are required to provide approval for the scheme to progress before steps can be taken towards implementation. To date no official response has been received. Whilst the Highways network budget area is committed to stay within budget through the implementation phase it is recognised that having to underwrite this saving has put pressure on the service by having to cut back maintenance operations. If a response is not forthcoming from WG in the first quarter of 2022-23, the Communities Directorate will identify alternative budget reduction proposals.

Budget Reductions 2021-22

4.2.3 The budget approved for 2021-22 included budget reduction proposals totalling £1.760 million, which is broken down in **Appendix 2** and summarised in Table 6 below. The end of year position is a shortfall on the savings target of £65,000, or 3.7% of the overall reduction target.

Table 6 – Monitoring of Budget Reductions 2021-22

	Total Budget Reductions Required	Total Budget Reductions Likely to be Achieved	Shortfall
DIRECTORATE /BUDGET REDUCTION AREA	£'000	£'000	£'000
Education and Family Support	116	116	0
Schools	0	0	0
Social Services and Wellbeing	315	315	0
Communities	823	758	65
Chief Executive's	130	130	0
Council Wide Budgets	376	376	0
TOTAL	1,760	1,695	65

4.2.4 The most significant budget reduction proposal not achieved in full is COM 2 – Relocation of Community Recycling Centre from Tythegston to Pyle resulting in cessation of lease payments at existing site (£60,000). The new site in Pyle is anticipated to open in 2022-23, with both sites being maintained until the new site is fully operational, therefore the saving will not be achieved in full until 2023-24. The saving will therefore have to met through alternative one-off efficiencies in 2022-23 in order to deliver a balanced budget position.

4.2.5 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. It has not been used in 2021-22 to mitigate on-going shortfalls as service areas committed to identify alternative one-off under spends in the service areas affected.

4.3 Commentary on the financial position at 31st March 2022

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.

4.3.1 Education and Family Support Directorate

The net budget for the Directorate for 2021-22 was £128.292 million and the actual outturn was £128.119 million, following draw down of £1.054 million from earmarked reserves, resulting in an under spend of £173,000. The outturn has improved since the projected over spend at quarter 3 of £1.019 million due primarily to:-

- New grant funding - £400,000 (Additional Learning Needs (ALN) grant - £329,000, Counselling Intervention grant - £71,000)
- Re-allocation of existing grants - £418,000 (Families First and Flying Start - £231,000, Children and Communities Grant - £187,000)
- Successful WG Loss of income claims in the Catering Service - £26,000

The most significant variances were:

EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT DIRECTORATE	Net Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Learner Support	2,848	3,015	167	5.9%
Youth Development Service	469	328	(141)	-30.1%
Business Support	525	428	(97)	-18.5%
Home-to-School Transport	6,739	7,687	948	14.1%
Catering Service	1,117	963	(154)	-13.8%
Family Support	1,406	1,188	(218)	-15.5%
Early Help	40	(58)	(98)	-245.0%
Youth Justice Service	319	237	(82)	-25.7%
Historic pension and redundancy costs	983	813	(170)	-17.3%
Corporate Health & Safety Unit	387	216	(171)	-44.2%

Schools' Delegated Budgets

Total funding delegated to schools in 2021-22 was £110.980 million (including Post-16 grant funding of £6.705 million).

The schools' delegated budget is reported as balanced in any one year as any under or over spend is automatically carried forward, in line with Welsh Government legislation, 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', as set out in the Financial Scheme for Schools.

The year-end position for 2021-22 was:-

- Net overall school balances totalled £8.490 million at the start of the financial year. During 2021-22 school balances increased by £4.004 million to £12.494 million at the end of the financial year, representing 11.26% of the total funding allocated in 2021-22.
- Out of a total of 59 schools, there are no schools with a deficit balance and 53 schools (42 primary, 9 secondary, and 2 special school) have balances in excess of the statutory limits (£50,000 primary, £100,000 secondary and special schools) in line with the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010. These balances will be analysed in line with the agreed 'Guidance and Procedures on Managing Surplus School Balances'.
- A summary of the position for each sector and overall is provided below:-

	Balance brought forward	Funding allocated in 2021-22	Total Funding available	Actual Spend	Balance at year end
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Primary	4,550	50,468	55,018	48,024	6,994
Secondary	2,978	50,384	53,362	48,572	4,790
Special	962	10,128	11,090	10,380	710
Total	8,490	110,980	119,470	106,976	12,494

It must be noted that there has been a significant improvement from the projected outturn position for schools of a £3.93 million surplus at quarter 3.

The main reason for this is additional schools' revenue funding announced late in 2021-22 through the following grants:-

<u>Name of grant</u>	<u>Additional Value</u> <u>£'000</u>
Supplementary Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards (RRRS) – to further support learning recovery and progression in schools	1,376
School Revenue Maintenance Grant - the purpose of this funding is to cover school revenue maintenance costs	2,153
Additional Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG) to support pupils in the Foundation Phase years	444
Additional Learning Needs (ALN) New Systems - this funding is intended to support maintained schools and special schools to prepare for the phased commencement and full implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.	268
Additional ALN - additional grant funding for special schools and schools with specialist ALN classes/units. The purpose of the funding is to reimburse schools for increased costs incurred in 2021-22 (due to the impacts of the pandemic) to provide high quality support for children and young people with ALN.	180
Additional Post-16 funding to support transition in Years 11, 12 and 13	197
'Winter of Wellbeing' - to support schools to provide additional opportunities for learners to play, and to engage in social, cultural and physical activities and experiences outside of formal learning.	252
Allocation of funding to schools from the Central South Consortium (CSC) for quarter 4 (for example, collaboration and curriculum reform, support for learners in examination years and the curriculum design programme)	1,171
Total	6,041

The year-end balances have also improved due to the following:-

<u>Other Movements</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Additional funding distributed to schools to cover costs of increased numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals during 2021-22	307
Successful claims from WG Hardship Additional Expenditure Fund since quarter 3 – staff costs (£609K), non-staffing costs (£83K) - Table 3	692
Successful claims from WG Hardship Loss of Income fund since quarter 3 – school meal income (£32K), Hire of school premises (£13K) - Table 4	45
Total	1,044

In addition, schools have seen delays in securing goods and services, including building materials, as a direct consequence of the pandemic and Brexit. This has resulted in delayed or unachievable planned projects which had been budgeted for in 2021-22. General and agency staff shortages have also meant that schools have been unable to fill vacant posts and therefore have experienced under spends on staffing budgets. These have all contributed to the significant and unpredicted increase in year-end school balances.

Central Education and Family Support budgets

Learner Support

- The over spend of £167,000 primarily relates to the shortfall in income from other local authority (LA) placements at Heronsbridge School and Ysgol Bryn Castell. A budget pressure of £500,000 was agreed by Council as part of the MTFS in February 2021, but there has been a further reduction in the number of other LA pupils in Bridgend schools. The position has improved since quarter 3 due to receipt of additional ALN Grant of £328,638 and Counselling Intervention Grant of £71,290. Without these, the underlying pressure would have been £566,928. A Budget Pressure of £200,000 was approved by Council in February 2022 as part of the MTFS 2022-23 to 2025-26 to address the underlying recoupment income shortfall. This budget pressure will address the over spend position only if grant funding levels are maintained for 2022-23.

Youth Development Service

- The under spend of £141,000 relates primarily to maximisation of Families First grant funding (£199,275) and is therefore not a recurring under spend for 2022-23.

Business Support

- The under spend of £97,000 relates primarily to staff vacancy management. The service area is looking to recruit and fill the vacancies therefore this saving will not be recurring in 2022-23.

