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Bridgend County Borough Council



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Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 /
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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Tuesday, 5 July 2022

Dear Councillor,

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

A meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 will be held remotely - via Microsoft Teams on **Monday, 11 July 2022 at 09:30**.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations)
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 22
To receive for approval the minutes of the meeting of 21 01 22 and 02 02 22
4. Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination 23 - 26
5. Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel 27 - 30
6. Forward Work Programme Update 31 - 38
7. 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.

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:

S Aspey

F D Bletsoe

E L P Caparros

P Davies

Councillors

P Ford

D M Hughes

M Lewis

J Llewellyn-Hopkins

Councillors

RL Penhale-Thomas

A Wathan

AJ Williams

R Williams

Present

Councillor AJ Williams – Chairperson

S Aspey
JE Lewis

MC Clarke
DBF White

SK Dendy

MJ Kearns

Apologies for Absence

PA Davies, M Jones, AA Pucella, G Thomas and KJ Watts

Officers:

Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director - Communities
Michael Pitman	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive

1. CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION REPORT

The Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny presented a report which requested the Committee to nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

She explained that 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. She added 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. 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

RESOLVED: That the Committee nominated Cllr David White as the corporate parenting champion to represent the Committee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

2. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022-23 TO 2025-26

The Chief Officer – Finance Performance and Change presented a report which updated the Scrutiny Committee on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26, which sets out the spending priorities of the Council, key investment objectives and budget areas targeted for necessary savings. The strategy includes a financial forecast for 2022-2026 and a detailed draft revenue budget for 2022-23.

She explained that 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 were reviewed regularly and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

The Chief Officer – Finance Performance and Change outlined the financial overview covering the last 10 years and the budget reductions that were required of the Council totalling £62 Million. The Table at 4.1.1 outlined the year-on-year reductions.

She explained that while the Council's net revenue budget is planned at £319.510 million for 2022-23, its overall expenditure far exceeded this. Taking into account expenditure and services which were funded by specific grants or fees and charges, the Council's gross budget was estimated to be around £480 million in 2022-23.

She stated that the Council gets the majority of its revenue funding from Welsh Government through the Revenue Support Grant and a share of Non Domestic Rates. This was then supplemented through council tax collection, other grants and fees and charges. Council tax was a charge that local authorities used to help to pay for their services.

The amount that council tax payers pay was made up of 3 elements:

- Bridgend County Borough Council charge
- Town or Community Council charge
- Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales charge

The Chief Officer – Finance Performance and Change explained that Council Tax funded almost 30% of the Councils total budget.

The Chief Officer – Finance Performance and Change stated that the Council had continued to support education, early intervention, social services and wellbeing services to ensure that we prioritise the vulnerable in our society. The MTFs reiterates that going forward. The Council looks at as many ways as possible to maximize the use of the resources that it has to be able to continue to protect these services.

She added that the Council would seek to raise additional income wherever possible, however there will be limited opportunities to do so given the challenges of Covid-19. The Council would continue to seek alternative ways of delivering services to provide sustainability and efficiencies. Savings for the coming year included reviewing and rationalising council supplies and services.

The Chief Officer – Finance Performance and Change explained that Social Services and Wellbeing was a significant part of the budget requirements and for the coming financial year the Council proposed to spend £78 million on this area. She also highlighted the Corporate Financial Overview of other areas for information. These were highlighted in detail at 4.1.1 of the report and covered some key areas listed below:

- general efficiencies
- property savings
- alternative delivery models
- Changes to Service Provision
- Education
- Social Care and Well-being
- Departmental changes

The Chief Officer – Finance Performance and Change explained that due to the late announcement of the comprehensive spending review, the provisional Local Government settlement was not received until the 21st December 2021. The draft settlement set out revenue and capital spending plans for 2022-23 and also included planned allocations for 2023-24 and 2024-25. She advised that the headline figure for

the revenue budget for 2022-23 was an overall increase of 9.4 4% across Wales and for Bridgend the increase was a 9.2% increase in funding from Welsh Government.

She stressed that within this settlement figure, the Council was required to meet the cost of teachers pay deal, increased National Insurance contributions as well as meeting the additional costs of introducing the real living wage for care workers. The details for this were still to be awaited.

The Chairperson asked in relation to the hardship fund, had the department shown reliance on this fund and how much had been claimed in the past.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing stated that there had been significant claims against the hardship fund made from social services and well-being. In 2020/21 over £1million was claimed in relation to the leisure arrangements with Halo. This had been due to the restrictions in place that affected Halo including opening hours and capacity as well as claims made for PPE and service management. In terms of going forward there was still some details to be worked out but the directorate was confident that it would be moving into a balanced budget next year even after the removal of the hardship fund. The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change added that the total figures with regards to expenditure for social care to the end of December from the hardship fund was £3.8 million.

A Member asked if there was any indication of the hardship fund being offered again in the future should there be another spike or variant in Covid-19. The Chief Executive said there were no plans for a further hardship fund but there was no way of knowing what comes next in terms of Covid and therefore what Welsh Government would provide. In terms of a budget, it was important to plan as if there were no additional support like the hardship fund.

