

# Public Document Pack

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

### Bridgend County Borough Council



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

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

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



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

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 644099 / 643513

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date:** Thursday, 11 April 2024

Dear Councillor,

#### **COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Council will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB /remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Wednesday, 17 April 2024 at 16:00.**

#### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest  
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest from Members/Officers in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 5 - 16  
To receive for approval the minutes of 28/02/2024
4. Presentation to Council by Representatives of BAVO 17 - 18
5. To receive announcements from:  
(i) Mayor (or person presiding)  
(ii) Members of the Cabinet  
(iii) Chief Executive
6. To receive announcements by the Leader
7. Town and Community Council Size Policy April 2024 19 - 24
8. School Modernisation Programme - Bryntirion Comprehensive School - Four classroom extension, Highway Works 25 - 30
9. Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2024-2025 31 - 60
10. Disclosure and Barring Service Policy 61 - 78
11. Information Report For Noting 79 - 96

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12. To receive the following Questions from:  
**Question from Councillor T Thomas to the Cabinet Member – Climate Change and the Environment**

What progress has the Cabinet Member made in improving children's playing parks in the County Borough?

**Question from Councillor S Bletsoe to the Cabinet Member – Housing, Planning and Regeneration**

The Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan was released in December 2021, stating that “The plan identifies a series of ambitious and deliverable projects. To achieve the overall vision and regenerate Bridgend Town Centre over the next 10 years”.

We are now 28 months since the Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan was released and it details a number of short, mid and long term deliverable projects that it hopes to achieve.

In the Cabinet Members opinion, which of the of these projects will be delivered in the 10-year lifespan of the masterplan.

13. Notice of Motions Proposed by: 1) Councillor Alex Williams and 2) Councillor J Gebbie

**1) Motion for Debate: Towards a more sustainable and resilient system of local government funding**

That this Council:

- Notes that there has been a major sustained failure to properly fund local government;
- Notes that Bridgend County Borough Council’s future budget position is challenging, and that further significant budget reductions will be highly likely over the course of the medium term financial strategy which will have a negative impact on the provision of core services and the wellbeing of our residents;
- Calls on central government to implement a fairer and simplified funding formula which ends the series of ad hoc one-year settlements and ring-fenced competitive bidding;
- Calls on central government to consider the viability of moving towards a more sustainable and resilient system of local government funding which:
  - (1) redistributes funds between local authorities more closely in line with an assessment of need; and
  - (2) assigns a fixed percentage of national tax revenues to local authorities.
- Calls on the Welsh Government to establish a formalised standing Commission to act as a liaison between local and central government to consider any developing central government policies which would affect local government competencies and ensure that all national legislative commitments are fully funded.

**2) Notice of Motion: Protected Characteristics for Care Experienced People**

Bridgend County Borough Council acknowledges that the Children and Young People's Education Committee established by the Senedd Welsh Parliament recommended that care experience becomes a protected characteristic in UK legislation and has signed up to the Corporate Parenting Charter in Wales which the Welsh Government has recently published inviting other public sectors organisations to become a Corporate Parent for care experienced children and young people in Wales. This motion further extends Bridgend County Borough Council's commitment to care experienced children and young people to the principles, priorities and promises enshrined within the Bridgend Corporate Parenting Strategy.

**This council recognises that:**

- Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives;
- Despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account;
- Care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system;
- Care experienced people may encounter inconsistent support in different geographical areas;
- As corporate parents, councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us as an authority;
- As corporate parents Bridgend County Borough Council will commit to acting as mentors, hearing the voices of care experienced children and young people and to consider their needs in any aspect of council work;
- Councillors will be champions of the children in our care and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society;

**This Council therefore resolves:**

- That it recognises that care experienced people are a group who are likely to face discrimination;
- That it recognises that Bridgend County Borough Council have a duty to put the needs of disadvantaged people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration;
- That future decision, services and policies made and adopted by the Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a protected characteristic.
- That in the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council includes care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a protected characteristic in services and employment.

- To formally call upon all other bodies to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
- For the council to continue proactively seeking out and listening to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies based on their views.

14. Urgent Items

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

Note: This will be a Hybrid meeting and Members and Officers will be attending in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Angel Street Bridgend / Remotely via Microsoft Teams. 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 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643696

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

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

Councillors:

S Aspey  
H T Bennett  
A R Berrow  
F D Bletsoe  
S J Bletsoe  
JPD Blundell  
E L P Caparros  
N Clarke  
RJ Collins  
HJ David  
C Davies  
C L C Davies  
P Davies  
S Easterbrook  
M J Evans  
N Farr  
P Ford

Councillors

J Gebbie  
W R Goode  
RM Granville  
H Griffiths  
S J Griffiths  
G Haines  
D T Harrison  
M L Hughes  
D M Hughes  
RM James  
P W Jenkins  
M R John  
M Jones  
MJ Kearns  
W J Kendall  
M Lewis  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins

Councillors

J E Pratt  
R J Smith  
JC Spanswick  
I M Spiller  
T Thomas  
JH Tildesley MBE  
G Walter  
A Wathan  
A Williams  
AJ Williams  
HM Williams  
I Williams  
MJ Williams  
R Williams  
E D Winstanley  
T Wood

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BUDGET COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB /REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor W Kendall – Mayor/Chairperson

S Aspey	H T Bennett	A R Berrow	F D Bletsoe
S J Bletsoe	JPD Blundell	E L P Caparros	N Clarke
RJ Collins	HJ David	C Davies	P Davies
S Easterbrook	M J Evans	N Farr	P Ford
J Gebbie	W R Goode	RM Granville	H Griffiths
S J Griffiths	D T Harrison	M L Hughes	D M Hughes
RM James	P W Jenkins	M R John	M Jones
MJ Kearn	T Wood	M Lewis	RL Penhale-Thomas
J E Pratt	R J Smith	JC Spanswick	I M Spiller
T Thomas	JH Tildesley MBE	G Walter	A Wathan
A Williams	AJ Williams	HM Williams	I Williams
MJ Williams	R Williams	E D Winstanley	

Officers:

Mark Shephard – Chief Executive  
Claire Marchant – Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing  
Lindsay Harvey – Corporate Director – Education and Family Support  
Janine Nightingale – Corporate Director – Communities  
Carys Lord – Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change  
Kelly Watson – Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory, HR and Corporate Policy  
Laura Griffiths – Group Manager – Legal and Democratic Services  
Rachel Keepins – Democratic Services Manager  
Mark Galvin – Senior Democratic Services Officer – Committees  
Michael Pitman – Democratic Services Officer – Technical  
Deborah Exton – Group Manager – Finance  
Nigel Smith – Chief Accountant -

**Mayor's announcement**

Prior to considering the formal business on the agenda, the Mayor announced with some considerable sadness of the death of former County Borough Councillor David White who had passed away following an illness. David had formerly also been Mayor of Bridgend Town Council. The Group Leaders of the Council each in turn, paid tribute to Mr. White and all those present in the meeting stood for a minutes silence as a mark of respect to this highly regarded former Councillor.

**10. Apologies for absence**

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Llewellyn-Hopkins and Chris Davies
Date Decision Made	No decision made

**11. Declarations of Interest**

Decision Made	The following personal declarations of interest were made:-  Councillor RM Granville – Agenda item 5 as a School Governor Councillor J Gebbie – Agenda item 5 as a School Governor Councillor JP Blundell – Agenda item 3 as a School Governor Councillor H Bennett – Agenda item 3 as her employer organisation are noted in the proposed budget cuts Councillor M Williams – Agenda item 3 as a School Governor at Litchard Primary School and Agenda item 4 as a member of Coity Higher and St. Brides Minor Community Councils Councillor E Winstanley – Agenda items 3 and 6 as an employee at Arwen Cultural Trust and Agenda item 5 as a School Governor at two schools within her Ward area Councillor J Pratt – Agenda item 3 as his wife is a teacher in a Bridgend County Borough School and a trade union representative Councillor Amanda Williams – Agenda item 5 as Chairperson of the Governing Body of Coity Primary School
Date Decision Made	No decision made