Home-to-school transport (HtST)

- There is an over spend on the Home to School Transport of £948,000 in 2021-22. This is on top of the underlying pressure on the HtST budget which has been supported by a one-off MTFs Budget Pressure of £1.210 million, approved by Council in February 2021, to support the increased costs of HtST and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.
- In addition to the historic pressures, Cabinet and Corporate Management Board also determined in 2020-21 that in order to ensure the safety of nursery pupils on school transport vehicles, those previously transported on big buses should be transported in either dedicated minibuses or taxis or in existing taxis and minibuses. This is an additional requirement for the 2021-22 school year onwards and has increased costs annually by an estimated £170,000.
- School transport operators have been significantly impacted by the pandemic and have passed many of the risks associated with continuing to operate including, for example, driver retention, relatively low paid jobs and ongoing insecurity in the market, on to the local authority. For example, the cost of drivers and escorts has increased significantly.
- A retendering exercise has also been completed on home to school transport contracts, principally big buses and minibuses, with an annual increase of £752,000.
- A further procurement exercise has been undertaken for special taxis, taxis, and minibus contracts which will put further pressure on the HtST budget in 2022-23.
- By combining the final over spend of £948,000 with the one-off support of £1.210 million, the underlying budget pressure on the HtST budget amounts to £2.158 million. An MTFs Budget pressure of £2.472 million was approved by Council in February 2022 to support the increased costs of HtST. The budget will need close monitoring given that the outcome of the recent procurement exercise for special taxis, taxis, and minibus contracts will impact on the costs in 2022-23.

Catering Service

- The under spend of £154,000 in the Catering Service has primarily arisen as a result of a £201,000 under spend on the Free Breakfast Club core budget due directly to Covid-19 restrictions continuing to limit the ability to provide the service at full capacity in 2021-22.
- WG have confirmed that funding is available in the WG Hardship Fund to cover free school meal provision within school holidays up to the end of the summer 2022 school holiday.

Family Support

- The £218,000 under spend within the Family Support Group is primarily due to maximisation of Children and Communities grant funding and is therefore not a recurring under spend for 2022-23.

Early Help

- The £98,000 under spend within Early Help relates primarily to the maximisation of the Families First and Flying Start Grants.

Youth Justice Service

- The under spend of £82,000 within the Youth Justice Service is primarily due to staff vacancies experienced within the service. Following a re-structure of the service a strategic service manager has been appointed. This appointment, together with the vacant posts expected to be filled in 2022-23, should mean that there will not be an under spend in 2022-23.

Historic pension and redundancy costs

- The £170,000 under spend is due primarily to a reduction in redundancy costs requiring funding in 2021-22. Due to the reduction in schools in a deficit position since 2020-21, fewer staffing restructures have been required in 2021-22. There has also been a reduction in the costs of supporting historic employee pension costs - there will be an incremental reduction each year as members pass away. The budget will be monitored in 2022-23 to determine if any of these savings can be proposed for future MTFs savings.

Corporate Health & Safety Unit

- The £171,000 under spend within the Corporate Health and Safety Unit is due to staff vacancy management. The vacant posts are expected to be filled in 2022-23 therefore this saving should not be recurring in 2022-23.

4.3.2 **Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate**

The net budget for the Directorate for 2021-22 was £75.239 million and the actual outturn was £69.848 million following draw down of £48,000 from earmarked reserves, resulting in an under spend of £5.391 million. The outturn has significantly improved since the projected under spend at quarter 3 of £1.093 million. This is mainly due to notification in February 2022 of £2.221 million in Grant funding from the Welsh Government Social Care Pressures Grant. This grant was to support local authorities with social care pressures from over spends and winter pressures and is reflected in the individual budget areas in the narrative below. The improvement in the outturn position is also due to:-

- Maximising Social Care Recovery Grant - £725,000. As noted in the quarter 3 budget monitoring report, this grant had received a further allocation of £1.139 million increasing the overall 2021-22 Social Care Recovery Grant to £2.916 million. It was also noted at quarter 3 that whilst a significant amount of the grant was planned to be used on staffing to provide additional support in key areas throughout the directorate, due to difficulties in recruitment, the grant would continue to be, and was, maximised in the final quarter of 2021-22.
- Re-allocation of existing Housing Support Grant - £717,000
- New funding from WG to promote the independence of people with care and support needs or in an early intervention and prevention context to maintain people in their own homes - £444,000
- Successful WG Hardship claims for internal BCBC social care services - £411,000
- Maximisation of Winter Pressures Grant - £382,000
- Additional Integrated Care Fund (ICF) Funding - £271,000. (Multi Agency Permanence Support Service (MAPPS) - £162,000. A new residential 'Pop up' service that can be made operational at short notice to provide accommodation to a young person/young adult who, due to their complex needs, cannot be placed alongside others - £109,000).
- New funding within Prevention and Wellbeing services - £95,000

The most significant variances are:

SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING DIRECTORATE	Net Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Adult Social Care	50,362	46,113	(4,249)	-8.4%
Prevention and Wellbeing	5,340	5,111	(229)	-4.3%
Children's Social Care	19,537	18,624	(913)	-4.7%

Adult Social Care

There is a net under spend of £4.249 million on the Adult Social Care budget. The most significant variances contributing to this under spend were:-

ADULT SOCIAL CARE	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget
	£'000
Residential Care for Older People	(321)
Homecare	(1,842)
Direct Payments	(385)
Residential Care – Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment	(111)
Equipment and Adaptions	(358)
Supported and Other Accommodation – Mental Health	(206)
Residential Care - Mental Health	(251)
Assessment and Care Management	(473)

- Residential Care for Older People – the under spend of £321,000 can be attributed to external care home provision (£150,000) and BCBC managed care home provision (£171,000). External care homes have seen an increase to the average resident's contribution received in 2021-22 and reduced residential/nursing placements. All contributions are financially assessed in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 but the average income received each year will vary in total depending on the financial position of the persons needing care during the financial year – e.g. if there are a small number of people who have savings or assets, and are paying their contribution in full or have a high contribution then this will increase the overall average. Secondly, whilst residential/nursing are recovering from their lowest vacancy rate of around 19% earlier in the pandemic (currently around 7.4%), increases are still at a slow rate, but improving month on month. Nursing placements have limited capacity due to nursing staff shortages. The BCBC Managed Residential Care Homes under spend is mainly due to successful claims to the WG Covid Hardship Fund.
- Homecare – at quarter 3 a projected over spend of £168,000 was reported within the homecare service in Adult Social Care which was due to an increase in the number of people receiving domiciliary care within a home setting or supported accommodation within Learning Disabilities and an increasing number of placements requiring complex packages of support within Mental Health Services.

Since quarter 3, significant amounts of grant funding have been maximised to offset these pressures – Social Care Pressures Grant (£1.348 million) and Housing Support Grant (£648,000).