A Member referred to SSW1 in Appendix 1 of the report and asked how we prepare for the budget pressures associated with family members coming into care at very short notice and sometimes with multiple siblings.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that this was done by looking at the data in terms of demographics i.e the number of children and young people in Bridgend and then predictions are made per 10,000 people based on previous years data and then form the budget plan around that based on an individual cost.

The Chairperson asked in relation to SSW2 in the appendix, what kind of pressures had there been and could some examples be provided as well as how they had been dealt with.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that the prolonged lockdowns have had an impact on emotional health and wellbeing and the Council has worked closely with partners in Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and developed a range of services to support this from preventative first line mental health services to more acute services. The ARC service which is open 7 days a week has seen an uptake in usage. She added that the Social Care and Assessment and Resource Team had also seen more uptake and will need further investment, further information on this aspect will also be talked about at a future Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help took the opportunity to thank the third sector workforce as the reliance that the council has had on volunteers had been significant as they had worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic.

A Member echoed these comments and stated as he was a person who was shielding for a short time during the pandemic, he too relied on volunteers and was very grateful for the work they had done. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing thanked Members for the comments and agreed that the work by third sector was very valuable.

A Member asked in relation to SSW2, what were the pressures in terms of staffing issues and how were the levels of staff looking now and ensuring that a good service was maintained. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that initially there were staffing issues up to 16% but the numbers have been steadily decreasing particularly in the recent months but as a service we had continued to work with colleagues in HR to ensure that support had been in place for staff on ill health absences.

A Member asked in relation to SSW3 if any future pay awards ensured that all members of staff were paid the National Living Wage of £10.50 an hour. The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help confirmed that the Council were on target for meeting that standard and had already done so in many areas.

The Chairperson asked in relation to SSW5, how successful was the in-house training and the cost of agency staff to the directorate.

The Corporate director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that the social care workforce development team were an award-winning team. They obtained an accolade for their 'First Year in Practice' programme so we were very committed in understanding the pressures that were around the social work recruitment particularly children's social work. We also work very closely with further education establishments like Bridgend College and Cardiff Met University. She added that the Council receives a Social Care Workforce Development grant from Welsh Government which funds a large portion of the cost in terms of training, agency and social work although there had been an increase in agency costs which had been challenging for all Local Authorities. As there was sometimes a significant gap in time between obtaining permanent staff particularly in the children's social care section, we have to rely on agency staff to ensure there were no vacancies in this area.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing added that a real challenge had been many of the successful applicants were already internal candidates and so there were new vacancies as soon as old ones were filled. As a result of this there has been a review of the service area and we have developed a more experienced social work post and adverts for this have recently been published.

A Member raised concerns over social workers moving to other authorities and the retention of staff can be challenging. He asked if there were any discussions on a national level about national terms and conditions so that local authorities did not need to compete with each other. The Leader commented on this and supported the idea of national terms and conditions. All local authorities had been experiencing these issues and some time and other valued professionals already had a national terms and conditions, for example teachers, nurses and doctors among some.

The Leader added that there were many administrative burdens relating to social workers and this was something that needed to be looked into to try and reduce this burden and ensure that social workers get more time with children and families.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing stated that many social workers in other authorities have the ability to undertake additional support roles and that had

proven to be successful and those local authorities attractive for social workers, so this was something that we also wished to implement.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing provided an outline with regards to SSW6 on what direct payments were within children's services.

A Member asked if there were any increase in take up on direct payments for adults social care also given the increase in the number of older people over the years. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing confirmed that there was indeed an increase in this area as well, the pressures were there but not in the same way they were for children's social care and with adults social care the payments allowed for more flexibility of care by the adult themselves or family members supporting them.

The Chairperson asked in relation to SSW7, could some clarification be given on the increase in costs.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that this related to a Cabinet report which was brought forward a number of months ago on a retender of our Supported Living services. Over a number of years, we had been seeing an increased cost from providers and so the £650,000 was an anticipated cost going into 22/23.

The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing provided a brief overview on SSW1 on Appendix B for Members. The Chairperson mentioned that all three of the RAG status for SSW proposals were listed as red and asked for some elaboration these risks. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing stated that these were linked to position that the Council finds itself in post Covid and the increased demand on services as a consequence of the extended periods of lockdown. The increased pressure on peoples physical and mental health can increase the need for services as well as the effects that are not fully understood on 'long Covid'. The services that are opening back up and becoming more like pre-covid the pressures have lessened but this may revert back if the levels of restrictions were to return.

The Chairperson asked on behalf of a Member in relation to the older generation and computer illiterate and ensuring that they were not forgotten about. She had specific concerns that people may feel isolated and may not be able to access services due to lack of access to electronic equipment, cost of broadband etc and that it was not financially viable to do so just to access a limited number of services. She believed it was important to remember that there were individuals out there who did not or could not use technology and ensuring that support was provided for them. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that many of the technologies being used were advancing in terms of their capabilities and it was particularly useful as part of care packages. An example of this was the bed sensors that can detect unusual activities whereby if the person was usually in bed at certain times or for certain lengths of time, the sensors can detect when they are not for any length of time and alert their carers so assistive technology was not a replacement for in person care service but rather an additional benefit.