**12. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024-25 to 2027-28**

<p>Decision Made</p>	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to seek Council approval of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28, attached at Annex 3 (along with associated appendices), which includes a financial forecast for 2024-28, a detailed revenue budget for 2024-25 and a Capital Programme for 2024-25 to 2033-34.</p> <p>The proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the spending priorities for the Council for the next 4 years alongside a detailed budget for 2024-25.</p> <p>She gave a comprehensive resume of the report, highlighting amongst other points the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The financial, legislative and policy context within which the draft budget has been prepared alongside more detailed information on the services to be provided by the Council over the period of the MTFS.</li> <li>• The proposed MTFS being driven by the Council's 13 MTFS principles, along with additional budget principles requested by Cabinet for the forthcoming financial year and has been developed by Cabinet and Corporate Management Board, taking into account discussions with, and the recommendations of, the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel and the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.</li> <li>• Welsh Government announced its draft budget on 19 December 2023 before the announcement of the provisional local government settlement on 20 December 2023.</li> <li>• In terms of the provisional local government settlement, the all-Wales increase in Aggregate External Funding (AEF) was 3.1%. The increase for Bridgend was 3%.</li> <li>• No information was provided on future years' funding although indications are it will still be extremely challenging.</li> <li>• There were no transfers for new responsibilities or specific grants into the provisional local government settlement.</li> <li>• The proposed budget for 2024-25 is £359.725 million, and this includes budget pressures of £11.856 million, budget reductions of £13.045 million and a council tax increase of 9.5%. The breakdown of the budget for 2024-25 was set out in Table 10 to the report.</li> <li>• The MTFS sets out a most likely savings target of £44.882 million over the next 4 financial years.</li> <li>• The Council's general capital funding decreased by £28,000 to £7.980 million.</li> <li>• The Section 151 officer has a statutory duty to set a balanced and robust budget.</li> <li>• The final settlement is not due to be announced until the end of February. As a result of this, the budget was being proposed on the basis of the provisional settlement received in December 2023. Changes in the Final Settlement, such as the transfer in of specific grants, and additional funding, will be reported to Council in due course, but will not affect the council tax level.</li> </ul> <p>In conclusion the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change stressed to Members how challenging this</p>
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	<p>year's budget had been to set a balanced budget.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader echoed the above and extended his thanks to Finance Officers for setting a balanced budget and Members also for their valid contribution to this through the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) and the overview and scrutiny process. He also thanked the general public, over 2,000 of which, had given their views on the Council's MTFs proposals, some of which had been taken on board. He reminded Council that the Authority provided over 800 functions (as part of its services), that included education for around 23,000 pupils and key support for the most vulnerable, for example, children with Additional Learning Needs and expensive Out of County Placements.</p> <p>The Leader and the Deputy Leader in turn also thanked Members across all parties for their contributions, including the recommendations of BREP via O&amp;S Committees. They advised that the budget this year had been harder than any in previous years to set. Some of the recommendations made through the scrutiny process had been agreed to, but unfortunately it had not been possible to accommodate all of these, due to the level of cuts that overall had to be made. The Deputy Leader stressed in particular the different number of pressures being experienced in relation to Social Services, cautiously warning, that these showed no signs of reducing in future years at the present time.</p> <p>Members then posed a number of questions and concerns to the Cabinet and Officers, particularly the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change, for example:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concern was expressed in the level of Council Tax increase, particularly if that this level of increase continued in future years, it would possibly lead to people becoming homeless due to them being unable to pay this and other utility bills. It was therefore considered that these should be both measured and proportionate going forward;</li><li>• A Member acknowledged the impact of around 14 years of UK Government cuts forced upon local authorities during the period of austerity and some of the the planned aims and objectives set by the Council that have had to be deferred or put off completely during this time, due to lack of resources. This had amounted to around £75m or 25% of the Council's total budget (in this period).</li><li>• A Member felt that the percentage cut (ie 3%) to the Education (Schools) budget would result in schools having deficit budgets which would then further result in them having to put together Deficit Recovery Plans over a 3 or 5 year period, which they may not be able to financially meet, with further cuts anticipated over the coming years.</li><li>• There were too many Red/Amber risks marked as potential savings that were required to be made (in the RAG status) in future years. What if these cannot be made/achieved?</li><li>• A Member noted that with the Council having an overspend this year of around £10m, with a probable risk of a further overspend being incurred next financial year, he urged officers, to look at</li></ul>
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	<p>what the Council could do differently next year and in future years, to minimise such overspends taking place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Member acknowledged the pressure Members were under, particularly with having commitments outside the local authority, for example also being members of outside bodies, other organisations and being also Town/Community Councillors, etc. She asked how their wellbeing was being gauged and supported;</li> <li>• A Member asked the Cabinet Member – Resources to consider agreeing in ensuring that the finer detail of the proposals set out in the draft Budget for 2025/26 will form part of the questions in next years public consultation exercise (on the MTFS);</li> <li>• A Member hoped that the local authority would put a plan in place to reduce the level of expenditure that is committed to supporting the homeless in the County Borough;</li> <li>• A Member asked that, notwithstanding that the Council has a statutory duty to provide a whole host of different services, would the Cabinet agree that, to all intents and purposes the process next year will begin from a zero-based budget position;</li> <li>• A Member raised some concern regarding the amount of Consultants the Council were currently using, which amounted to a total of around 23. This was an increase to that which the Authority had previously used at a given time. He sought assurance that we were having value for money through the use of these, as well as asking what checks and balances were in place to ensuring they were value for money;</li> <li>• A Members considered that the time for local government reform was now due as all local authorities were experiencing budget pressures and that representations to that effect should be made by the local authority through the appropriate channels;</li> <li>• Members were pleased to note that the Bridgend Bus station would not be the subject of closure, as part of the MTFS proposals;</li> </ul> <p>Members at the conclusion of debate on this item, voted unanimously for an electronic vote on the report’s recommendations.</p> <p>Following conclusion of this the result of the vote was as follows:-</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;"><u>For</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Against</u></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><u>Abstentions</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">26</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council approved the MTFS 2024-25 to 2027-28, including the 2024-25 revenue budget and the Capital</p>	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>	26	20	2
<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>					
26	20	2					

	<p>Programme 2023-24 to 2033-34. In particular it approved the following specific elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MTFS 2024-25 to 2027-28 (Annex 3 of the report).</li> <li>• The Net Budget Requirement of £359,725,154 in 2024-25.</li> <li>• A Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,834.41 for 2024-25 (at Table 15 of the MTFS report).</li> <li>• The 2024-25 budgets as allocated in accordance with Table 10 in paragraph 4.1.3 of the MTFS report.</li> <li>• The Capital Programme 2023-24 to 2033-34, attached at Appendix G of the MTFS report.</li> </ul>
Date Decision Made	28 February 2024

**13. Council Tax 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report, the purpose of which, was to provide Council with details of the council tax requirement for the County Borough Council, following Council having approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy on 28 February 2024, together with the requirements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and Town and Community Councils, and to ask the Council to note the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band for 2024-25.</p> <p>She explained that Paragraph 3.1.2 (g) of the Financial Procedure Rules (FPRs) requires her to recommend the level of Council Tax to be levied for the forthcoming year. The Council as the local authority for the area, also has to fulfil its requirement under Section 33 and 34 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p> <p>The following were key points that should be noted from the report:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Council Tax requirement is £124,495,342.</li> <li>• The total Council Tax requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council is £101,746,816.</li> <li>• The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales precept is £19,561,085.</li> <li>• The total Council Tax requirement from Town and Community Councils is £3,187,441.</li> <li>• The Bridgend County Borough Council Band D equivalent is £1,834.41.</li> <li>• The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales Band D equivalent is £352.67.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average Community/Town Council precept is £57.47.</li> <li>• The increases in council tax are:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Bridgend County Borough Council 9.5%</li> <li>o Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales 8.69%</li> <li>o Average Town and Community Council 9.11%</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> Subject to Council’s earlier approval of the proposed net budget requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council of £101,746,816 for 2024-25 and a Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,834.41 for 2024-25. Council agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note the level of the precept from the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales, as set out in Table 3.</li> <li>• note the total Council Tax charges for Band D properties for 2024-25 for each of the Community Council areas as outlined in Table 6 and the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band as outlined in Appendix A to the report.</li> </ul>
Date Decision Made	28 February 2024

**14. Capital Strategy 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance. Housing and Change presented a report, which advised that, the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules (paragraph 3.5.1) required the Chief Finance Officer to prepare a Capital Strategy for submission to the Council for approval prior to the start of the financial year. The Strategy must demonstrate that capital expenditure and investment decisions are in line with service objectives and properly take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability.</p> <p>The Capital Strategy must comply with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.</p> <p>The purpose of the report she added, was to present to Council for approval, the Capital Strategy 2024-25</p>
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to 2033-34, which includes the Prudential Indicators and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2024-25.

The Capital Strategy sets guiding principles for capital expenditure, and a framework for the management of capital finance, while the Capital Strategy is currently based on financial information as reported in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The Capital Strategy was shown at Appendix A to the report.

Members made the following comments that were responded to by Officers and/or the appropriate member of Cabinet:-

- With reference to paragraph 3.1.2 of the report and the Table illustrated there, why are BCBC committing £944k of the Revenue budget to the Capital Programme. This is equivalent to a 1% increase in Council Tax or a 1% cut to the Council's Education budget, in order to finance the Capital Programme, at a time when we have a £33.4m slippage from the current year to the next year;
- A Member referred to the newly introduced Capital Programme Board which would focus on key projects particularly those associated with slippage in the Capital Programme. He suggested that this Board should have decision making powers and also have as its membership the presence of members of the Cabinet. He further added that consideration should also be given for this Board to have an oversight of the Capital Programme as a whole, as opposed to solely concentrating on certain individual projects;
- A Member was encouraged to see as part of the report's proposals, the further progression of the Council's School Modernisation Programme and more particularly, the new build of schools in the area of Cornelly.

In respect of bullet point 1. above and the £944k Revenue contribution to the Capital Programme, the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change confirmed that she would send a breakdown of this to all Members, including details of the individual schemes and the financial contribution to these outside of the meeting. Some of the contributions came from schools or are works that are capital in nature and are therefore shown in the Capital Programme but were funded from an existing Revenue budget. These accounted for £668k of the £944k shown for 2023/2024.

These contributions will all have been agreed by members through the regular update report to Council.

Finally, she stated that an additional £0.221m had been added to the programme in relation to a range of planned minor works, which were of a capital rather than a revenue in nature, so these had now been included as part of the Capital Programme. These would be funded from the existing revenue minor works budget.