- There is an under spend on Direct Payments of £385,000. As reported in quarter 3 this is mainly due to the one-off reimbursement from the previous provider. The local authority undertook a procurement exercise during 2021-22 which resulted in a change of provider for payroll/managed accounts services and advisor support as part of the Direct Payments service. Managed direct payment accounts are constantly under review and reimbursements actioned periodically in line with contract requirements where accounts are under spent due, for example, to under-utilisation of hours or no cover arrangements being required. These circumstances have been more prevalent during the pandemic, due primarily to Welsh Government restrictions. During quarter 3 a one-off transfer of reimbursements was actioned upon the cessation of the contract with the previous provider.
- Residential Care – Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment – the under spend of £111,000 is mainly due to a reduction in the number of packages in line with the current practice outcome focussed model. This budget area will be closely monitored with a view to determining whether the under spend is recurring, with potential re-alignment to other budgets facing projected over spends within Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment service areas in 2022-23.
- Equipment and Adaptions – this service area has seen a significant increase in spend on equipment due to the need to support individuals in line with Welsh Government's rehabilitation and recovery model. However, grant funding has been maximised to offset these pressures - Independence of People with Care and Support Needs funding (£444,000), Winter Pressures Grant (£235,000) and Social Care Workforce Grant (£80,000). Without this additional funding there would have been a £401,000 over spend and recurrent budget pressure in this service area.
- Supported and Other Accommodation – Mental Health – the under spend of £206,000 is primarily due to maximisation of Innovation Grant funding received in 2021-22 of £262,000.
- Residential Care Mental Health – the under spend of £251,000 is primarily due to a reduction in placements – there were 45 placements as at 31 March 2022 compared with 51 as at 31 March 2021. This is primarily due to alternative service solutions being provided that were more suitable for people and adaptable to Covid-19 circumstances. Close monitoring of this budget will be required in 2022-23, with a view to potential budget virements within Mental Health if these alternative solutions continue to prove beneficial. Considerable pressure on the overall Mental Health Budget is anticipated as a result of the medium to long term impact of the pandemic on individuals.
- Assessment and Care Management – there is an under spend of £473,000 across all service areas due to a continuing challenging recruitment environment for qualified social workers and maximisation of grant income to offset staffing costs. The position reflects grant funding from Winter Pressures (£31,000), Integrated Care Fund (ICF) (£210,000) and Social Care Recovery Grant (£48,000). Various recruitment activities have been actioned in order to fill vacant posts.

Prevention and Wellbeing

- There is an under spend of £229,000 in 2021-22 which has improved by £116,000 since quarter 3. This is primarily due to £21,000 being successfully claimed from the Covid loss of income fund since quarter 3 for dual use sites where facilities are managed for community use outside of school hours along with £95,000 from various grants - Local Authority Partnership Agreement (LAPA) £16,000, Play Sufficiency £34,000 and maximisation of grants from Sports Wales - £45,000.
- The Council received WG funding of £1.007 million in 2021-22 for the loss of income experienced by Halo in running the leisure services due to Covid-19. The financial impact of this will have to be closely monitored in the first half of 2022-23 as income is not projected to return to pre-pandemic levels for the first 2 quarters of 2022-23 as a minimum.

Children's Social Care

There is a net under spend of £913,000 on Children's Social Care which has improved from a projected over spend at quarter 3 of £505,000. Whilst there has been an increase in spend of £868,000 in targeted areas in quarter 4 to address service pressures (additional staff - £557,000, increased placement costs - £311,000), these have been offset by the Social Care Pressures grant. The underlying movement in quarter 3 is due to other new funding streams and maximisation of grant funding. The outturn includes re-allocation of Social Services Workforce Grant to Children's Services (£379,000), Residential Pop Up Grant (£109,000), ICF (£36,000), MAPPS (therapeutic behaviour funding) (£162,000), Housing Support Grant (£69,000), Covid Hardship (£46,000) and Social Care Recovery Funding (£669,000). Without the one-off grant funding streams, Children's Social care would have had an over spend of £848,000.

- The Care Experienced population at the end of 2020-21 was 390. Movements in year has resulted in 385 at quarter 1, 388 at quarter 2, 378 at quarter 3 and 374 at quarter 4.
- At the end of quarter 3 there were 11 children in independent residential placements (in and out of authority) and 3 in BCBC 39 week local authority education provision. At the end of quarter 4 the numbers have decreased in independent residential placements to 9 but stayed at 3 in BCBC local authority education provision. Going forward, it is hoped the Residential Pop Up Service will be utilised to prevent children going into high cost residential out of county placements. In addition, a high-cost one-to-one residential placement is due to cease in 2022-23, which will further reduce the pressure on this budget area.
- There is an under spend on Independent Fostering Agency placements of £310,000 and Fostering of £365,000. This is due to alternative placement options being utilised, including In-House residential provision and Special Guardianship Orders. These budgets will be monitored closely in 2022-23 and budgets vired as appropriate within Children's Services.
- A key piece of Bridgend's Care Experienced Children's strategy action plan is to increase the revocation of care orders for children placed with relatives/ friends or parents, increase the number of care order discharges, and increase the use of alternative orders such as Special Guardianship Orders. A key part of this strategy is the utilisation of Reunification Workers, funded via Regional Funding in 2021-22, which will continue into 2022-23. The service will continue with the initiatives and

actions in line with the services key aim to reduce the number of children placed within the Looked After system as required in the Children’s Social Care Strategic Plan 2022-25.

- Successful claims of £67,000 from the WG Covid-19 Hardship fund have been made since quarter 3 along with additional Housing Support Grant of £64,000.
- Commissioning and Social Work – there is an under spend of £133,000, however this includes Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers Grant funding of £103,000. This is a Home Office funded initiative which is confirmed on a year by year basis, and therefore may not be recurring in 2022-23.
- An overall Budget Pressure of £1.026 million was approved in February by Council as part of the MTFs 2022-23 to 2025-26 to mitigate the workforce pressure being experienced in Children’s Services.

4.3.3 Communities Directorate

The net budget for the Directorate for 2021-22 was £28.654 million and the actual outturn was £28.456 million following draw down of £1.884 million from earmarked reserves, resulting in an under spend of £198,000. The outturn has improved since the projected over spend at quarter 3 of £90,000 primarily due to successful claims from the WG Hardship fund of £240,000 in the final quarter.

The main variances are:

COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE	Net Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Development Control	(223)	26	249	-111.7%
Policy and Development	(275)	(30)	245	-89.1%
Waste Disposal and Collection	9,004	9,197	193	2.1%
Highways	7,266	6,878	(388)	-5.3%
Fleet Services	16	381	365	2281.3%
Traffic and Transport	747	418	(329)	-44.0%
Engineering Services	90	(98)	(188)	-208.9%
Corporate Landlord	2,825	3,480	655	23.2%
Public Realm	1,036	370	(666)	-64.3%

Development Control

- The over spend in Development Control of £249,000 is primarily due to a downturn in planning application income. Fee income is subject to considerable fluctuations between years, depending on number and types of applications. For example in 2020-21 the service generated a surplus of £14,000.

Policy and Development

- The over spend of £245,000 within the Policy and Development Section is due to a shortfall in income linked directly to the amount of Section 38 fees received. These fees are charged to developers and relate to assessments and inspection of new street works. Due to the nature of Section 38 fees, income can be subject to considerable fluctuations between years depending on number and type of applications.

Waste Disposal and Collection

- There is an over spend of £193,000 on the Waste Disposal and Collection budget. £60,000 of this is due to the delay in the achievement of COM 2 - Re-location of Community Recycling Centre from Tythegston to Pyle resulting in cessation of lease payments at the existing site. The new site in Pyle is anticipated to open in 2022-23, with both sites being maintained until the new site is fully operational, therefore the saving will not be achieved in full until 2023-24.
- The balance of the over spend is due to continued increased tonnages of residual waste being experienced by the service. Tonnages increased in 2020-21, primarily due to lockdowns and more residents working from home in general and this trend continued into 2021-22. The figures include successful claims of £267,161 from the WG Hardship fund, albeit funding was reduced to 50% of the increased costs for the second half of 2021-22. A budget pressure of £387,000 was approved by Council in February 2022 to mitigate the increased disposal costs due both to an increase in the number of households in the borough and lifestyle changes due to the pandemic – more people working from home and hence producing more domestic waste as a result.