The Leader mentioned that there was a number of proposals being discussed as part of the CCRC in terms of boosting connectivity in rural areas through residents and businesses.

A Member asked if there had been a reduction in use of day services. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that there had been a decrease and we had found that many people who would normally have used the day services were now enjoying their care and support given in other ways within their own communities. She added that there had also been more specialist provisions being looked at and

recently a dementia service running in Bridgend that will likely see an increase in use so it was a case of some services were being delivered in different ways that were more suitable to individual needs and other services being in ways that were preferred by the user. The Leader added that one of the services being provided was swimming lessons for people with dementia and their carers which had proven very successful.

A Member mentioned in relation to SSW2 of Appendix B, how the new ways of working dealt with the challenges of working from home and people filling in forms over the phone. Her concern was that she did not want anyone falling through the net. The Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing explained that many services will slowly start to move in a blended way to ensure that anyone who was having difficulties would still be able to access face to face support and so the aim was to utilise the best of both worlds in terms of working and providing services.

The Leader added that the needs of people were paramount to the remodelling and decision-making process and this was something that continued to be worked on to ensure that services were fit for purpose for everyone. The Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help added that the narrative of social services has shifted to become more user led and asks what cant you do, and what can we do to help you.

The Chief Executive highlighted a point relating to CW3 in Appendix 1 about the new funding that had been set aside to meet ongoing budget pressures as a result of the Covid19 pandemic. He advised that there would be a number of issues that could potentially emerge that were hard to predict and the funding of £1 million allows some flexibility. The settlement figure being greater than expected can allow us to become relaxed but with ongoing pressures and demands it was important to not become too relaxed and so the funding set aside can assist in some of those pressures that may arise.

Recommendations:

1. In relation to budget pressure SSW5, the Committee recommended that consideration be given to lobbying Welsh Government to set a Welsh national salary, terms and conditions for social workers to alleviate Childrens social worker recruitment and retention pressures for Local Authorities, similarly to the national arrangements for teachers, police and nurses.
2. In addition to the above, the Committee expressed concern at the significant reliance and potential cost of agency staff in Children's Services and requested assurance that the situation is kept under review and all that can be done to reduce it considered.
3. In relation to budget reduction proposal SSW1, the Committee recommended consideration is given to ensure that service users are not excluded by the use of technology / digital service delivery.
4. In relation to budget reduction proposal SSW2, the Committee requested assurance that consideration of new ways of working includes options for face-to-face service e.g., for those who are unable to engage in other ways e.g., via telephone completion of forms, etc.

5. In relation to budget reduction proposal SSW3, the Committee suggested that the use of the term service remodelling had negative perceptions which could have adverse impact on staff and service users and did not make clear the extensive advocacy and consultation undertaken to listen to the wishes of service users, and recommended consideration be given to more positive terminology and explanation of the budget line, such as tailoring or ongoing continuous improvement, etc.

6. In relation to general comments relating to budget pressure CW3, the Committee recommended that consideration be given to reviewing the £1M pressure, as due to the extent of the significant reliance on the former Welsh Government hardship fund by a number of services including those within Social Services and Wellbeing, there was concern that the figure may be insufficient and a reduction in service delivery could ensue.

3. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

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

Present

Councillor AJ Williams – Chairperson

S Aspey
SK Dendy

MC Clarke
JE Lewis

C L C Davies
G Thomas

PA Davies
KJ Watts

Apologies for Absence

M Hughes, M Jones, MJ Kearns, AA Pucella and DBF White

Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Claire Marchant	Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing
Andrew Thomas	Group Manager Sports & Physical Activity
Mark Wilkinson	Group Manager - Learning Disability

Invitees:

Councillor Huw David	Leader
Councillor Jane Gebbie	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help
Robert Goodwin	Locality Manager for Bridgend Mental Health and Learning Disability Services
Simon Gwynne	Partnership Manager HALO
Richard Hughes	Chief Executive, Awen Trust
Councillor Dhanisha Patel	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations
Scott Rolfe	Chief Executive HALO
Kay Baker	BAVO

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of interests were declared in the report upon Progress in Delivering Priorities for Wellbeing, Leisure and Cultural Services in Bridgend, as follows:

Councillor Janice Lewis declared a personal interest in the report as a user of the Library Service and as a Volunteer helping to run St Brides Minor Community Centre.

Councillor Dhanisha Patel declared a personal interest in the report as a Member of St Brides Minor Community Council.

The Leader, Councillor Huw David declared a personal interest in the report, as the Chair of Cefn Cribwr Community Association.

