

**SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 - MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2023**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3  
HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET,  
BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2023 AT 16:00**

Present

Councillor P Davies – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe	N Clarke	C Davies	M J Evans
P W Jenkins	W J Kendall	J E Pratt	G Walter
I Williams	MJ Williams		

Invitees:

Councillor Neelo Farr	Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing
Janine Nightingale	Corporate Director, Communities
Zak Shell	Head of Operations - Community Services
Ieuan Sherwood	Group Manager – Economy, Natural Resources & Sustainability

Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Rachel Keepins	Democratic Services Manager
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Jessica Mclellan	Scrutiny Officer

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Mike Kearn.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Melanie Evans declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4, Update on Shared Prosperity Fund, as a Member of Pencoed Town Council and a Community Governor for Pencoed Comprehensive and Croesty Primary Schools.

37. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of meetings of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 dated 26 September 2022, 14 November 2022, 12 December 2022, 4 January 2023 and 23 January 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.

38. UPDATE ON SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

The Corporate Director, Communities presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide the Committee with an overview of proposed grant schemes that are to be commenced.

The Chairperson thanked the Corporate Director, Communities and Invitees and Members discussed the following:

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- The length of time taken for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) agreement to be signed off and the responsibility for this.
- Whether risk management mechanisms could enable money from the Council's reserves to be used to take schemes forward and replaced when funding was received to enable projects to continue where funding had been agreed in principle.
- The UKSPF allocation in Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) table and the Authority's 8.3% of the total allocation of funding from the region, ranking them 8th out of the 10 Local Authorities for percentage of funding.
- Collaborative working and assurances that there was support and resources for people applying for grants and joint working with voluntary sector and smaller community groups to build resilience and economic development.

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

RESOLVED: Following detailed consideration and discussions with Cabinet Members and Officers, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

1. While the Committee acknowledged that starting a scheme or project before written confirmation of any Government Grant Funding carried some risk, Members reflected on whether the process undertaken by Cabinet and Officers had taken into consideration the risk of the UK Government not permitting the rolling of year 1 funding into year 2. Members therefore recommended that Cabinet consider whether, on balance, starting the process of these projects before funding was received was a justified risk moving forward and also provide reassurance as to how they could ensure it will be considered in future decisions, as the Authority would not want to receive any less than the 8.3% announced by the United Kingdom (UK) Government.
2. The Committee furthermore recommend that a way of providing short term interim funding (including potentially reserves) for projects that have a high degree of certainty of Grant Funding be explored and consideration be given to mechanisms for managing risk and allowing projects to commence where Grant Funding had been agreed in principle, but not yet formalised.

and the Committee requested:

3. That Members be informed of the outcome, as soon as possible, of whether or not the request made by a number of Authorities to roll over year 1 funding into year 2 had been granted.
4. Information that the Director of Communities offered regarding engagement with community groups to establish the level of demand for Bridgend Local Investment Grant Funding and assistance required. This was in response to Members' concerns regarding responsibilities and reliance on volunteers and organisations to deliver the projects and Officers' explanations that part of the UKSPF was to build resilience

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and economic development, targeting communities that may not normally have access to that type of funding.

### 39. CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION NOMINATION REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer presented the 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.

The Chairperson invited nominations, following which it was

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Jonathan Pratt be nominated to represent Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 as an Invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.

### 40. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee discussed the draft outline FWP and Members expressed concern in relation to the Communities Directorate having sufficient resources, commenting upon the level of Directorate budget savings made over the last 10 to 12 years, the level of unfilled vacancies, the outstanding responses to Scrutiny Recommendations, information requests and delays in reports being available. The Committee stressed that this was not a criticism of the Director or any staff.

Following detailed discussions, the Committee made the following recommendations:

1. Members welcomed their position within the Committee to challenge and scrutinise correctly, however were unified in feeling that they recently had not had the scope and opportunities to consistently do so. Members expressed severe concerns and the need for greater understanding of the structure, resources and pressures within the Communities Directorate to better understand the position as to any potential issues and to seek assurances that the Directorate has the resources to deliver what it is required.

The Committee agreed that this concern was paramount and recommended that an extraordinary meeting be requested, before the Committee scrutinises any further reports from the Directorate scheduled on the draft outline FWP. They requested that that the Chief Executive, Leader and Cabinet, and appropriate Finance Officers be invited to this extraordinary meeting with the explicit aim of seeking assurances and, if needed, working together to identify potential solutions.

2. The Committee require assurance that the proposed topics scheduled in the draft Outline FWP are achievable before further consideration and agreement of their FWP.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee approved the FWP in Appendix A, subject to the addition of the above, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP,

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Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and any updates from the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of COSC.

41. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 18:10