Highways

- There is a net under spend on Highways of £388,000 which is made up of an under spend of £271,000 on Street lighting energy, an under spend of £364,000 on the Highways DSO budget, offset by expenditure on highways maintenance borne by the directorate.
- Street lighting energy - due to a change in energy providers in 2021-22, the kilowatt per hour charge decreased by 7% which, based specifically on the energy budget for street lighting, led to a reduction in costs of circa £63,000. In addition, there is an under spend of £73,000 due to financial profiling of the annual loan repayments to Salix - the LED replacement programme was funded through Salix Finance who provide interest-free government funding to the public sector to improve energy efficiency. The LED replacement programme has generated the balance of the saving due to reduced energy consumption. This budget area will be closely monitored throughout 2022-23 especially in light of the high inflationary uplifts currently being experienced in the energy market, to determine the element of under spend that is recurring, with potential re-alignment to other budgets facing projected over spends within the Communities Directorate in 2022-23. The project demonstrates a successful outcome of an invest to save programme within the Council.
- Highways Services DSO - is primarily due to members of staff working on, and hence charging their time to, the SALIX capital scheme to enable the replacement of street lighting with new energy efficient LED units. Whilst the scheme was anticipated to be completed in quarter 2 of 2021-22 it was extended by SALIX to the end of March 2022 to maximise the budget on LED/energy saving works. This is not a recurring saving as the SALIX Scheme has now been completed.

Fleet Services

- There is a £365,000 over spend on Fleet services. Whilst the service underwent a review in 2019-20 which resulted in an increase to charge out rates to recover fixed costs, the pandemic impacted on productivity rates, primarily due to social distancing requirements in the workplace. Whilst the outturn for Fleet Services includes £24,000 claimed for Fleet Services from the WG Loss of Income fund due to loss of external income, internal recharges impacted by Covid were not eligible to be claimed from the WG Hardship fund. Reduced spend will have been incurred on Hire and Servicing budgets across the service departments and included in the year end positions for service areas.

Traffic and Transport

- There is an under spend of £329,000 within Traffic and Transport Services. Parking Services is showing an under spend of £154,000. This is primarily due to better than forecast levels of income received in some car parks. This additional income is contributing to running parking services and pressures within the overall transport budget, e.g. Fleet services, shop mobility.
- There is an under spend within Traffic Management and Road Safety of £104,000. This budget area had an allocation from the Public Realm fund of £80,000 to progress junction traffic assessments. The work was delayed and is now planned to take place in 2022-23, with additional external funding confirmed to widen the assessment brief.
- The remainder of the under spend relates to staff vacancies and maximisation of grant funding streams.

Engineering Services

- The under spend of £188,000 within Engineering Services is primarily due to an increase in the level of fee earning jobs (grant funded/non grant funded projects) and the differing chargeable rates allowed on the schemes.

Corporate Landlord

- There is an over spend of £655,000 against Corporate Landlord for 2021-22. The outturn position includes £175,000 in support from the Covid-19 Recovery Fund towards a phased return to historic rental income levels for BCBC owned premises following the rental holiday periods supported during the pandemic.
- 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:-

Property	Income Shortfall	Narrative
Science Park	£30,000	Shortfall anticipated to be one-off in 2021-22
Innovation Centre	£124,000	During the pandemic the Innovation Centre has been used to store PPE and relocate furniture from Ravens court to facilitate the vaccination centre being located there. The strategy for the asset is under review to reduce the income shortfall in the longer term.
Bridgend Market	£256,000	A new Bridgend Market strategy is being developed to reduce the income shortfall in the longer term.

- The Corporate Landlord service area has also incurred additional one-off Health and Safety demolition costs of £104,000 which are reflected in the outturn position.

Public Realm Infrastructure

- CCMB approved a list of schemes to be funded from this budget in 2021-22, with the majority of schemes being completed. A small number of schemes were impacted by the pandemic, either through an unanticipated delay to the commencement date or having to go to out to re-tender. These projects have been re-profiled to be completed in 2022-23.

4.3.4 **Chief Executive's**

The net budget for the Directorate for 2021-22 was £21.801 million and the actual outturn was £18.731 million following draw down of £774,000 from earmarked reserves, resulting in an under spend of £3.070 million. The projected under spend at quarter 3 was an under spend of £2.088 million. However, the Directorate has been successful in claiming £418,000 from the WG Hardship Fund since quarter 3, has had a rebate of £129,329 from the Regional Internal Audit Service and has re-allocated existing grants of £354,000.

The most significant variances are:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S	Net Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Housing & Homelessness	3,375	821	(2,554)	-75.7%
Finance	3,761	2,957	(804)	-21.4%
ICT	3,964	4,133	169	4.3%
Legal, Democratic & Regulatory	4,960	5,530	570	11.5%
Partnerships	2,086	1,658	(428)	-20.5%

Housing & Homelessness

- Budget growth of £2.192 million was approved by Council as part of the MTFS budget setting process in February 2021 to continue the commitment to focus support for homeless individuals, providing them with accommodation. The budget was approved prior to confirmation from WG that the Covid Hardship Fund was to be extended for the first six months of 2021-22, and later in the year, confirmed that it would be in place for the remainder of 2021-22. Successful claims to the WG Hardship fund of £2.794 million significantly supported these services throughout 2021-22 and make up the majority of the under spend. £178,000 was successfully claimed since quarter 3 and has improved the under spend from the £2.294 million projected at quarter 3.
- The Council has seen a significant increase in the provision of temporary accommodation. At quarter 4, the service is providing temporary accommodation for 309 individuals, compared with 269 individuals in temporary accommodation in March 2021.

Finance

- The improvement from the quarter 3 projected year-end position of an under spend of £118,000 is primarily due to successful claims from the WG Hardship Fund for the administration of the Winter Fuel and Self Isolation Payment Schemes (£240,000). There was also a £162,000 improvement in relation to court cost income as there was a one-off reimbursement of excess court costs charged by the courts over a period of years of £84,000 and a general recovery of court cost income due to additional court hearings taking place in 2021-22. Finally, there was a rebate of £129,329 from the Regional Internal Audit Service (RIAS) in respect of a reduced number of audit days received in the 2020-21 financial year as a result of staff vacancies within the service. The restructure of the RIAS was completed in 2021-22 and the service are actively recruiting to fill, or have already filled, vacant posts therefore this saving will not be recurring in 2022-23.

ICT

- There is a net over spend of £169,000 across ICT budgets. This was largely due to the costs of implementing the Hwb infrastructure works (a centrally managed WIFI solution) at all the Primary, Secondary and Special Schools in Bridgend, which exceeded the grant allocation provided by WG by £278,000. This was mainly due to the fact that the grant assumed an average cost per school for infrastructure works which was insufficient to ensure infrastructure of equitable quality was provided across all schools in Bridgend. Unforeseen costs arose based on specific circumstances in schools – e.g installation across older school sites where there was no previous infrastructure, and this shortfall has been funded by a revenue contribution from ICT services. This has been offset by a £100,000 under spend on staff budgets due to vacancies. Most of these vacancies have now successfully been filled, so this under spend will not be recurring in 2022-23.
- Additional costs of £30,000 were also incurred on postage budgets as a consequence of providing support for staff working from home. A budget pressure of £30,000 was approved by Council in February 2022 to mitigate the increased costs incurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting change in work practices to accommodate this scenario.