7. PROGRESS IN DELIVERING PRIORITIES FOR WELLBEING, LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES IN BRIDGEND

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing introduced the report and emphasised the importance of Scrutiny considering the report, as leisure and cultural services, and their wellbeing approach in Bridgend had been at the fore of their responses during the past almost two years of the Covid pandemic and needed to continue to be for their responses during the recovery phase over the coming years.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing advised the report looked at leisure and cultural opportunities, what had been done and what would be done to improve accessibility, removal of barriers and things that can be developed to support both individual and community wellbeing, linked to Council and Community COVID recovery. He explained they also had representation to show the work that had been progressed with the Third Sector and through their building resilient communities' approaches and where that may be taken in the future. To add to that they had included some of the areas of service that the Prevention and Wellbeing Service directly delivers in terms of active young people programmes, healthy living services and play development.

A Member referred to paragraph 4 of the report and the participation in the learn to swim programmes and asked would this be re-established in 2022, and when that would happen as the report stated they had a twenty-one-month backlog.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing explained that the way school swimming was supported within Bridgend was that the investment was delegated to the schools and then the school arranged how they wanted to use that investment to attend those programmes. Regarding the young people who were no longer in primary school and were now attending the secondary school the project needed to move beyond school swimming, and they had to look at more holistic programmes. This included how they target programmes like the free-swimming initiative, where they knew people had barriers such as the cost to learn to swim, and how they make programmes more available to those people who would not be engaging in any other way was potentially a real challenge going forward, but one that needed to be firmly on the radar.

The Partnership Manager for Halo advised that an eighteen-week programme of school swimming had resumed. From January they had an eighteen-week plan for the rest of that year to July of schools going back, which meant that they had 30 different schools back. 118 different groups, so different year groups or different in the same year group going at different times based on the numbers of schools, as there were still restrictions on capacity.

A Member expressed his concern that the swimming pool in Maesteg was closed on a Sunday.

The Partnership Manager for Halo advised several lesson programmes were run on a Saturday in Maesteg and on certain weekends on a Sunday too. He explained that they had historically closed earlier on the basis of capacity, use and demographics, so over the years there had been slightly less programmes in Maesteg based on that usage pattern. Regarding resource element they had challenges with teaching and were running several programmes this year where they were delivering swimming teacher courses and offering that out for a number of partners and to the population in terms of access, so looking for new people to come into their lesson programme and teach as well.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing added on a broader context, when everything had been closed and then had been permitted to reopen at different phases and restrictions the position of the Council was to rebuild services from the base. Not everything needed to be exactly as it had been previously, so the opportunities that had been developed around reaching people digitally or through outreach programmes were

in the mix during the recovery period. He advised it was about rebuilding the business from the base progressively and growing the opportunities and maximising the use as they went on that journey.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.7 of the report regarding the Autism Swimming Pilot Programme and the plans to expand the opportunity and asked if there was a timescale on those plans.

The Partnership Manager for Halo advised that another programme would run in February and a Young Person's Active Communities Coordinator had been recruited into the Team to support the delivery of that programme on a more regular basis. The aspiration was therefore to run those programmes on a weekly basis.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.8 the Feel Good for Life Programme which had been supporting people living with dementia or cognitive impairment and asked if there was more scope to engage with people regarding this.

The Partnership Manager for Halo responded that they had submitted an application to develop the Programme across more centres and had also submitted a National Lottery application to support and develop it over five years. He advised that the support that they got from their partners was also important in terms of how they delivered.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing added that it was a great example and demonstrated an interesting model of how a number of partners came together to deliver a programme rather than individually.

A Member referred to the Library Service Click and Collect Scheme in paragraph 4.12 and expressed concern about those who were digitally excluded and asked how they could still use their library.

The Chief Executive of Awen advised that click and collect was slightly misleading as it was call and collect, where people could telephone their local library and order the books which could lead to the home delivery service. The home delivery service had gained a lot of plaudits he said throughout the pandemic for the way that it had been able to engage with people who were socially isolated. He assured that there were many avenues to contact the library other than online.

A Member referred to Books on Wheels in paragraph 4.13 of the report and asked how people found out about the service, as they had not seen the scheme publicised and asked if the library buses still went out.

The Chief Executive of Awen explained that there had been a change in service which had been agreed with the Council pre pandemic, which they were hoping to improve and expand upon. With this Home Delivery Service, they were able to reach more people more often and those that really needed the service. He advised that they worked closely with local Community Coordinators, with the Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing and his Team and others to try and refer people to the service, as well as promotion to families and others through social media. He advised that they were looking at how people could be more formally referred through the social care system which would increase the number of people who were aware and were able to access the service.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing wished to pick up on the digital point and explained that the role of libraries and supporting those that were digitally excluded was a significant issue. One of the bigger discussions going on he advised was how the libraries had always acted as Council information points, supporting people that perhaps

would not go into the council offices, so looking forward there had been discussions on how staff could be trained to have up-to-date information and then being able to support people to access their 'my council' apps.

A Member referred to the delivery service and how people selected what books they wanted. She wondered if they were sent a list of what was available to them or were they chosen on their behalf.

The Chief Executive of Awen explained that one of the things they had found customers liked as part of the collect system was that they could choose their own books, which would be the traditional request system. However, the library staff who knew their customers could pick books on their behalf as they could see what they had read before so there would be no duplications and it was a service people liked.