	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council approved the Capital Strategy 2024-25 to 2033-34, including the Prudential Indicators 2024-25 to 2033-34 and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2024-25 at Appendix A to the report.</p>
Date Decision Made	28 February 2024

**15. Treasury Management Strategy 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report, seeking Council approval of the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) 2024-25, which includes the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Borrowing Strategy 2024-25</li> <li>o Treasury Investment Strategy 2024-25</li> <li>o Treasury Management Indicators for the period 2024-25 to 2026-27.</li> </ul> <p>The proposed Treasury Management Strategy was attached at Appendix A to the report.</p> <p>She explained that Paragraph 22.2 of the Finance Procedure Rules (FPRs) requires that the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for preparing and presenting an annual Treasury Management Strategy to Council for approval. Paragraph 22.3 of the FPR’s within the Council’s Constitution also requires that all investments and borrowing transactions shall be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy, as approved by Council.</p> <p>In terms of an Executive summary of the report, this was as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Treasury Management Strategy 2024-25 (TMS) incorporates the Borrowing Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Indicators.</li> <li>• The Council’s treasury activities are regulated by legislation and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Code of Practice. The Council operates within these requirements.</li> <li>• Council is required to approve the TMS in advance of the financial year.</li> </ul> <p>A Member sought assurance that in light of some other Council’s struggling with their finances, that the</p>
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	<p>Council’s investments with certain other local authorities are safe and secure, given the financial instabilities organisations across the UK have been experiencing now for some considerable time.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change, confirmed that the Finance Department are led by Financial Management Journals and their Treasury Management advisors in relation to where to invest money and the Authority also closely looked how much it was investing at any one time and for what length of time also, in order to minimise any risk associated with the investment.</p> <p>A Member also asked what affect the change in interest rates had had on BCBC over the recent period and this was responded to by the Group Manager – Chief Accountant.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council approved the Treasury Management Strategy 2024-25 including the Treasury Management Indicators 2024-25 to 2026-27 at Appendix A to the report.</p>
Date Decision Made	28 February 2024

**16. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	There were no urgent items.
Date Decision Made	No decision made

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this link (to be inserted following translation)

# Agenda Item 4

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BRIDGEND ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (BAVO)</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MARK GALVIN SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – COMMITTEES</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>The report and accompanying presentation will update Council on the latest work and developments of the above organisation and partner of the Council, as well as to outline to Members similar presentations to be given to future meetings of Council, by other Stakeholders.</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council of a presentation proposed to be delivered by representatives of the Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO).

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Council will be accustomed to receiving presentations from its key partners and stakeholders periodically in the past.

## **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 The presentation will be given to Council at its April meeting by the Operations and Partnership Manager of BAVO and colleagues.
- 3.2 Further presentations will be scheduled periodically for future Council meetings from partner organisations and agencies, with the next two scheduled being Halo (June meeting) and Welsh Water (July meeting).

## **Language)**

- 4.1 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.

## **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

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

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 That Council is recommended to note the presentation as referred to at paragraph 3.1 of the report.

## **Background documents**

None.



# Agenda Item 7

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>REVIEW OF COMMUNITIES – TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL SIZE POLICY</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>GARY ENNIS GROUP MANAGER BUSINESS SUPPORT</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Terms of Reference for the review of town and community council arrangements, approved by Council on the 21st June 2023, noted that that there is not necessarily an ideal fixed size, but that a community council will need to be of a large enough size to make it viable as an administrative unit of local government and therefore able to support any future collaboration with the Council.</b></li> <li>• <b>Following initial consultation, having a clear policy on the size of a community council would assist the drafting of proposals in liaison with the Member panel.</b></li> <li>• <b>There is some evidence of democracy deficit in all of the community councils with less than 5,000 electors i.e. all but one ward were uncontested at the Local Elections in May 2022.</b></li> <li>• <b>It is proposed to have an ideal minimum size of electorate for a community council to be in the region of 5,000 electors with an upper electorate limit in the region of 10,000 electors, and for town councils to have a minimum electorate in the region of 9,000 but with no maximum limit.</b></li> <li>• <b>Existing community councils with smaller electorates may need to be abolished and merged with other community councils, but the intention will always be to maintain their identities within the new larger community council. This will be achieved, as far as it is practical to do so, by maintaining their boundaries as a ward in the new community council as well as considering, in</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>exceptional circumstances, increasing the representation of the abolished community council on the new council.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community councils with an electorate in excess of the maximum electorate may be abolished to create 2 new separate community councils, but this will be achieved without splitting existing wards i.e. maintaining the existing identity of individual wards from the original council.</b></li> <li>• <b>In setting the ratio of councillors to electors, it is proposed to use the Aston Business School guidelines published in 1992 to provide a level of flexibility when determining the ratios.</b></li> <li>• <b>Once approved, the draft proposals for the new town and community council arrangements from May 2027 will go out for consultation. Following a period of analysis of representations received from the consultation, which will be shared with the Member panel, a report on the final proposals will be brought back to full Council.</b></li> </ul>
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## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider a town and community council size policy to assist with the review of town and community councils currently underway.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 At the Council meeting on the 21st June 2023, the Council approved the Terms of Reference for a review of community arrangements of all town and community councils in the Bridgend Council area.
- 2.2 An initial consultation exercise has been undertaken and a Member panel has met to consider all the responses to the consultation and look at options for changing boundaries, creating, abolishing and/or amending the current town and community council areas.
- 2.3 To assist the deliberations of the Member panel it is necessary for Council to approve a town and community council size policy.

## **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 Under the current structure there are four town councils and sixteen community councils. The last review of town and community councils did not consider minimum or maximum electorate levels and only made minor amendments to the existing structure at that time.

- 3.2 The Terms of Reference for the current review approved by Council on the 21st June 2023, noted that that there is not necessarily an ideal fixed size, but that a community council will need to be of a large enough size to make it viable as an administrative unit of local government and therefore able to support any future collaboration with the Council. With Council budgets being under considerable pressure for the foreseeable future, the role of town and community councils is likely to become more important in delivering local services in this collaborative approach and therefore having a clear policy on the size of a community council would assist the current review.
- 3.3 In general, larger community councils can have substantial staff teams and budgets and are better placed to manage parks and open spaces, footpaths, and community facilities as well as cemeteries and other local amenities. Smaller ones do not have this capacity, therefore in order to raise sufficient funds from their precepts to maximise economies of scale and have a collaborative approach with the Council, it may be beneficial to set an approximate electorate size. This will mean that smaller community councils may need to be merged with others to create larger community councils but not so large that they become much bigger than our town councils. There will always be flexibility here, and maintaining the identity of such communities is clearly important as is making sure they maintain an appropriate level of representation within the larger community council. Having a smaller number of larger community councils alongside town councils will maintain an effective and convenient tier of local government i.e. they are of a size that is viable as an administrative unit of local government.
- 3.4 At the Local Government elections in May 2022, of the sixteen community councils nine had an electorate of under 5,000 electors and, apart from one ward, all were uncontested; see Table 1 below. This is an indication of a democratic deficit in that there is a potential lack of democracy when seats are uncontested.

Table 1 – Community Councils under 5,000 electorate at May 2022 Local Elections

Community Council	Electorate	Seats	May 2022 Election Outcome
Merthyr Mawr	234	7	Uncontested
Llangynwyd Lower	381	7	Uncontested
Coychurch Higher	718	7	Uncontested
Coychurch Lower	1120	7	Uncontested
Cefn Cribwr	1187	10	Uncontested
Llangynwyd Middle	2321	12	Uncontested
Ynysawdre	2749	10	Uncontested
Newcastle Higher	3368	12	Aberkenfig ward Uncontested
St Brides Minor	4950	13	Uncontested

- 3.5 It is proposed, therefore, to have an ideal minimum size of electorate for a community council to be in the region of 5,000 electors with an upper electorate limit in the region of 10,000 electors, and for town councils to have a minimum electorate in the region of 9,000 but with no maximum limit.
- 3.6 Existing community councils with smaller electorates may need to be abolished and merged with other community councils but, as mentioned above, the intention will always be to maintain their identities within the new larger community council. This

will be achieved, as far as it is practical to do so, by maintaining their boundaries as a ward in the new community council as well as considering, in exceptional circumstances, increasing the representation of the abolished community council on the new council, albeit the councillor to elector ratio would be much lower than other wards on the new council. Each case would need to be assessed on its merits and in the interest of democracy. Where a community council have an electorate in excess of the maximum electorate, there may be a need to abolish the existing community council and create 2 new separate community councils, but this will be achieved without splitting existing wards i.e. maintaining the existing identity of individual wards from the original council.

- 3.7 In setting the ratio of councillors to electors, it is proposed to use the Aston Business School guidelines published in 1992 to provide a level of flexibility when determining the ratios. Their guidance is set out below in Table 2: -

**Table 2 – Ratio of Councillors to Electors**

<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Councillor Allocation</b>
Less than 500	5 – 8
501 – 2,500	6 – 12
2,501 – 10,000	9 – 16
10,001 – 20,000	13 – 27
Greater than 20,000	13 - 31

- 3.8 Warding of town and community councils will continue to be appropriate. Where they are warded, there will need to be parity in the ratio of councillors to electors amongst the wards in each town and community council albeit some flexibility may be required where mergers have taken place. This will ensure appropriate representation of abolished smaller communities councils in the new council.
- 3.9 Once the town and community size policy is approved, the draft proposals for the new town and community council arrangements from May 2027 will go out for consultation. Following a period of analysis of representations received from the consultation, which will be shared with the Member panel, a report on the final proposals will be brought back to full council.
- 4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**
- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.
- 5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**
- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.
- 6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications from this report.

**7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent implications from this report.

**8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial impacts from this report.

**9. Recommendation**

9.1 Council is asked to approve the town and community council size policy set out in this report which will form the baseline for drafting the proposed town and community council structure to go out for consultation.