Legal, Democratic & Regulatory

- There is over spend of £570,000 within Legal, Democratic and Regulatory services. This is primarily due to the over spend of £591,000 on childcare legal costs. There has been an unprecedented increase in public and private law childcare cases. The volume has increased considerably since the start of the pandemic, along with an increase in volume of complex cases that have required Senior Counsel.
- The over spend has been mitigated by a rebate of £102,000 relating to Shared Regulatory Services as service level delivery has been impacted by the pandemic resulting in an under spend.
- Included in the final figures are successful claims of £88,000 from the WG Loss of Income fund to support lower levels of income being experienced for licencing fees and public health fees.

Partnerships

- This service area includes Transformation, Partnerships and Customer Services and Engagement. The under spend of £428,000 relates primarily to maximisation of Housing Support Grant - £354,000 and is therefore not a recurring under spend for 2022-23. The balance is due to staff vacancies. Various recruitment activities have been actioned in order to fill vacant posts, but appointments have been affected by Covid-19 and challenging recruitment market conditions.

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 2021-22 was £44.970 million and the actual outturn was £37.540 million, resulting in an under spend of £7.430 million.

The most significant variances were:-

COUNCIL WIDE BUDGETS	Net Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Capital Financing	7,329	8,447	1,118	15.3%
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	15,654	15,239	(415)	-2.7%
Insurance Premiums	1,363	2,840	1,477	108.4%
Repairs and Maintenance	505	37	(469)	-92.7%
Other Council Wide Budgets	11,241	2,094	(9,147)	-81.4%

Capital Financing

- The over spend of £1.118 million on capital financing costs is due to utilising the budget in 2021-22 to pay off historic prudential borrowing costs, where feasible, which will have a long term revenue cost saving benefit for the Council.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- There is an under spend of £415,000 on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. This is a demand led budget and take-up is difficult to predict with £400,000 vired from the central price inflation budget in anticipation of increased demand in 2022-23. The take up has remained similar to 2021-22 when the gross spend in this budget area was £15.299 million. The budget will be closely monitored in 2022-23 as it is likely that there will be an additional call on the council tax reduction scheme in view of the impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis on personal financial circumstances and a likely increase in the number of benefit claimants.

Insurance Premiums

- There is an over spend of £1.477 million on the insurance premium budget. The insurance budget has experienced an increase in the level of claims in 2021-22 of 56% compared with 2020-21. It is anticipated that this is a one-off pressure due to the first year of the Covid pandemic experiencing an unusually low claim value (2020-21 saw an under spend on the insurance budget of £1.314 million). The insurance budget will be monitored closely in 2022-23 and any early indication of

any ongoing significant changes will be reported to Cabinet through the quarterly budget monitoring reports.

Repairs and Maintenance

- There is an under spend of £469,000 which is as a result of slippage on some minor works schemes and feasibility studies, which will now be completed in 2022-23. An earmarked reserve has been established to meet these costs in the next financial year.

Other Council wide Budgets

- Other Council wide budgets includes funding for pay, price and pension increases along with funding to deal with unexpected costs unforeseen when the budget was set. There is a net under spend of £9.147 million on other council wide budgets. The main areas contributing to this under spend are:-
 - When the MTFS was approved in February 2021, the pay increases for NJC, JNC employees, Soulbury and teachers had not been finalised. Provision was made in the budget based on previous years' increases with an element of contingency built in. The agreed pay awards were lower than anticipated. 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.
 - Inflation rates have fluctuated since the budget was set - CPI was 0.7% in February 2021, had increased to 3.2% in August, 5.1% in November increasing further to 7% in the 12 months to March 2022. 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. Part of the under spend relates to projected reductions in requirements to allocate price budgets to service areas in-year as the Council has not seen the estimated increases in CPI impact on contractual arrangements to date in 2021-22. However, given the uncertainty around Brexit and Covid-19 and the possible economic fallout arising from these, along with the rising energy and supply costs it is likely that the provision set aside in the MTFS for 2022-23 will need to be supplemented by any funding not committed from the council wide budgets this financial year.
 - The Covid-19 pandemic has also impacted on projected spend on other Council wide budgets, for example, there has been reduced spend on feasibility as projects have been delayed and reduced corporate support required to enable restructures to be undertaken as these have also been delayed by the pandemic.

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. During 2021-22 Directorates drew down funding from specific earmarked reserves and these were reported to Cabinet through the quarterly monitoring reports. The final draw down from reserves was £8.995 million and is summarised in Table 7 below. A more detailed review of draw-down of reserves is outlined in **Appendix 4**.

Table 7 – Draw Down from Earmarked Reserves during 2021-22

	Draw down from Earmarked Reserves 2021-22 £'000
Education & Family Support	1,054
Social Services & Wellbeing	48
Communities	1,884
Chief Executives	774
Corporate/Equalisation	5,235
Total	8,995

4.4.2 The year end review also examined:-

- commitments against existing reserves and whether these were still valid;
- earmarked reserve requests from Directorates as a result of emerging issues and;
- emerging risks for the Council as a whole.

Table 8 below details the creation of new earmarked reserves, increases to existing earmarked reserves and amounts that have been unwound from reserves. The net additions to reserves for the whole of 2021-22 is £32.852 million which includes the £4.004 million increase to School Balances set out in paragraph 4.3.1, along with £11.122 million to fund new capital projects. The final column shows that there have been net additions of £17.240 million in the last quarter of the financial year.

Table 8 – Net appropriation to/from Earmarked Reserves 2021-22

	Unwound 2021-22 £'000	Net Additions to Reserves 2021-22 £'000	TOTAL £'000	Increase/ (Decrease) Qtr 4 only £'000
Corporate Reserves:				
Education & Family Support	(6)	1,309	1,303	1,029
Social Services & Wellbeing	-	-	-	(17)
Communities	(284)	(451)	(735)	(1,019)
Chief Executives	-	10,100	10,100	2,961
Non-Directorate	(1,413)	2,937	1,524	(2,559)
Total Corporate Reserves	(1,703)	13,895	12,192	395
Directorate Earmarked Reserves:				
Education & Family Support	(12)	406	394	369
Social Services & Wellbeing	(42)	5,563	5,521	5,655
Communities	(186)	2,050	1,864	1,410
Chief Executives	(1,000)	2,748	1,748	1,558
Total Directorate Reserves	(1,240)	10,767	9,527	8,992
Equalisation & Grant Earmarked Reserves:				
Education & Family Support	-	2,160	2,160	2,165
Social Services & Wellbeing	-	(243)	(243)	458
Communities	-	1,806	1,806	1,453
Chief Executives	-	(393)	(393)	62
Non-Directorate	-	856	856	(289)
Total Equalisation & Grant Reserves	-	4,186	4,186	3,849
School Balances	-	4,004	4,004	4,004
TOTAL RESERVES	(2,943)	32,852	29,909	17,240

4.4.3 A full breakdown of the total movement on earmarked reserves at 31st March 2022 is provided in **Appendix 4**. Table 9 below summarises the final position on all useable reserves for the year.

Table 9 – Summary of Movement on Earmarked Reserves 2021-22

Opening Balance 1 April 2021 £'000	Reserve	Movement at Quarter 4		Closing Balance 31 March 2022 £'000
		Additions/ Reclassification £'000	Drawdown £'000	
9,772	Council Fund Balance	331	-	10,103
52,620	Corporate Reserves	13,895	(7,321)	59,194
15,423	Directorate Reserves	10,767	(2,125)	24,065
6,315	Equalisation & Grant Reserves	4,186	(2,492)	8,009
8,490	School Balances	4,004	-	12,494
82,848	Total Earmarked Reserves	32,852	(11,938)	103,762
92,620	Total Reserves	33,183	(11,938)	113,865

4.4.4 In terms of financial reserves, the Council Fund balance represents 3.35% of the net revenue budget for 2021-22, or 5.12% of the net revenue budget, excluding schools. This aligns with MTFs Principle 9 which states that:-

The Council Fund balance should be set at a prudent but not excessive level. This will normally be maintained at a level of 5% of the Council's net budget, excluding schools.