A Member asked due to the increase in digital demand would they still be retaining paper books and large print books for members of the community who required them.

The Chief Executive of Awen advised that was the largest section of what they provided and although people were accessing their resources in different ways, including books, the more significant investment that they made would be in physical print and it was still the most popular medium of borrowing at that time.

The Leader advised that digital inclusion was important, and an area of success was the work they had done with carers and the work undertaken through schools to ensure none of the children would be digitally excluded. He advised work would continue around reaching out to those digitally excluded people as they recognised it was a constant piece of work.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing advised that the investment in recent years into library facilities and resources remained positive. He explained that the things that libraries did were broader than digital and books, in terms of community groups, young family support and homework clubs, so developing libraries into vibrant, engaging spaces for the broader population remained important.

The Chief Executive of Awen advised that they should not underplay the fact that a lot of older people were digitally savvy so as well as making sure people weren't excluded, they also had to make the most of the new technologies and platforms available to them. He explained the wider service being carried out in libraries had been missed by people through the pandemic and as the reported stated Libraries had only been closed for around three months, and they had maintained a service throughout which he believed had been welcomed by many people.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing explained that libraries were Community Information Hubs and not only a place to provide books and reading resources for people. They were the heart of the community and making them and other community facilities vibrant places where people got together and had their need met was important. She advised using digital resources and not being scared of using them with their older population as well as the younger population would enable people to connect. It was an overall strategy and linked with some of the work around Local Area Coordinators, particularly to connect people to what works for them and digital was part but not all of that strategy.

A Member referred to the improvements being made in various libraries, but that Aberkenfig and Sarn Libraries had not been mentioned.

The Group Manager for Prevention and Wellbeing advised that they had aspirations that all assets, whether they be leisure, cultural or community were modern and kept pace with people's needs. Being able to do that all in one stream was a challenge and he thought with the investment they had secured they had done well out of the Welsh Government streams, but it was one project at a time and Aberkenfig had been discussed based on its size, scale and potential to do other things.

The Chief Executive of Awen advised that all the library sites were looked at where investment was concerned. Sarn library was one of the more recent ones to be developed as it had been part of the community centre redevelopment that took place in 2011-12 and had one of the most extensive information technology resources. He explained that they do keep a lookout to see what they could do better and more of to enhance spaces for children and young people as well, which he knew was a priority for them as a Council. There was certainly not a queuing system, and all libraries were looked at on a continuous basis.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.26 in the report and the Pen Pal Scheme and volunteers and asked if all primary schools had been approached or had it just been a select number for a pilot. She thought it would be something that could possibly be rolled out to all schools as it would help with writing and help those who may feel isolated.

The Operations and Partnership Manager, Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) advised that it had only been the one school that they had engaged with, as there had been a specific pot of money they had to work with over a period of three to four months. It had been a pilot they had tried and the information in the report contained the outcomes. She advised that it had been a good piece of work but needed capacity to maintain it and also there were safeguarding issues to be managed.

The Group Manager, Prevention and Wellbeing expressed that simple things could go a long way, talking about digital exclusion and trying to develop intergenerational work, they had started an agenda of becoming an age friendly community and looking at how they bring different population groups together and add value, of which this had been a good example. He advised they had tried to get some isolation investment but had not been able to apply that year as Welsh Government had wanted to invest smaller amounts to third sector groups. However, the pilot had something to offer regarding expanding a broader approach to befriending and supporting loneliness.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.22 in the report and asked if the work had been done through BAVO as throughout the pandemic they had been vital in providing volunteers and bringing in volunteers to assist where needed throughout the community.

The Group Manager, Prevention and Wellbeing explained that their partnership and the investment they had managed to secure had supported the Community Navigators and Volunteer Development Roles within BAVO. He advised there had been a strong platform at Bronze Command between Bridgend County Borough Council and BAVO in terms of positions and who was best placed to respond. He advised that BAVO provided the leadership and the resource for what had been intended originally to be a small programme with three hundred beneficiaries but had proved it was able to support high volumes based on Community Connections.

The Operations and Partnership Manager, BAVO gave credit to the staff within the organisation and the Commissioners for allowing them to diversify their services to do what was needed during the pandemic. They were now trying to not just continue delivering what people believed they required, but also trying to support and educate people how they could do it themselves.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing wished to build upon how they move forward together as she believed that the programme, which had been recognised in the evaluations, the initial ambition, resourceful, resilient communities were about supporting communities and individuals to sustainably support their own wellbeing. She advised they were now using some of their social care recovery funding and trying to plan through the new Regional Integration Funding going into next year, how they support communities and individuals to recover and get back to where those original intentions of the programme were.

A Member asked if all the community centres in the borough were now up and running and open for people to use.