**Background documents**

None

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROGRAMME BRYNTIRION COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL – FOUR- CLASSROOM BLOCK – HIGHWAY WORKS</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT AND THE CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>GAYNOR THOMAS – SCHOOLS PROGRAMME MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon policy framework or procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>Active travel/highway improvements have been conditioned as part of the planning consent in respect of a scheme for additional accommodation at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.</b></p> <p><b>A funding bid for these works was submitted to Welsh Government. However, the bid was unsuccessful. Consequently, the local authority will need to fund the works so that the building can be brought into beneficial use.</b></p> <p><b>Council approval is sought to vire School Modernisation budgets within the capital programme for this purpose and to include the active travel/highway improvements as a separate scheme in the capital programme.</b></p>

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report seeks Council approval to:

- vire £141k of capital budgets detailed in this report for the purpose of active travel/highway improvements associated with the delivery of a four-classroom block at Bryntirion Comprehensive School; and
- include a scheme for active travel/highway improvements in respect of Bryntirion Comprehensive School in the capital programme with a budget of £141k.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The availability of school places at Bryntirion Comprehensive School is an issue. Based on Welsh Government's Circular number 021/2011 'Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales' the school is currently operating at capacity.
- 2.2 There are a number of housing developments within the school's catchment area that have been/are in the process of being built. The local authority has entered into section (s) 106 agreements and has secured education contributions for pupil places to serve those developments. A scheme for additional accommodation at Bryntirion Comprehensive School, which is partly funded by s106, is included in the approved capital programme and the construction element of the project is currently subject to a tender process.

## 3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 Planning approval for the teaching block stipulated that active travel/highway improvements shall be implemented in permanent materials before the accommodation is brought into beneficial use. The estimated cost of the scheme (that is, works and professional fees) is £121k.
- 3.2 Active travel/highway improvement grant funding opportunities were identified and the Communities Directorate submitted a funding bid to Welsh Government which included the improvements identified in the planning conditions, as part of a wider bid in respect of the Bryntirion area. However, officers have now advised that the improvements associated with the Bryntirion Comprehensive School scheme cannot be incorporated into the wider active travel programme in the Bryntirion area this financial year. Notwithstanding this, as active travel/highway improvements are a planning condition, the local authority will need to progress those works so that the teaching block can be brought into beneficial use.
- 3.3 There are a number of school modernisation schemes within the capital programme, and technical officers have advised that no further expenditure is anticipated on these projects:

Gateway to the Valleys	£32k
Garw Valley primary highways	£30k
Mynydd Cynffig Primary School – mobile classrooms	£79k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£141k</b>

- 3.4 In January 2024, Cabinet/Corporate Management Board (CCMB) was advised of the funding bid (detailed in paragraph 3.2) and agreed that, should the funding bid be unsuccessful, school modernisation budgets could be re-purposed to address the active travel/highway improvements, subject to Council approval.
- 3.5 Construction of the additional accommodation at Bryntirion Comprehensive School is anticipated to be completed by January 2025, with the building being available for occupation in February 2025.

## 4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)



- 4.1 A full equality impact assessment (EIA) has been conducted as part of the development of this proposal. The full EIA considers the impact of the proposal on the nine protected characteristics, the Socio-economic Duty, and the use of the Welsh Language.
- 4.2 The EIA has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language.

## 5. **Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment provides a comprehensive summary of the outcomes expected from the implementation of the service.

Long-term	This scheme has been identified through a collaborative strategic approach with officers from key departments of the Council including the Education and Family Support Directorate and Corporate Landlord Department. A strategic group considered the fit with local and national strategy, outcomes for learners and families, and economic considerations. The scheme addresses the Council's statutory duty to provide pupil places and support the day-to-day operation of the school.
Prevention	Provision of places at schools is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure there is a sufficient overall supply and there is suitable accommodation to deliver the curriculum effectively. This scheme aims to address capacity issues arising from additional housing being constructed within the immediate and surrounding areas and has been identified to ensure that pupil places can be delivered in the future. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient supply of school places, and this scheme will safeguard the Council's position in terms of any potential legal challenge in this regard.
Integration	Providing sufficient places at Bryntirion Comprehensive School ensures that the curriculum can be delivered and meets the social, environmental, and cultural objectives of pupils and the community it will serve. This scheme will promote inclusion. Construction was competitively tendered to achieve best value for money via a procurement process conducted on Sell2Wales in accordance with the local authority's contract procedure rules and managed on ETenderWales. Tenders will be based on the 'most economical and advantageous tender' (that is, 30% quality and 70% cost). This approach provides opportunities for local companies to engage, thus supporting economic activity in the area. Community benefits will be maximised.

Collaboration	The local authority collaborates effectively with stakeholders which includes schools, Estyn, Central South Consortium, and many internal and external partners to ensure that the building meets needs of the users and the community which it will serve. Officers have collaborated with technical colleagues developing the scheme to ensure that the building design is sustainable and energy efficient. The project team will ensure that the scheme will work effectively, to maximise the use of resource and capitalise on the expenditure ensuring it meets the needs of current and future generations.
Involvement	Stakeholders include Cabinet, members, school governors, staff, pupils, the community, and internal and external partners. Regular email updates and Microsoft Teams meetings, as well as in-person meetings have been held with stakeholders, as required.

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 The local authority's 'Bridgend 2030 – Net Zero Carbon Strategy' and Welsh Government's carbon reduction commitments will also be addressed through the School Modernisation Programme, as all new provision will be designed to ensure that it is Net Zero Carbon 'in operation' and embodied carbon targets are achieved.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 Bridgend County Borough Council is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity through all our services and dedicated to treating all citizens, employees and visitors with respect, while providing services which respond to people's individual needs.
- 7.2 The Education and Family Support Directorate (EFS) Strategic Plan 2023-2026 ensures that equality and fairness remain firmly at the heart of how the council plans, provides, and delivers important services to the people of Bridgend County Borough.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Active travel and highway improvements (consisting of a number of dropped kerbs and signage) have been conditioned through the planning process. Technical officers have advised that a budget of £121k for works, professional fees and an allowance for inflation is required to deliver active travel/highway improvements relating to the Bryntirion Comprehensive School scheme. The proposed virement of uncommitted school modernisation budgets of £141k, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of this report, is considered sufficient to meet the anticipated cost of these improvements along with a contingency sum of £20k.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 It is recommended that Council approve the following:

v1.0

- to vire £141k of capital budgets detailed in this report for the purpose of active travel /highway improvements associated with the delivery of the four-classroom block at Bryntirion Comprehensive School; and
- to include a separate scheme for active travel/highway improvements in respect of Bryntirion Comprehensive School in the capital programme, with a budget of £141k.

**Background documents**

None

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# Agenda Item 9

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY PLAN FOR 2024 / 25</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>ALEX RAWLIN POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>Council’s priorities in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan inform Service Plans which form part of the Policy Framework. The Performance Framework forms part of the Policy Framework.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>This report sets out a draft Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2024-25 to reflect agreed budgets. It asks Council to approve –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>• The proposed one-year draft delivery plan</b></li><li><b>• Work required to improve the council’s use of service user perspectives.</b></li></ul>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a proposed one-year Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (CPDP) for 2024-25 for Council approval.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) currently has a high level, five-year Corporate Plan 2023-28. The Council took a new approach for 2023-24 and did not include commitments or performance indicators in the Corporate Plan. Instead, the Council developed a one-year delivery plan so it could be more agile and flexible to the changing operating environment.

## **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 Council approved the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28 at its meeting on 28 February 2024, including a detailed budget for 2024-25. Council officers have used the budget information to review the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2023-24 and propose the draft Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2024-25 in **Appendix 1**. The Plan has been scrutinised by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) twice, at their meetings on 30 January 2024 and 19 March 2024.

- 3.2 To prepare the updated delivery plan, Directorate Management Teams (DMTs) reviewed the 2023-24 Corporate Plan Delivery Plan to identify –
- Unfunded commitments for removal
  - Partly funded commitments for updating
  - Unfunded / unstaffed areas of business as usual where performance indicators should be removed
  - Unfunded / unstaffed areas of business as usual where performance indicators' targets will need to be changed
  - New priority areas of work to be added (from within the directorate or from previous COSC feedback)
- 3.3 Their findings were discussed and moderated at a meeting of Heads of Service / Corporate Management Board on 31 January 2024. Further changes were made and incorporated into the Plan.
- 3.4 This process has led to a small number of elements of the previous CPDP being removed. The plan is now made up of:
- 7 wellbeing objectives
  - 42 aims, supported by:
    - 84 commitments
    - 88 performance indicators.
- 3.5 In addition to the review of priorities in light of financial pressures, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee also considered:
- The committee's proposals for additional indicators throughout the year,
  - Audit Wales' views of the council's use of service user perspectives.
- 3.6 COSC agreed to work with the Corporate Performance Team during the early part of 2024-25 to consider how best to improve the council's use of service user perspectives to inform decision making, by developing a small suite of service user perspective performance indicators.
- 4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**
- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening included at **Appendix 2**, has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.
- 5. Wellbeing of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Wellbeing Objectives**

5.1 This report proposes updates to the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that form part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28:

1. A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable
2. A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
3. A County Borough with thriving valleys communities
4. A County Borough where we help people meet their potential
5. A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
6. A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
7. A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

5.2 The 5 ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act have also contributed to the Council developing its own five ways of working. The ways of driving and measuring those ways of working is also contained in the proposed draft Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 There are no specific implications of this report on climate change. However, the proposed draft Corporate Plan Delivery Plan proposes measures and targets to help us assess the Council's performance on areas including climate change.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 There are no specific implications of this report on safeguarding or corporate parenting. However, the proposed draft Corporate Plan Delivery Plan proposes measures and targets to help us assess the Council's performance on areas including safeguarding and corporate parenting.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 Review of the Corporate Priorities has been undertaken in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28 and the funding set out therein.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 It is recommended that Council:

- Approves the proposed Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2024-25 as set out in **Appendix 1**.
- Considers the proposed work of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to support the Corporate Performance Team looking at how best to measure service user perspectives as part of the Council's performance management framework.