4.4.5 The main addition in quarter 4 highlighted in Table 8 is a £5.655 million addition to the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate. As noted in 4.1.10, the Directorate received a significant amount of one-off funding from WG with £2.221 million from the Welsh Government Social Care Pressures Grant notified in February 2022. The earmarked reserves will enable continuation of support with social care pressures from over spends and winter pressures in 2022-23.

4.4.6 As noted in 4.4.2 there have been additions to the Capital Programme Contribution earmarked reserves of £11.122 million in 2021-22. The Capital Programme Contribution reserve was established to avoid the Council needing to borrow, which would result in consequential borrowing costs on the revenue budget, and will be used to fund schemes within the capital programme, both current and future capital pressures. The reserve supplements the funding we receive from WG and via capital receipts to fund our capital programme. Currently we have a balance of £40.195 million of funding in this reserve which constitutes 38.65% of our overall earmarked reserves balance. This will be used to fund a wide range of schemes in the capital programme.

4.4.7 The School balances reserve increased significantly from £8.490 million at the end of 2020-21 to £12.494 million at the end of 2021-22 due primarily to additional school grant funding announced late in 2021-22.

5. Effect upon policy framework and 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. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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

- 7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. As the report is for information it is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

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

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the report upon the revenue outturn position for 2021-22.

Carys Lord
Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change
June 2022

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

Telephone: 01656 643645

Email: joanne.norman@bridgend.gov.uk

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

Background documents: Individual Directorate Monitoring Reports

PRIOR YEAR BUDGET REDUCTIONS CARRIED FORWARD INTO 2021-22

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal		Original Reduction and RAG £000	Revised RAG £000	Total amount of saving achieved in 2021-22 £000	Reason why not achieved	Proposed Action in 2022-23 to achieve
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RAG STATUS KEY	
RED	Not likely to be achieved at all in this financial year or less than 25%.
AMBER	Reduction not likely to be achieved in full in financial year but greater than 25%
GREEN	Reduction likely to be achieved in full

EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT

EFS1 (2017-18)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		20		20	Cabinet deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learning Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government. In the meantime, a one-off Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25 in February 2021 to support the increased costs of Home to School Transport and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022. No further action required.
EFS2 (2017-18)	School transport route efficiencies.		40		40	Cabinet deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learning Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government. In the meantime, a Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25 in February 2021 to support the increased costs of Home to School Transport and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022. No further action required.
EFS1 (2018-19)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		67		67	Cabinet deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learning Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government. In the meantime, a Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25 in February 2021 to support the increased costs of Home to School Transport and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022. No further action required.
EFS27 (2018-19)	Review arrangements for Special Schools Home to School Transport with a view to achieving efficiency savings		75		75	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25 in February 2021 to support the increased costs of Home to School Transport and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022. No further action required.
EFS 1 (2019-20)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		67		67	Cabinet deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learning Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government. In the meantime, a Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25 in February 2021 to support the increased costs of Home to School Transport and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022. No further action required.
EFS 1 (2020-21)	Phased implementation of Learner Transport Policy regarding statutory distances for free travel.		75		75	Cabinet deferred the decision to amend the Local Authority's Learning Travel Policy until after the review of the current statutory distances by Welsh Government. In the meantime, a Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25 in February 2021 to support the increased costs of Home to School Transport and the increased provision of taxis and minibuses for those pupils with additional learning needs.	A Budget Pressure was approved by Council as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 in February 2022. No further action required.
Total Education & Family Support Directorate			344		344		

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal		Original Reduction and RAG £000	Revised RAG £000	Total amount of saving achieved in 2021-22 £000	Reason why not achieved	Proposed Action in 2022-23 to achieve
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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		40		40	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
SSW20	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.		70		70	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
SSW27	Increase income generation from mobile response and telecare charging		75		75	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
	Total Social Services & Wellbeing Directorate		185		185		

COMMUNITIES

COM19 (2017-18)	Permitting Scheme road works net of existing income of £95,000		100		0	The final business case was submitted to WG in quarter 3 of 2021-22. The service area have linked in on several occasions with WG who are required to provide approval for the scheme to progress before steps can be taken towards implementation. To date no official response has been received.	Whilst the Highways network budget area is committed to stay within budget through the implementation phase it is recognised that having to underwrite this saving has put pressure on the service by having to cut back maintenance operations. If a response is not forthcoming from WG in the first quarter of 2022-23, the Communities Directorate will identify alternative budget reduction proposals.
COM 4 (2019-20)	Review of School Crossing Patrol service in line with GB standards		10		10	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
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		5	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
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		1,300	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM 55 (2019-20)	Increase charge for Green Waste Service from £28.30 per household to £38.30		25		25	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM 26 (2020-21)	Investigate the introduction of charging to users of the Shopmobility facility in Bridgend Town Centre to reduce/remove the current level of subsidy		18		18	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM51	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		350	Service area has identified efficiencies to meet the shortfall in 2021-22 with budget re-alignment taken place as part of the budget setting process for 2022-23	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM 55 (2020-21)	Increase charge for Green Waste Service from £28.30 per household to £38.30		25		25	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM96	WG National AHP Waste Programme - capital contribution from WG towards 7.5 tonne vehicle to collect AHP recycling		14		14	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
	Total Communities Directorate		1,847		1,747		
GRAND TOTAL OUTSTANDING REDUCTIONS			2,376		2,276		
REDUCTIONS SHORTFALL					100		

MONITORING OF 2021-22 BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Budget Reductions 2021-22 £'000	Value of Saving Achieved 2021-22 £'000	Reason why not achieved	Proposed action in 2022-23 to achieve
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EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT
CENTRAL EDUCATION & FAMILY SUPPORT

EFS2	Removal of a vacant post within Cognition and Learning Team	Potential reduction in support for a vulnerable group, however it is anticipated that this has been mitigated by a change in working practices by the team as a result of the ALN reform	61	61	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
EFS3	Reconfiguration of the team providing support to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners to create a more efficient service	Whilst the impact is more on the management and leadership of the team, this may result in some slight reduction in the service offered to this vulnerable group but there will still be a service offering support	50	50	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
EFS4	Reduction in Central South Consortium (CSC) Budget of 1%	Reduction is achievable within the overall CSC budget and will be mainly achieved through efficiency savings	5	5	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
Total Education and Family Support			116	116		

SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING

SSW1	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	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
SSW2	Across Adults and Children's services embed and consolidate outcome focussed practice and commissioning for all service areas	This will support people to live their lives and will require our systems to be adapted to support the changes in practice. There will be a shift to embed outcome focussed practice which will have a focus on targeted prevention initiatives and by developing collaborative, long term relationships with providers as well as maximising the opportunities of the use of technology. this will be underpinned by planning accommodation, care and support together and listening to people who are experts in their own lives and acting upon what will make a difference.	225	225	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
Total Social Services & Wellbeing Directorate			315	315		