The Group Manager, Prevention and Wellbeing explained it was a mixed picture both now and during the pandemic, he thought there were community centres that thrived and supported the broad range of essential public services during the pandemic and then there were other centres that had different challenges. He explained that one of the things they were looking at was to progressively look at equipping community centres digitally to connect with each other, and with virtual village hall concepts and also support hybrid office for those that can or cannot always physically attend based on vulnerability. It may connect with the Carbon Neutral Agenda in the future where people do not always need to attend a centralised location, but that would not be a quick fix.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help advised that at her community centre the finance had been difficult as its income was not as much as pre pandemic, but fortunately they had a BAVO connector working out of their community centre, who provided information, help, support, guidance, and advice in relation to any grant applications they were making. The biggest challenge was the constant changes as they did not know what service provision they were going to be able to provide as regulations had kept changing. She was aware of other community centres that had not reopened yet which was sad as each community needs a community centre, as a central hub.

The Operations and Partnership Manager, BAVO advised that did seem to be the pattern across the Borough, with BAVO supporting some Centres individually in different ways. There was a need for the support going forward, but not a one size fits all approach, it was about individual centres being able to access the funding needed to take forward what would be beneficial within their area.

The Leader agreed that the experience was different across the County Borough and there had been an increase in activity due to people being keen to get back to personal, face to face contact. He advised they also continued to see new initiatives that could provide additional use, although he pointed out that some community centres were still not available as they had been used as a testing centre for Covid. He advised community centres that were struggling to get in touch with BAVO and the Authority, as they recognised their importance.

A Member asked if there had been an increase in young carers since the pandemic.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing explained she was not able to give an exact figure at that time, but they were doing a lot of work, with one of the key challenges to appropriately addressing the needs of young carers was identification. The work they had been doing through the Young Carers Card and the work they needed to be doing going forward with schools, would be fundamental in terms of that early identification so they could put the right care and support, and services needed in place.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help advised it was really difficult as young people did not identify themselves as young carers. She asked Members that if they see a young carer in their midst, it was useful to be able to identify and ensure that they have the appropriate support.

The Group Manager, Prevention and Wellbeing added that beyond the social work practice aspects the Prevention Team was trying to proactively engage particularly with young people who had caring responsibilities. He advised that two programmes had been run during the year, using the Youth Consultation Group of people to look at the Young Carers Card and to introduce the new Welsh Government approach to young carers identification and what partners could do to unlock for them in terms of social opportunities or engagements in different things that were meaningful to them. Through their work with schools, they had a number of network groups so they had been engaging with 204 young carers to identify what the network would look like, how they would propose it would run and what it focussed on.

A Member referred to sports and physical activities in the report for adolescents and asked what about the younger children to make sure that they were supported in being fit and active and catch up on potential sports that they had missed.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing explained she had announced the Winter of Wellbeing, which was one of the programmes they had put in place. She advised that they were working with their partners that had helped deliver the Summer of Fun Programme that had been put in place to try and help motivate young people to get out, be active and reintegrate into society.

The Group Manager, Prevention and Wellbeing advised in terms of the Winter of Wellbeing Programme, the schools had also been given direct investment, with recognition across the county that young people had been universally challenged by the pandemic. He added that going forward most people would be hoping for more face-to-face opportunities and to see this continue to grow. He advised their investment from Sport Wales continued which was something they could share with the Committee regarding what that might look like going forward for 2022 onwards.

A Member referred to paragraph 8 of the report and the risk identified in terms of sustainability of the various initiatives, schemes and deliveries that were going forward and was conscious that it took time to develop new initiatives. He asked what the challenges were to match the aspirations of Halo and Awen in terms of developing and delivery, and what the issues were around staff job security and developing long-term strategy. Lastly, he asked what was the percentage of the business turnover that was relatively short- or medium-term grant dependent.

The Group Manager, Prevention and Wellbeing advised he would defer to his colleagues that came from a social enterprise background, which was really the underlying philosophy of some of those things where you test ideas, innovate, scale up and then look to embed things that work on a more semi commercial footing, as the risks being identified were core and the Third Sector worked by resourcing, building, and sustaining services. He advised that they were starting from a new place, they had been building networks of people and were looking to co-produce with the right population groups, which would really make a difference, looking more at how they could scale up and mainstream some of those things. He advised that picking which were the most important items and looking at things that gave the right time and resource to develop more strength and intelligence about programmes was important. He explained that the way that Bridgend, not just in the Third Sector work but where there would be anti-poverty investment was important, pooled across partners and programmes rather than being distributed in smaller aspects. He explained in terms of scaling up they should be

looking at their core resources and where things made more sense, challenging what they had always done that made less sense and do something new, a cultural shift and in doing this, doing it well and cheaper, and getting a better long-term outcome for people.

The Chief Executive Officer of Halo explained that they try to look at all the risks with a new initiative and the issue of long-term funding resonates. They were not keen on getting into pilots where they thought there was not going to be any continuity, so try to assess all of the risks as much as they can. He explained that as Halo was a social enterprise managing the leisure portfolio, the commercial aspects with the community aspects of the business were slightly different in that a large amount of the revenue that was generated, that gets reinvested was from the communities and the programmes that they run. He explained the challenges that they face over the next twelve to eighteen months were going through the recovery trying to predict the response from communities. He advised one of the opportunities that did stand out was those particular communities that were most in need and may well resonate across all the funding landscapes to attract additional funding, which they had seen some examples of over the past eighteen months.