## **Background documents**

None



## Appendix 1 - Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-25

### How we will measure our 7 Wellbeing Objectives

#### WBO1 - A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
<p>1.1 Providing high-quality children's and adults social services and early help services to people who need them</p>	<p>Carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSWB55 - Percentage of eligible carers who were offered a carer's assessment (SSWB)</li> </ul> <p>Children's social care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSWB78 - Timeliness of visits to                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) children who are care experienced</li> <li>b) children on the child protection register (SSWB)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SSWB39 - Safe reduction in the number of care experienced children (SSWB)</li> <li>• CH/026 - Safe reduction in the number of children on the child protection register (SSWB)</li> </ul> <p>Adult social care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSWB57 - Percentage of enquiries to the Adult Social Care front door which result in information and advice only</li> <li>• SSWB76 - Number of packages of reablement completed during the year (SSWB)</li> <li>• SSWB38 - Percentage of reablement packages completed that                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) reduced the need for support</li> <li>b) maintained the same level of support</li> <li>c) mitigated need for support (SSWB)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SSWB61 - Number of people who access independent advocacy to support their rights with                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children's Social Care</li> <li>b) Adult Social Care (SSWB)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1.1.1 Continue to improve early help services by increasing the number of team around the family (TAF) interventions that close with a positive outcome (SSWB)</p> <p>1.1.2 Help communities become more resilient, so more people will find help / support they need in their community. (SSWB)</p> <p>1.1.3 Support the wellbeing of unpaid carers, including young carers, to have a life beyond caring. (SSWB)</p> <p>1.1.4 Improve Children's Services by delivering the actions in our three-year strategic plan. (SSWB)</p> <p>1.1.5 Improve adult social care with a new three-year strategic plan to tackle physical and mental health impacts of Covid-19 on people with care and support needs, and our workforce. (SSWB)</p> <p>1.1.6 Change the way our social workers work to build on people's strengths and reflect what matters to our most vulnerable citizens, the relationships they have and help them achieve their potential. (SSWB)</p> <p>1.1.7 Address the gaps in social care services such as care and support at home, specialist care homes for children and adults and recruiting more foster families. (SSWB)</p>

<p>Page 36</p>	<p>Early help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEFS29 Percentage of completed Team Around the Family (TAF) plans closed with a successful outcome (SSWB)</li> </ul>	
<p>1.2 Supporting people in poverty to get the support they need / help they are entitled to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CED43 - Percentage of people supported through FASS (Financial Assistance and Support Service) where support has resulted in increased income through claims for additional/increased benefits and allowances (CEX)</li> <li>• CED44 - Percentage of people supported through FASS who have received advice and support in managing or reducing household debt (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>1.2.1 Support eligible residents to receive financial help through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. (CEX)</p> <p>1.2.2 Raise awareness of financial support available to residents. (CEX)</p>
<p>1.3 Supporting people facing homelessness to find a place to live</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAM/012- Percentage of households threatened with homelessness successfully prevented from becoming homeless (CEX)</li> <li>• DOPS39 - Percentage of people presenting as homeless or potentially homeless for whom the Local Authority has a final legal duty to secure suitable accommodation (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>1.3.1 Continue to improve our housing and homelessness service to reduce homelessness across the borough through implementation of the agreed action plan (CEX)</p>
<p>1.4 Supporting children with additional learning needs to get the best from their education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEW - Percentage of new local authority Individual Development Plans (IDPs) delivered via the online IDP system (EFS)</li> </ul>	<p>1.4.1 Implement the online IDP (Individual Development Plan) system for local authority and school-based IDPs.(EFS)</p>
<p>1.5 Safeguarding and protecting people who are at risk of harm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CORPB1 - Percentage of council staff completing safeguarding awareness training (CEX/All)</li> <li>• SSWB77 - Percentage of Adult safeguarding inquiries which receive initial response within 7 working days (SSWB)</li> <li>• CH/003 - Percentage of Childrens referrals where decision is made within 24 hours (SSWB)</li> </ul>	<p>1.5.1 Work as One Council to effectively safeguard children and adults at risk</p> <p>1.5.2 Safeguard children, young people and adults at risk of exploitation. (SSWB)</p>

<p>Page 37</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSWB62 - Percentage of child protection investigations completed within required-timescales (SSWB)</li> <li>SSWB63 Average waiting time on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) waiting list (SSWB)</li> </ul>	
<p>1.6 Help people to live safely at home through changes to their homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CED45 - Average number of days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant for:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>low level access showers</li> <li>stair lifts</li> <li>ramps</li> <li>extensions (CEX)</li> </ol> </li> <li>DOPS41 - Percentage of people who feel they can live more independently as a result of receiving a DFG in their home (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>1.6.1 Improve the process and access to grants for older and disabled people who need to make changes to their home (CEX)</p>
<p>1.7 Support partners to keep communities safe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORPB2 - Percentage of council staff completing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) training (Level 1) (CEX/All)</li> <li>CED46 - Number of instances where CCTV supports South Wales Police in monitoring incidents (CEX)</li> <li>New - Percentage of Assia service users reporting increased feelings of safety at their exit evaluation</li> <li>New – Percentage of high risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 48 hours.</li> <li>New – Percentage of medium risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 72 hours.</li> </ul>	<p>1.7.1 Regionalise the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), creating a single CSP covering the three respective local authority areas, providing strategic oversight for VAWDASV, Contest &amp; Serious Violence (CEX)</p> <p>1.7.2 Identify children who are more likely to offend and provide them with support to reduce offending behaviour. (EFS)</p>

**WBO 2 - A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns**

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
<p>2.1 Helping our residents get the skills they need for work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEFS82 - Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme going into employment (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>2.1.1 Invest £22m of Shared Prosperity Funding in projects in the County Borough by 2025, with third sector partners, including in people and skills, supporting local businesses, and developing communities and place. (COMM)</p> <p>2.1.2 Employability Bridgend will work with funders and partners, including the Inspire to Work Project to deliver a comprehensive employability and skills programme (COMM)</p>
<p>2.2 Making sure our young people find jobs, or are in education or training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEFS80 - The number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme supported into education or training (COMM)</li> <li>PAM046 - Percentage of Year 11 leavers not in education, training, or employment (NEET) in the careers Wales annual destination statistics (EFS)</li> </ul>	<p>2.2.1 Increase employment and training opportunities in the County Borough for young people aged 16 to 24 years old. (COMM)</p> <p>2.2.2 Employ and develop a well-motivated, well supported, qualified social care workforce in the Council and with partners. Fill vacancies in our social care services and reduce dependence on agency workers. (SSWB)</p> <p>2.2.3 Bridgend Music Service will further develop links with partners to explore income generation opportunities and broaden the learning offer where appropriate. (EFS)</p>
<p>2.3 Improving our town centres, making them safer and more attractive</p>		<p>2.3.1 Deliver a further £1.3m of Transforming Towns investment across our town centres in partnership with Welsh Government over the next two years to improve the economic sustainability of our town centres.(COMM)</p> <p>2.3.3 Redevelop Bridgend Central Station including improving the front public area and consider the feasibility of developing a transport interchange at the rear, providing links between bus services and trains, in partnership with Welsh Government and Network Rail. (COMM)</p>
<p>2.4 Attracting investment and supporting new and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCO23.03 - Number of businesses receiving support through Shared Prosperity Funding (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>2.4.1 Invest in business start-ups in the County Borough by providing both professional and grant support, supporting key</p>

<p>existing local businesses</p> <p>Page 39</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO23.04 - Number of business start-ups assisted (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>growth sectors like research and development, finance and the green economy. (COMM)</p> <p>2.4.3 Work with the Cardiff City Region (CCR) and its 10 local authorities to transition to the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) and to continue to work regionally on strategic planning, transport and economic development (COMM)</p>
<p>2.5 Making the council an attractive place to work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CED29 - Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) I feel every department is working towards the same common goal</li> <li>b) I am satisfied with BCBC as an employer</li> <li>c) Working here makes me want to perform to the best of my ability</li> <li>d) I feel that BCBC values its employees' ideas and opinions</li> <li>e) Do you think there are opportunities for two-way communication to discuss and raise ideas and issues? (CEX)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CED49 - Percentage of staff reporting through survey that they agree or strongly agree with the statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) I feel supported to manage my personal wellbeing whilst in work</li> <li>b) The council is dedicated to taking positive action to support employees achieve a positive sense of wellbeing in their working lives. (CEX)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CED50 - Number of sign up of new subscribers to the staff extranet (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>2.5.1 Improve the Council 's culture as an employer, offering fair work opportunities to current and potential employees. Use the views of our workforce to make improvements, develop and motivate employees and improve staff retention. (CEX)</p>
<p>2.6 Ensuring employment is fair, equitable and pays at least the real living wage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CED54 - Number of real living wage employers identified (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>2.6.2 Encourage employers to offer growth/ training options to employees (CEX)</p>