MONITORING OF 2021-22 BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Budget Reductions 2021-22 £'000	Value of Saving Achieved 2021-22 £'000	Reason why not achieved	Proposed action in 2022-23 to achieve
COM1	Transfer of pitches/pavilions through Community Asset Transfer. Increased charges for end-users to achieve full cost recovery for pitches/pavilions that do not transfer. Reduction of grass cut areas and areas within maintained parkland.	The savings identified will see the removal of the remaining seasonal operatives' budget with corresponding cuts to plant, equipment and materials. Where asset transfers occur the respective club (rugby, football, bowls and cricket etc) will be expected to fully fund the ongoing maintenance of the asset. The remaining parks budget will be used to maintain the Council's main parks, including children's play areas, highway grass cutting which is safety related, and to secure the ongoing site management and safety of the sites that will remain in Council ownership. the level of funding will also dictate the standard of open space maintenance and may result in a further reduction of grass cut areas if the proposed savings are not forthcoming through the asset transfer process.	300	300	The full saving in 2021-22 has been achieved as the seasonal operative budget has been capped at a level to ensure the Parks and Playing Fields expenditure does not exceed available budget. Successful CAT transfers have taken place to date, and will continue to be progressed by the CAT Officer.	In addition to the Community Asset Transfers already completed, the Corporate Landlord and Legal Services have, or are in the process of, issuing licences to sports clubs to undertake the day to day management of playing surfaces before the commencement of the new season under an initial License to Use as the first stage of CAT while long-term leases for whole sites are being finalised. Playing Field and Green Spaces being maintained by Town and Community Councils are also progressing. The Seasonal operative budget continues will continue to be capped as further CAT transfers take place.
COM2	Re-location of Community Recycling Centre from Tythegston to Pyle resulting in cessation of lease payments at existing site	Construction of the new site will mean that this saving will not be effective until 2021/22	60	0	The new site in Pyle is anticipated to open in 2022-23, with both sites being maintained until the new site is fully operational, therefore the saving will not be achieved in full until 2023-24.	The saving will be met through alternative one off efficiencies in 2022-23 to deliver a balanced budget position.
COM5	The lease for Sunnyside House expires on 31/03/21 - savings will be made from this date.	No impact on service provision	309	309	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM6	One off capital payment for the fire suppression system required at Tondu. Revenue cost of system is included in the annual contract price with Kier.	Minimal impact. The fire system will be provided and if paid from the Capital Asset Management Fund as opposed to the revenue budget, the £60K per annum can be saved.	60	60	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
COM7	WG National AHP Waste Programme - capital contribution from WG towards 7.5 tonne vehicle to collect AHP recycling	A Contract Variation will be progressed with Kier to achieve the saving levels proposed based on a reduction in costs in relation to the current AHP vehicle that is leased.	19	14	New vehicle purchased part-way through 2021-22 therefore only partial saving achieved.	None required - saving will be made in full in 2022-23
COM8	Reduction to energy budget for Street Lighting - savings due to replacement with more efficient LED	Reduction will have limited impact	75	75	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
Total Communities Directorate			823	758		

COMMUNITIES



MONITORING OF 2021-22 BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Ref.	Budget Reduction Proposal	Impact, including on 5 Ways of Working as set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	Budget Reductions 2021-22 £'000	Value of Saving Achieved 2021-22 £'000	Reason why not achieved	Proposed action in 2022-23 to achieve
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CHIEF EXECUTIVES

CEX1	Reduction of the ICT Telephony Budget	No impact on the communications infrastructure and maintenance	41	41	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
CEX2	Reduction of HR Staffing Budget	Reduction of a post and increased workload. Where possible savings will be made from vacant posts.	24	24	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
CEX3	Reduction of Finance staffing budgets	Reduction in capacity across the finance service following proposed restructure, which could impact on time taken to undertake functions. Will endeavour to make savings from vacant posts where possible	65	65	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
	Total Chief Executive's Directorate		130	130		

CORPORATE / COUNCIL WIDE

CWD1	Reduction in insurance budget through on-going efficiencies in managing the insurance contract.	No impact as favourable insurance contract renewals have been achieved, however no mitigation available for potential increases to premiums in future years.	75	75	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
CWD2	Savings on building maintenance prudential borrowing budget	No impact - capital financing budget was utilised in 2019-20 to pay off prudential borrowing associated with Minor Works with a long term cost saving benefit for the Council.	120	120	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
CWD3	Reduce provision made for pay and prices following Chancellor's announcement of pay freeze, and lower than anticipated current inflation rate.	Impact will need to be kept under review, and may be risk depending on final pay awards agreed and inflation increases during the year.	181	181	Saving achieved in full in 2021-22	None required - saving made in full in 2021-22
	Total Corporate / Council Wide		376	376		

GRAND TOTAL REDUCTIONS		1,760	1,695
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TOTAL BUDGET REDUCTION REQUIREMENT		1,760	1,760
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REDUCTION SHORTFALL		0	65
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740	1,681
795	19
225	60
1,760	1,760

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL	Budget 2021-22			Actual Outturn	Actual Variance Over/(under) budget	% Variance
	Expenditure Budget	Income Budget	Net Budget			
	£000	£000	£000			
EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT						
School Delegated Budgets	125,577	(21,302)	104,275	104,275	-	0.0%
Learning	10,229	(2,398)	7,831	7,946	115	1.5%
Strategic Partnerships & Comm	25,938	(10,139)	15,799	15,682	(117)	-0.7%
Health and Safety	389	(2)	387	216	(171)	-44.1%
TOTAL EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT	162,133	(33,841)	128,292	128,119	(173)	-0.1%
SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING						
Adult Social Care	69,462	(19,100)	50,362	46,113	(4,249)	-8.4%
Prevention and Wellbeing	6,170	(830)	5,340	5,111	(229)	-4.3%
Childrens Social Care	20,621	(1,084)	19,537	18,624	(913)	-4.7%
TOTAL SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING	96,253	(21,014)	75,239	69,848	(5,391)	-7.2%
COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE						
Planning & Development Services	2,092	(1,523)	569	1,045	476	83.7%
Strategic Regeneration	2,286	(597)	1,689	1,554	(135)	-8.0%
Economy, Natural Resources and Sustainability	8,100	(6,894)	1,206	1,206	-	0.0%
Cleaner Streets and Waste Management	12,498	(1,585)	10,913	10,992	79	0.7%
Highways and Green Spaces	22,914	(11,734)	11,180	9,913	(1,267)	-11.3%
Director and Head of Operations - Communities	272	-	272	266	(6)	-2.2%
Corporate Landlord	14,915	(12,090)	2,825	3,480	655	23.2%
TOTAL COMMUNITIES	63,077	(34,423)	28,654	28,456	(198)	-0.7%
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S						
Chief Executive Unit	592	-	592	532	(60)	-10.1%
Finance	46,733	(42,972)	3,761	2,957	(804)	-21.4%
HR/OD	2,283	(336)	1,947	1,933	(14)	-0.7%
Partnerships	2,932	(846)	2,086	1,658	(428)	-20.5%
Legal, Democratic & Regulatory	5,938	(978)	4,960	5,530	570	11.5%
Elections	155	(49)	106	134	28	26.4%
ICT	5,090	(1,126)	3,964	4,133	169	4.3%
Housing & Homelessness	10,794	(7,419)	3,375	821	(2,554)	-75.7%
Business Support	1,121	(111)	1,010	1,033	23	2.3%
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S	75,638	(53,837)	21,801	18,731	(3,070)	-14.1%
TOTAL DIRECTORATE BUDGETS						
	397,101	(143,115)	253,986	245,154	(8,832)	-3.5%
Council Wide Budgets						
	45,940	(970)	44,970	37,540	(7,430)	-16.5%
Accrued Council Tax Income				(2,463)	(2,463)	0.0%
Appropriations to Earmarked Reserves	2,703	-	2,703	21,097	18,394	0.0%
Transfer to Council Fund				331	331	0.0%
NET BRIDGEND CBC	445,744	(144,085)	301,659	301,659	0	0.0%