The Partnership Manager of Halo advised the other element was that they had a five-year partnership plan that they worked towards which was made up of all the key documentation from Welsh Government and also Bridgend County Borough Council linked into the key objectives, into the sustainability of the facilities and they then work on those in terms of how they develop their plans and programmes. He advised they work in partnership and were doing so to have the best benefit for those in the community, working together to combat the challenges that they all face financially.

The Member acknowledged that from the response to his questions it seemed that the risk was well managed and asked what level was the risk

The Chief Executive of Awen explained they took a deliberate strategy when it came to financial planning to try and not rely on grant income to sustain their core services, so that was a relatively low risk. He advised that the longer-term risk was if Central Government funds dried up for capital schemes e.g., to keep maintaining venues, but at that time after a decade of austerity things were looking bright to that effect. He explained that the report was around the contribution of what they contributed to health and wellbeing and the brave decision to stop doing some of the traditional things, but also the shift in funding from health and social care into the community upstream in order to try and prevent people from needing formal services.

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.

8. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse introduced the report, which referred to the strategic document that they used as the point of reference which is the Mental Health Delivery Plan which was reviewed in 2019 due to the pandemic. He explained that the report contained a number of overarching themes and a number of priorities which applied to both adults and children mental

health services. Those priorities guided them in how they delivered and developed the Mental Health Services in Bridgend. He advised the report moved on to an overview of the Community Mental Health Services and referred to the Operating Group, which was a group of senior managers from the Council and from Cwm Taf delivery unit which met every month to review the operating model, talk about developments in services and planning for future developments. He concluded that the report also talked about some of the work they had done with the Voluntary Sector, in particular the Wellbeing Retreat developed in 2020 particularly from mental health matters, the service had been in place for just over a year.

A Member referred to paragraphs 3.5 and 4.2 of the report where it stated the impact on mental health as a result of the pandemic had been evident during 2021, affecting the number and type of referrals to services and had almost doubled in 2021 from the level in 2020. She asked if they had an example of what the actual figures were and how many referrals they were looking at.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse explained it had doubled they thought because of the pandemic and the report gave a scale, and he could provide actual accurate figures following the meeting.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.2 and most referrals coming from the Police and asked what number of referrals they received from concerned neighbours or the public where there were aware that someone was on their own or they were concerned for them generally.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse advised that it was not a category in itself, however the Police referrals come mostly from them being called out to incidents in the community, which could have been reported by a neighbour. Once the Police had dealt with the situation, they would complete a referral form from them, but the identity of the person who contacted the police would not be shown.

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTM UHB) Service Group Manager replied that the pattern of referrals they had seen had been a growth in Tier Zero and Primary Care, but the number of people with serious mental health concerns had remained quite constant in terms of the numbers, which was evidenced by the number of people who had been detained under the Mental Health Act, which had not been significantly different to before the pandemic.

A Member commented on the alteration of the operating model to change methods of contact from face to face to phone and online contact and asked how they dealt with this as it can be difficult to ascertain how someone is feeling without seeing them, and also asked what about the digitally excluded without digital access digitally or via a telephone.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse explained that they had continued to see people but met them outside, so although regular contact with people had been done via the phone or digitally, if staff felt they were not satisfied with the phone or digital conversation and needed more information, they were able to meet following a process of risk assessment for every visit that they did and using personal protective equipment (PPE) and social distancing

A Member asked about the approach for those who appeared homeless and with mental health issues.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse advised they worked closely with the Wallich, a voluntary sector charity in Bridgend that assists homeless people. They would make a referral into mental health services if they thought it appropriate, and they would go wherever that person was and have a discussion and meet again, following a risk assessment process, using PPE and social distancing. He advised Princess of Wales Hospital had a single point of access, which provided an emergency response to people where they might be in the community, and they could either present at the hospital, or they may be brought there by the Police if on the street and in distress. There were different ways they would go through their network of contacts in the Voluntary Sector and between themselves, people would be referred to the right place.

The CTM UHB Service Group Manager added that they had kept that part of their service open, which was a good service and one that was unique to Bridgend in the Health Board region. He advised it gave people some focused access to mental health services where they did not have to go through their GP or to Accident and Emergency. He continued that for people who were homeless, it was more difficult but supported by social care colleagues or people in the community, they could be referred with help.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.3 of the report, the Approved Mental Health Professional Hub which stated there had been a sharp increase in 2020, 117% from 18 to 39 people detained and an increase in the number of new people not previously known to mental health services and asked if this had led to a lack of beds or whether Covid had impacted on capacity in hospitals.

The CTM UHB Service Group Manager advised they had kept inpatient services open throughout the pandemic and had been able to admit all patients who needed to be admitted, and clinical colleagues had made decisions around planned discharge for people who they could discharge in a safe way and be supported at home, so they had been okay in terms of capacity for their inpatient units. There had been some issues around discharging people in their older people services but even there they had some spare capacity and had not been overwhelmed in the same way that other services had.