**WBO3 - A County Borough with thriving valleys communities**

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
Page 49 3.1 Investing in town centres, including Maesteg town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCO23.01 - Number of commercial properties assisted through the enhancement grant scheme (COMM)</li> </ul>	3.1.1 Complete a Placemaking Strategy for Maesteg town centre to improve the environment and support future investment bids. (COMM)  3.1.2 Develop a commercial property enhancement grant for all valley high streets, to make them look better and bring properties back into commercial use. (COMM)
3.2 Creating more jobs in the Valleys		3.2.1 Develop funding bids for our valleys, to enhance the economy and stimulate new job opportunities. (COMM)  3.2.2 Increase the amount of land and premises available for businesses, including industrial starter units, in the Valleys. (COMM)
3.4 Improving education and skills in the Valleys		3.4.1 Establish three new Flying Start provisions, offering free childcare for two-year-olds in Nantymoel, Ogmore Vale and Pontycymmer. (EFS)  3.4.2 Open Welsh-medium childcare in the Ogmore Valley and Bettws, with 32 full-time-equivalent childcare places. (EFS)
3.5 Investing in our parks and green spaces and supporting tourism to the valleys		3.5.1 Develop a regeneration strategy for the valleys (including Ogmore and Garw Valleys).(COMM)  3.5.2 Work with the Cwm Taf Nature Network Project to improve access to high quality green spaces (COMM)
3.6 Encourage the development of new affordable homes in the valleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CED55 - Number of additional affordable homes provided by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in the Valleys (CEX)</li> </ul>	3.6.1 Promote and encourage the development of new social housing in the valleys. (CEX)  3.6.2 Redevelop the Ewenny Road site, including new and affordable homes, an enterprise hub, open space and green infrastructure, in partnership with the adjoining landowner. (COMM)

**WBO4 - A County Borough where we help people meet their potential**

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
<p>Page 41</p> <p>4.1 Providing safe, supportive schools with high quality teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEFS156 – Number of schools judged by Estyn to be in ‘significant improvement’ or ‘special measures’ (EFS)</li> <li>• PAM032 - Average ‘Capped 9’ score for pupils in Year 11 (EFS)</li> <li>• EDU016a/PAM007 - Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools</li> <li>• EDU016b/PAM008 - Percentage of Pupil attendance in secondary schools (EFS)</li> <li>• EDU010a - Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in primary schools (EFS)</li> <li>• EDU010b - Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in secondary schools (EFS)</li> <li>• DEFS155 - Percentage of schools that have self-evaluated themselves as ‘green’ as part of their annual safeguarding audit (EFS)</li> </ul>	<p>4.1.1 Help schools achieve their improvement plans by analysing needs and offering training to address this, ensuring that all schools will be judged by Estyn as ‘not requiring any follow-up’ (EFS)</p> <p>4.1.2 Ensure all local schools are rated as green following their safeguarding audit and provide support they need to improve (EFS)</p> <p>4.1.3 Make additional digital learning training available to all school staff to improve teaching and learning in our schools (EFS)</p> <p>4.1.4 Improve the digital offer to young people, including youth led interactive website (EFS)</p>
<p>4.2 Improving employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities</p>		<p>4.2.1 Improve the offer to adults with Learning Disabilities to enable them to develop new skills and deliver their potential (SSWB)</p>
<p>4.3 Expanding Welsh medium education opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEFS138 - Percentage of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh (EFS)</li> <li>• DEFS157 - Percentage of learners studying for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh at the end of Key Stage 4 (EFS)</li> </ul>	<p>4.3.1 Deliver the actions in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) (EFS)</p>

<p>Page 42</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DEFS158 - Number of learners studying for Welsh as a second language (EFS)</li> </ul>	
<p>4.4 Modernising our school buildings</p>		<p>4.4.1 Enlarge Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr to a 2.5 form-entry new-build school. (EFS)</p> <p>4.4.2 Provide a new-build for Mynydd Cynffig Primary School. (EFS)</p> <p>4.4.3 Enlarge Ysgol Ferch o'r Sgêr to a two form-entry new-build school. (EFS)</p> <p>4.4.4 Provide a new two-form entry English-medium school to replace the existing Afon Y Felin and Corneli Primary Schools. (EFS)</p> <p>4.4.5 Relocate Heronsbridge School to a new-build 300-place school. (EFS)</p>
<p>4.5 Attract and retain young people into BCBC employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DOPS36 - Number of apprentices employed across the organisation (CEX)</li> <li>CED56 - Percentage of those concluding apprenticeships and obtaining a non-apprentice role (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>4.5.1 Work with local schools to promote the Council as an employer and promote apprenticeships (CEX)</p>
<p>4.6 Offering youth services and school holiday programmes for our young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSWB66 - Participation in targeted activities for people with additional or diverse needs (SSWB)</li> <li>SSWB67 - Participation in the national free swimming initiative for 16 and under (SSWB)</li> </ul>	<p>4.6.1 Make our leisure and culture programmes more accessible to children with additional needs (SSWB)</p> <p>4.6.2 Enlarge the Food and Fun Programme for summer 2024. (EFS)</p>
<p>4.7 Work with people to design and develop services</p>		<p>4.7.1 Work co-productively with people to develop their own solutions (SSWB)</p>
<p>4.9 Being the best parents we can to our care experienced children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSWB48 - Percentage of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the a)12 months since leaving care</li> </ul>	<p>4.9.1 Give care experienced children love, care, safe homes to live in and opportunities to try new activities, gain new skills and fulfil their potential working across the Council and partners (SSWB)</p>



b)13- 24 months since leaving care (SSWB)

- CH/052 - Percentage care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year (SSWB)

4.9.2 Work with partners to deliver improved outcomes for care experienced children through the delivery of actions in the corporate parenting action plan and informed by the views of our children and young people (SSWB)

4.9.3 - Support the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy in schools.(EFS)

**WBO5 - A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency**

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
5.1 Moving towards net zero carbon, and improving our energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO23.05 - Reduction in emissions (across our buildings, fleet &amp; equipment, streetlighting, business travel, commuting, homeworking, waste, procured goods and services) (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO20.01 - Annual Gas Consumption across the Authority (kWh) (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO20.02 - Annual Electricity Consumption across the Authority (kWh) (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO20.03 - Annual CO2 related to gas consumption across the Authority (tonnes) (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO20.04 - Annual CO2 related to electricity consumption across the Authority (tonnes) (COMM)</li> <li>• CED57 - Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) pollution in the air (micrograms per m3) (CEX SRS)</li> </ul>	<p>5.1.1 Keep reducing our carbon footprint by changing our Council vehicles to electric and further energy efficiency schemes. (COMM)</p> <p>5.1.2 Continue work to finalise and implement our Air Quality Action Plan, and start work on the measures to improve air quality along Park Street (CEX SRS)</p> <p>5.1.3 Ensure all new build schools meet the requirement for net zero carbon (EFS)</p> <p>5.1.5 Invest in energy efficiency improvements to Council buildings including schools. (COMM)</p>
5.2 Protecting our landscapes and open spaces and planting more trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO23.07 - The number of green flag parks and green spaces (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO23.06 - The number of blue flag beaches (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>5.2.1 Deliver projects such as woodland protection, develop and protect our natural environment in partnership with our communities as part of our Bridgend Biodiversity Plan. (COMM)</p> <p>5.2.2 Work with the Cwm Taf Nature Network Project to enhance and improve access to high quality green spaces in our County Borough. (COMM)</p> <p>5.2.3 Deliver 5 tree planting schemes, seeking to promote maximum carbon sequestration based on the principle of 'right tree in the right place' (COMM)</p>

<p>5.3 Improve the quality of the public realm and built environment through good placemaking principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAM/018 Percentage of all planning applications determined within 8 weeks (COMM)</li> <li>• PAM/019 Percentage of planning appeals dismissed (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>5.3.1 Adoption of the Replacement Local Development Plan (COMM)</p>
<p>5.4 Reducing, reusing or recycling as much of our waste as possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO20.05 – Percentage of street cleansing waste prepared for recycling (COMM)</li> <li>• PAM/030 – Percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ prepared for reuse, and/or recycled, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in any other way</li> <li>○ prepared for reuse</li> <li>○ prepared for being recycled</li> <li>○ as source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way (COMM)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• PAM/043 - Kilograms of residual waste generated per person (COMM)</li> <li>• PAM/010 – Percentage of highways land inspected by the Local Authority to be found to be of a high / acceptable standard of cleanliness (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>5.4.1 Develop our Future Waste Services Model and seek to improve our recycling rates further in line with Welsh Government targets. We will consult on the options with residents in 2024 (COMM).</p>
<p>5.5 Improving flood defences and schemes to reduce flooding of our homes and businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO23.08 - Percentage of statutory sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) applications processed within 7 weeks from receipt of appropriate scheme drawings (COMM)</li> </ul>	<p>5.5.1 Invest in and improve flood mitigation measures throughout our communities to reduce flood risk. (COMM)</p>