NB: Differences due to rounding of £000's

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TOTAL MOVEMENT ON EARMARKED RESERVES AS AT 31ST MARCH 2022

Opening Balance 01 Apr 21	Reserve	Movement as at 31 March 2022		Closing Balance 31 Mar 22
		Net Additions/ Reclassification	Draw-down/ unwound	
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
	Corporate Reserves:			
1,289	Asset Management Plan	105	(482)	912
2,838	Building Maintenance Reserve	(685)	(233)	1,920
1,273	Capital Asset Management & Asbestos Fund	209	(426)	1,056
667	Capital Feasibility Fund	333	(355)	645
28,920	Capital Programme Contribution	11,122	(17)	40,025
1,424	Change Management	-	(312)	1,112
1,626	Digital Transformation, ICT & Finance Systems	-	(196)	1,430
800	Economic and Future Resilience Fund	-	-	800
2,160	Insurance Reserve	-	-	2,160
5,395	Major Claims Reserve	2,654	(3,900)	4,149
906	MTFS Budget Contingency	-	-	906
35	Property Disposal Strategy	157	-	192
4,993	Service Reconfiguration	-	(1,400)	3,593
294	Welfare Reform Bill	-	-	294
52,620	Total Corporate Reserves	13,895	(7,321)	59,194
	Directorate Reserves:			
5,199	City Deal Reserve	771	-	5,970
7,370	Directorate Issues	9,996	(2,026)	15,340
932	Highways Asset Management Reserve	-	(27)	905
578	Looked After Children	-	-	578
103	Porthcawl Regeneration	-	-	103
196	Property Reserve	-	(16)	180
11	Safe Routes to Schools	-	-	11
365	School Projects Reserve	-	(56)	309
669	Wellbeing Projects	-	-	669
15,423	Total Directorate Reserves	10,767	(2,125)	24,065
	Equalisation & Grant Reserves:			
44	Building Control Reserve	-	(19)	25
82	Civil Parking Enforcement	-	(32)	50
68	Election Costs	150	(90)	128
404	HWB Schools Infrastructure	401	(13)	792
4,699	IFRS Grants	2,656	(1,467)	5,888
153	Legal Fees	-	-	153
173	Local Development Plan	-	(15)	158
692	Special Regeneration Fund	123	-	815
-	Loss of income	856	(856)	-
6,315	Equalisation & Grant Reserves:	4,186	(2,492)	8,009
8,490	School Balances	4,004	-	12,494
82,848	TOTAL RESERVES	32,852	(11,938)	103,762

NB: Differences due to rounding of £000's

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JUNE 2022

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

CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION

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 at 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. ¹

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

- 3.2 In order to further develop and enhance the Council's Corporate Parenting role with its partners, a Corporate Parenting Committee 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 quarterly. The terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Committee 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 Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of 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 as an invitee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

Kelly Watson

Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

24 June 2022

Contact Officers: Meryl Lawrence
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Lucy Beard
Scrutiny Officer

Jessica McLellan
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643515 / 643613 / 643263

Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal address: Democratic Services - Scrutiny
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

30 JUNE 2022

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

NOMINATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY PANEL

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this 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 required the scrutiny of certain statutory functions of each Public Service Board and the Authority designated the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel with the responsibility, under the remit of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 The Panel will hold up to two meetings a year and can make recommendations to the Public Service Board via a report to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

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 Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel is determined annually and comprises three Members nominated from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, one Member nominated from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and representatives that sit on the Public Service Board attend.

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. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of 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.

Kelly Watson

Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

24 June 2022

Contact Officers: Meryl Lawrence
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Lucy Beard
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Jessica McLellan
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643515 / 643613 / 643263

Email: 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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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JUNE 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES, HR & CORPORATE POLICY

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the proposed draft outline Forward Work Programme (**Appendix A**) for this Committee for discussion and consideration;
- b) To request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) To request the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.6;
- d) To note that the proposed draft Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following consideration in their July Committee meetings.

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**:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.
- 3.2 The Council's Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council's Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.

Best Practice / Guidance

- 3.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the forward work programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.
- 3.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximize the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.
- 3.5 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) guide to work effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

'Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well it can help lay the foundations for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.'

4. Current situation/proposal

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Forward Work Programme

- 4.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 18 May 2022, the standing statutory reports to this Scrutiny Committee upon: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timely meeting dates into a draft Forward Work Programme (FWP).

- 4.2 The draft outline Forward work programme for each Scrutiny Committee have been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:
- Corporate Risk Assessment;
 - Directorate Business Plans;
 - Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / Minutes;
 - Committee / Member proposed topics;
 - Policy Framework;
 - Cabinet Work Programme;
 - Discussions with Corporate Directors;
 - Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.
- 4.3 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g., the MTFS including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in December 2022, following which the Committee will coordinate the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2023.
- 4.4 An effective FWP will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The FWP will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each SOSC reported and any updated information gathered from FWP meetings with Corporate Directors.
- 4.5 The Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Forward Work Programmes will be reported to the next meeting of COSC, with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee for coordination and oversight of the overall FWP. The SOSC FWP's will be included in the standing FWP Update report from then on with any feedback from each SOSC meeting included.

Identification of Further Items

- 4.6 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 maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. Criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

PUBLIC INTEREST:	The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny;
ABILITY TO CHANGE:	Priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence, and add value to;
PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council is not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough, or a large number of service users or its population;
REPLICATION:	Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

- The issue is already being addressed / being examined elsewhere and change is imminent.
- The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and can be referred there).
- Scrutiny involvement would have limited / no impact upon outcomes.
- The topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic and needs refining / scoping.
- New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year.
- The topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change / reconfiguration.

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

4.10 The draft outline Forward Work Programme for COSC is attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.

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.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of 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 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider the proposed draft outline Forward Work Programme for the Committee in **Appendix A**, make any amendments and agree its Forward Work Programme.
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the report for the next two Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.6.
- d) Note that the proposed draft Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be reported to the next meeting of COSC, with the comments from each respective SOSC following consideration in their July Committee meetings.

Kelly Watson
Chief Officer – Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy
24 June 2022

Contact Officers: Meryl Lawrence
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Lucy Beard
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Telephone: (01656) 643515 / 643613 / 643263

Email: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

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

Background documents: None.

Statutory standing reports have been mapped to the cycle of meetings as follows:

Date of Meeting:	Report Topics:
Thursday 30 June 9.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Election of Chairperson report; - Revenue Budget Outturn 2021-22 - Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination report; - Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel report; - Draft Forward Work Programme
Thursday 21 July 9.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget Monitoring 2022-23 – Quarter 1 Revenue Forecast - Council’s Performance against its Wellbeing Objectives for 2021 - 22 (Year End Performance)
Monday 5 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Director of Social Services Annual Report 2021/22 - Scrutiny Annual Report
Thursday 27 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget Monitoring 2022-23 – Quarter 2 Revenue Forecast
Thursday 15 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 and Budget Proposals * - Q2 Performance Report 2022-23
Tuesday 31 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scrutiny Recommendations on Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-24 to 2026-27 and Draft Budget Consultation Process - New Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 - Capital Strategy 2023 – 24 onwards - Budget Monitoring 2022-23 - Quarter 3 Revenue Forecast
Thursday 2 March	TBC

*If the Budget Settlement is received late as in previous years, the scrutiny of the Draft MTFS and Budget Proposals will need to be moved to meeting dates to be convened after Cabinet in January 2023.

Dependent upon the above there may need to request a meeting be scheduled in the first half of February to redistribute topics and this can be kept under review.

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