A Member referred to paragraph 4.4 in the report and the increase in the number of young people on the autistic spectrum being referred and asked how these referrals were made to the community mental health teams.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse explained that the bulk of referrals to the community mental health teams are made through the GP. So, people would go to their GP, and they would make a call on whether they refer onto a community mental health team, one of the prevention and wellbeing services or social prescribing into another service. He added that for a lot of the young people they go from child and adolescent mental health services into adult mental health services as they ASD became more apparent, as they became teenagers and young adults.

THE CTM UHB Service Group Manager explained the community mental health teams are in their secondary care service and hospital wards in the community. He advised they provide care for people with complex need and are all care coordinated so they would have an identified nurse or social worker to provide a treatment plan for them and update that with them. He advised they had been able to allocate care coordinators to all their patients who had been referred in and using the risk assessment process to maintain contact with them face to face.

A Member asked if they had seen any delays in referrals due to the potential problems with getting a GP appointment for individuals to be seen physically by their GP when they were doing online referrals.

The CTM UHB Service Group Manager advised that inevitably the pandemic had affected General Practice which impacted on the number of referrals going through the system and they were now seeing this rising quite quickly as GPs went back to a more usual way of working.

A Member asked how an individual would find out about the different groups available to them to access.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse explained that each of those groups would advertise in their own specific way and would have posters and leaflets available in the area in which they operated or in the local community centre. Workers in the assisted recovery in the Community Team and in their Wellbeing Retreat, would also all have information about how to access these services in the community. There were a number of different routes and the single points of access mentioned would also have information and be able to signpost people to services.

The CTM UHB Service Group Manager advised that they could always do more to publicise their services and how to get to them and thought well targeted posters could be helpful.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse added that there were a number of online routes as well for people who had digital access, via the Council website and the Community Coordinators had a website, but the challenge for them was to reach people without digital access and get posters, leaflets, and information in places where they were likely to see them.

The Member commented that some people may not look digitally and not realise they had a problem until they saw something that could signpost them.

The Group Manager, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Substance Misuse agreed that coming out the pandemic they needed to think about how to widen their range of providing information and advice.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help advised she and the Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations had spoken to a Special Advisor from Welsh Government and part of that discussion had been about the distribution of mental health provision and how they were going to make it more public. There was some planning work going on around that, and an opportunity for the Officers to be involved. She stated that there were not enough practitioners, and they could not appoint to positions and the importance of getting people into university taking up the qualifications to be lead practitioners. She added that they had a good provision in their schools as well, so young people were further advised in their education provision.

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 endorsed the report.

9. **NOMINATION TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SCRUTINY PANEL**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny presented a report requesting the Committee to nominate one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

The Chairperson invited nominations, following which it was

RESOLVED: That Councillor Amanda Williams be nominated by the Committee to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

10. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

11 JULY 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

5 July 2022

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Background documents: None

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

11 JULY 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 one Member 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 The Committee is asked to nominate one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 The work of the Subject 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 one Member to sit on the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel.

Kelly Watson

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

5 July 2022

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Background documents: None

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BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

11 JULY 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 whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.6 of this report;
- d) To note that the proposed draft Forward Work Programme and any feedback from the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and 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 maximise 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

Draft Outline Forward Work Programmes

- 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 COSC upon: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timed meeting dates into a draft Forward Work Programme (FWP).
- 4.2 The draft outline Forward work programme for each Scrutiny Committee has 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 COSC 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 feedback from each SOSC and any updated information gathered from FWP meetings with Scrutiny Chairs and 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 feedback 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 on FWPs from each SOSC meeting held 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 which will result in a Cabinet decision being taken;

PERFORMANCE:	Priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well;
EXTENT:	Priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the County Borough;
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 to the Council's interest.
- The topic is too broad to make a review realistic.
- 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.

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 this Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for 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 in **Appendix A** and make any amendments and / or comments;

- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.6 of this report.
- d) Note that the proposed draft Forward Work Programme and any feedback from the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following consideration in their July Committee meetings.

Kelly Watson

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

5 July 2022

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Background documents: None.

**Draft Outline Forward Work Programme
Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2:**

APPENDIX A

<u>Date of Meeting:</u>	<u>Report Topics:</u>
Mon 11 July 9.30am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination report; - Nomination to the Public Service Board Scrutiny Panel report; - Draft Outline Forward Work Programme.
Thurs 15 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Care Inspectorate Wales Children's Services Inspection Report - Summary of Adult Services Inspection Reports
Thurs 3 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Intervention to Reduce Care Experienced Children and Key Pressures including Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA), Early Help and Edge of Care. - Annual Report - Safeguarding of Children and Adults.
Thurs 8 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 and Budget Proposals * - Learning Disabilities Action Plan **
Thurs 16 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrated Working with Cwm Taf University Health Board. - Support for Young Carers and Adult Carers
Mon 27 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevention and Wellbeing, Leisure (Halo) and Cultural Trusts (Awen) and Further Integration with BAVO. - Adult Mental Health

* 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 a meeting date to be convened after Cabinet in January 2023.

** In the event of the above, the Learning Disabilities Action Plan will be re-scheduled to 16th February 2023.

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