**WBO6 – A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community**

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
<p>6.1 Celebrating and supporting diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CORPB3 - Percentage of council staff completing Introduction to Equality and Diversity E-Learning (CEX/All)</li> </ul>	<p>6.1.1 Implement the agreed action plan supporting Welsh Government on race equality and LGBTQ+ (CEX)</p> <p>6.1.2 Establish new BCBC staff groups for people with protected characteristic (CEX)</p>
<p>6.2 Improving the way we engage with local people, including young people, listening to their views and acting on them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CED58 - Percentage of consultation participants who answered positively: How effective do you think we have been in meeting our aim of being citizen-focused over the last 12 months? (CEX)</li> <li>• CED59 - Level of engagement (Welsh / English)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) across consultations</li> <li>b) with corporate communications to residents</li> <li>c) across all corporate social media accounts (CEX)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>6.2.1 Review how we communicate and engage with residents, including children and young people to help us become more customer focused and responsive. (CEX)</p> <p>6.2.2 Provide new opportunities for the community to engage with us on our regeneration plans, holding workshops with key stakeholders including town councils, learners and community groups. (COMM)</p>
<p>6.3 Offering more information and advice online, and at local level, and making sure you can talk to us and hear from us in Welsh</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CED5 - Percentage first call resolutions (via Customer Contact Centre) (CEX)</li> <li>• CED51 - Number of online transactions using the digital platform (CEX)</li> <li>• CED52 - Number of hits on the corporate website (CEX)</li> <li>• CED53 - Percentage of staff with Welsh language speaking skills (CEX)</li> <li>• CORPB4 - Percentage of council staff completing Welsh Language Awareness E-Learning (CEX/All)</li> </ul>	<p>6.3.1 Continue to evaluate and review the communication options available to ensure information is available to all residents across the borough (CEX)</p>

<p>6.4 Helping clubs and community groups take control of and improve their facilities and protect them for the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO16.8 - Number of council owned assets transferred to the community for running (CATs) (COMM)</li> <li>• SSWB69 - Number of people supported to have their needs met in their communities by local community co-ordinators and community navigators (SSWB)</li> </ul>	<p>6.4.1 Invest in Community Asset Transfers and support clubs and Community Groups with equipment grants to improve and safeguard the facilities. (COMM)</p>
<p>6.5 Becoming an age friendly council</p>		<p>6.5.1 To work towards becoming an accredited Age Friendly Council. (SSWB)</p>

## WBO7 - A County Borough where we support people to be healthy and happy

Detail / aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
7.1 Improving active travel routes and facilities so people can walk and cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO23.17 - New active travel routes (length in linear metres) (COMM)</li> </ul>	7.1.1 Improve sustainable and active travel choices, including the Metrolink bus facility in Porthcawl, to increase connectivity and greener travel choices. (COMM)
7.2 Offering attractive leisure and cultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSWB70 - Number of visits by older adults to physical activity opportunities supported (SSWB)</li> </ul>	7.2.1 Redevelop Porthcawl Grand Pavilion to increase the use of the new facilities and extend social and leisure facilities, in partnership with Awen Cultural Trust.(COMM)  7.2.2 Develop an active leisure offer for older adults to improve physical and mental wellbeing. (SSWB)  7.2.4 Maintain performance against Welsh public library standards. (SSWB)  7.2.5 Develop a long-term Active Bridgend plan and leisure strategy. (SSWB)
7.3 Improving children's play facilities and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO23.09 - Value of investment in play areas (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO23.10 - Number of play areas that have been refurbished (COMM)</li> </ul>	7.3.1 Improve the quantity and quality of play opportunities. We will Invest in children's play areas throughout the Borough and make sure inclusive play equipment is provided to allow opportunities for all. (SSWB/COMM)
7.4 Providing free school meals and expanding free childcare provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEFS163 - Percentage of nursery, reception, year 1 and year 2 learners offered a free school meal (EFS)</li> <li>• DEFS162 - Percentage of non-maintained settings that are judged by Care Inspectorate Wales as at least 'good' (EFS)</li> <li>• DEFS160 Number of two-year-olds accessing childcare through the Flying Start programme (EFS)</li> </ul>	7.4.1 Provide free school meals to all primary school learners by September 2024. (EFS)  7.4.2 Work with childminders, nurseries and others to roll-out universal childcare for all two-year-olds. (EFS)

<p>7.5 Integrating our social care services with health services so people are supported seamlessly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSWB75 - Number of people delayed in their transfer of care on the 'discharge to recover and assess' pathways (SSWB)</li> </ul>	<p>7.5.1 Work even more closely with the NHS so all people receive the right health or care service at the right time. (SSWB)</p>
<p>7.6 Improving the supply of affordable housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CED60 - Number of completed affordable new build dwellings provided by RSLs (CEX)</li> <li>CED61 - Total number of empty properties returned to use with local authority intervention (CEX)</li> </ul>	<p>7.6.1 Increase the number of affordable homes in Bridgend County Borough in partnership with Welsh Government and social landlords. (CEX)</p> <p>7.6.2 Get a better understanding of housing and support needs and work with social landlords to provide homes to suit those needs. (CEX)</p> <p>7.6.3 Continue to target those long-term empty properties that have the most detrimental impact on the community, focusing on the Top 20. (CEX)</p>

## Demonstrating our 5 Ways of Working (WOWs)

WOW	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
<p>1) Better and more targeted use of resources</p>	<p>Workforce Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CORPB5 - Percentage of staff that have completed a Personal Review/Appraisal (excluding school staff)</li> <li>• PAM/001 - Number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) Local Authority employee lost due to sickness absence</li> </ul> <p>Asset management data (capital receipts, building compliance, carbon etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO16.9 - Realisation of annual capital receipts targets (COMM)</li> <li>• DCO19.02 – Percentage of full statutory compliance across BCBC operational buildings</li> <li>• DCO23.14 - Percentage of statutory compliance across BCBC operational buildings - Big 5 (COMM)</li> </ul> <p>Business continuity / resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOPS34abc Network Availability (CEX)</li> </ul> <p>Finance measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DRE6.1.1 Percentage of budget reductions achieved</li> </ul>	<p>Develop clear and agreed actions to address recommendations from regulators, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce strategy (and specific social services recruitment)</li> <li>• Asset management improvements</li> <li>• Procurement review Audit Wales</li> <li>• Performance management improvement plan</li> <li>• Digital strategy</li> <li>• MTFS / Capital Strategy</li> </ul>
<p>2) One council, working well together with partners</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A collaborative approach to achieving aims through support of regional PSB</li> <li>• Town and Community Council Review</li> </ul>
<p>3) Improving communication, engagement and responsiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service measures (including resolution at first point of contact)</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction measures (measures to be added)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement recommendations of communications peer review - including officer and member relations</li> <li>• Implement Public participation strategy</li> </ul>



<p>Page 51</p> <p>Supporting and empowering communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SSWB69 - Number of people supported to have their needs met in their communities by local community coordinators and community navigators (SSWB)</li> </ul>	
<p>Protecting the services that matter to you the most</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget and staff survey PIs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage people, communities, children and young people to talk to the Council about issues that are important to them, and influence the decisions that affect their lives</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 - Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Form

This document is a multi-purpose tool ensuring the appropriate steps are taken to comply with the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) Equality Impact Assessment legislation and to demonstrate that we have shown due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage when taking strategic decisions under the [Socio-economic Duty](#). It also ensures consideration of the [Welsh Language Standards](#). [Click here to access more information and guidance to help you complete this EIA.](#)

- **This assessment should be carried out during the formation stage of your policy or proposal. Any negative impact identified will support you to devise engagement strategies for further evidence gathering.**
- **If you are undertaking a full public consultation as part of your policy or proposal this form should be completed before the consultation begins and used as a tool to inform your consultation questions and engagement activities.**
- **All sections and all questions require a response and must not be left blank even if they are ‘not applicable’ or ‘subject to further consultation’.**

Name of project, policy, function, service or proposal being assessed:	Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024/25
Brief description and aim of policy or proposal:	Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) currently has a high level, five-year Corporate Plan 2023-28. The Council took a new approach for 2023-24 and did not include commitments or performance indicators in the Corporate Plan. Instead, the Council developed a one-year delivery plan so it could be more agile and flexible to the changing operating environment.
Who is responsible for delivery of the policy or proposal?	Chief Executive, Mark Shephard
Date EIA screening completed:	03/04/2024
Does this policy or proposal relate to any other policies? (please state)	Bridgend County Borough Council Corporate Plan 2023-28
Who is affected by this policy (e.g. Staff, residents, disabled people, women only?)	All Bridgend County Borough Council staff and residents within the County Borough

<p>Is the policy related to, influenced by, or affected by other policies or areas of work (internal or external)? <i>Note: Consider this in terms of statutory requirements, local policies, regional (partnership) decisions, national policies, welfare reforms.</i></p>	<p>Relates to the Bridgend County Borough Council Corporate Plan 2023-28. Influenced by MTFS 2024-25 and other plans, strategies and policies named within the plan.</p>
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### **Assessment of Impact**

#### **Protected characteristics**

Is it possible that any aspect of the policy or proposal will have a positive or negative impact on people from different groups in different ways?

**\*Please note: If you identify a negative impact for any protected characteristics you will need to undertake further evidence gathering to complete a full EIA.**

	Please place an X in the relevant box			Explanation of impact
	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)	No impact	
Gender	X			<p>From the 2021 census, there were 145,500 people living in the county borough comprising of a gender split of 49.4% male (71,800) and 50.6% (73,600) female.</p> <p>For the year ending March 2023, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 1.4 million women and 751,000 men aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the last year. This is a prevalence rate of approximately 6 in 100 women and 3 in 100 men.</p> <p>There are performance indicators in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024 - 25 that measure gender specific training programmes such as the percentage of council staff completing Violence Against Women training. It is possible that this performance indicator may have a differing positive impact on women. There are unlikely to be any further positive or negative gender-specific implications because no other commitment, performance indicator, or aim specifically targets a particular sex.</p>
Disability	X			<p>From the 2021 census, 11% of Bridgend residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot. There are commitments and performance indicators that have been created to improve the health and wellbeing of disabled people within the borough. The Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024 - 25 seeks to improve through an improved Disabled Facilities Grant process and improving employment opportunities for those with learning</p>

				disabilities. Subsequently, this group may be positively impacted by the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024 – 25.
Race	<b>X</b>			From the 2021 census there are 4,691 BAME people living in Bridgend comprising of 3.2% of the total population. It is unlikely that any negative implications will arise for this group. Aims are included within the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024 – 25 that seek to celebrate and support diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination. This includes implementing the agreed action plan supporting Welsh Government on race equality and LGBTQ+. This action plan has been created with the intent of positively impacting and celebrating the different races within the borough.

Religion and belief			<b>X</b>	From the 2021 census, 52.3% of residents reported having 'No religion', 40.4% described themselves as Christian, and 5.6% did not state their religion. It is unlikely that the Corporate Plan will have any negative or positive impact on individuals from different beliefs. Any negative impacts identified will need to be monitored and remedied by services.
Sexual Orientation	<b>X</b>			It is unlikely that any negative implications will arise for this group. Aims in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024 – 25 that seek to celebrate and support diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination. This includes implementing the agreed action plan supporting Welsh Government on race equality and LGBTQ+. This action plan has been created with the intent of positively impacting and celebrating the different races within the borough.
Age	<b>X</b>			<p>From the 2021 census the age breakdown of people living in Bridgend is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0 – 14 = 16.7% (24,300)</li> <li>• 15 – 64 = 62.6% (91,100)</li> <li>• 65+ - 20.7% (30,200)</li> </ul> <p>Due to the wide range of commitments and services covered by the plan it is likely that there will be differences in the way the commitments will impact on different age groups. Whilst many of the commitments are focused on improving outcomes and accessibility of services for all residents, others are more focused on certain age groups, such as improving learner outcomes for young people, increase employment / training opportunities in BCBC for young people, free school meals etc, and making Bridgend a</p>

				great place to grow old, working with partners to improve leisure activities, accessible housing, care and support as an Age Friendly Council.
Pregnancy & Maternity			X	It is unlikely that the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan will have any specific impact on individuals who are pregnant but there may be benefits from commitments to improve or extend services provided to assist and support families and improve health outcomes for residents.
Transgender	X			It is unlikely that any negative implications will arise for this group. Aims are included within the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2024 – 25 that seek to celebrate and support diversity and inclusion and tackling discrimination. This includes implementing the agreed action plan supporting Welsh Government on race equality and LGBTQ+. This action plan has been created with the intent of positively impacting / celebrating different races within the borough.
Marriage and Civil partnership			X	There is not expected to be an impact on marriage and civil partnership as a result of the proposed Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.

**Socio-economic impact**

Is it possible that any aspect of the policy or proposal will have a positive or negative impact on people or communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?

**\*Please note: If you identify a negative socio-economic impact you will need to undertake further evidence gathering to complete a full EIA.**

	Please place an X in the relevant box			Explanation of impact
	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)	No impact	
Socio-economic disadvantage	X			The Corporate Plan Delivery Plan shares the aim of the Socio- economic duty which is to deliver better outcomes for those experiencing socio economic disadvantage. We are supporting these residents through the CPDP by including commitments such as supporting eligible residents to receive financial help, increasing employment opportunities for young people, and supporting residents to become more resilient. We seek to improve development opportunities in our valleys communities and providing free school meals.

## Welsh Language

Is it possible that any aspect of the policy or proposal will have a positive or negative impact for persons to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language?

**\*Please note: If you identify a negative impact for persons to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language you will need to undertake further evidence gathering to complete a full EIA.**

	Please place an X in the relevant box			Explanation of impact
	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)	No impact	
Will the policy or proposal impact on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language	X			Opportunities for Welsh speakers within the borough should improve as commitments include; opening Welsh- medium childcare in Bettws; making sure you can contact us in Welsh; and expanding Welsh medium education opportunities. It is likely these contributions will impact those who speak the Welsh language positively.
Will the policy or proposal treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language	X			Opportunities for Welsh speakers within the borough should improve as commitments include; opening Welsh- medium childcare in Bettws; making sure you can contact us in Welsh; and expanding Welsh medium education opportunities. It is likely these contributions will impact those who speak the Welsh language positively.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general equality duty and specific duties, which help authorities to meet the general duty. The aim of the general equality duty is to integrate considerations of the advancement of equality into the day-to-day business of public authorities. In summary, those subject to the equality duty, must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't
- Foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't

The Corporate Plan Delivery Plan has been produced to assist us in achieving the aims of our Corporate Plan. It is an attempt at approving services and outcomes for residents and staff in the Borough. As the plan seeks to make improvements, it should not have a negative impact on anyone that resides within the area. We have considered our Public Sector Equality Duty when creating the document as we seek to celebrate and champion diversity, empowering our communities through the commitments that we create. Consideration has been given to those who could be negatively impacted by decisions made and we have sought to protect these groups to make positive improvements.

**How does this policy or proposal demonstrate you have given due regard to the general equality duty?**

### **Procurement and partnerships**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires all public authorities to consider the needs of protected characteristics when designing and delivering public services, including where this is done in partnership with other organisations or through procurement of services. The Welsh Language Standards also require all public authorities to consider the effects of any policy decision, or change in service delivery, on the Welsh language, which includes any work done in partnership or by third parties. We must also ensure we consider the Socio-economic Duty when planning major procurement and commissioning decisions to consider how such arrangements can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage.

**Will this policy or proposal be carried out wholly or partly by contractors or partners?**

	<b>Please place an X in the relevant box:</b>
Yes	
No	<b>X</b>

If yes what steps will you take to comply with the General Equality Duty, Welsh Language Legislation and the Socio-Economic Duty in regard to procurement and/or partnerships?

	<b>Steps taken to ensure compliance:</b>

General Equality Duty	N/A
Welsh Language legislation	N/A
Socio-economic duty	N/A

**What have you decided to do?**

Record of decision based on assessment of impact on protected characteristics, socioeconomic impact and Welsh Language. Please place an X in the relevant box.

**If you identify negative impact on one, some or all protected characteristics, socioeconomic duty or Welsh Language you will MUST complete a full EIA.**

Impact identified	Next steps:	Please place an X in the relevant box:
No negative impact identified		X
One or more negative impact identified		
<p><b>Please explain the reasons for this decision. If you have 'screened out' you must include information and evidence to justify your decision.</b></p>		

**Approval:**

Date EIA screening completed:	04/04/2024
Approved by (Head of Service):	Kelly Watson
Date of approval by HoS:	04/04/24

If this screening has identified that a full EIA is needed, who will carry out the full EIA?	N/A
If this screening has identified that a full EIA is needed when will	N/A



<b>the Full EIA be completed by (Date):</b>	
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When complete, this form must be retained by the service, a copy should also be sent to [equalities@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@bridgend.gov.uk)  
The EIA screening should be referenced and summarised in the relevant cabinet report for this policy. Where a full EIA is needed this should be included as an appendix with the cabinet report and therefore available publically on the we

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE POLICY</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL &amp; REGULATORY SERVICES, HR &amp; CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>PAUL MILES, GROUP MANAGER HR &amp; OD</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	There is no effect upon the Council’s policy framework or procedure rules as a result of this report
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the revised Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) Policy with effect from 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024.

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the revised Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

## 2. Background

2.1 The Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of those accessing our services through the effective use of the Disclosure and Barring Service and exercising its statutory duty of care towards vulnerable members of society.

2.2 The DBS Policy sets out the requirements for criminal record checking, which is a requirement for certain employees and also applies in a range of other service areas. This is integral to the Council fulfilling its safeguarding arrangements.

2.3 The DBS Policy applies to employees, those who volunteer or undertake work experience or student placements and elected members who have provided their consent for a check to be undertaken.

2.4 The requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service check relates to the nature of the duties being undertaken irrespective of the status of the contract.

2.5 There is a statutory requirement to undertake rechecks every three years for employees governed by the Care Standards Act 2000. In line with this, the Council has adopted a best practice rechecking policy for all employees, requiring all checks to be undertaken on a three yearly basis.

### **3. Current situation/ proposal**

- 3.1 The updated DBS Policy is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 The DBS Policy has been updated to reflect that rechecks will only be undertaken every three years for employees governed by the Care Standards Act 2000.
- 3.3 The revised policy has been shared with Heads of Service, Corporate Safeguarding Board and the Trade Unions.

### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

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

### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

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

### **6. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.

### **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 A DBS policy allows us to appropriately carry out checks on individuals. This is one of the measures that contributes to the overarching safeguarding requirements of the Council.

### **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28 approved by Council on the 28 February 2024 included a budget reduction proposal of £30,000 to be achieved by amending the Disclosure and Barring Service Policy to only recheck every three years for employees governed by the Care Standards Act 2000, not for all employees who require a DBS (CEX10). The approval of the revised DBS Policy by Council will ensure the budget reduction proposal is achieved.

### **9. Recommendation**

9.1 It is recommended that Council approves the revised DBS Policy attached as **Appendix 1** with effect from 1 May 2024.

**Background documents:** None

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# **DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) POLICY**

**Date of Issue:**

<b>DOCUMENT CONTROL</b>	
Document Title:	Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policy
Previous Publication Date:	July 2021
<b>DOCUMENT APPROVAL</b>	
Approved by:	Date:
Group Manager HR/OD	
Trade Unions	
Corporate Management Board	
Cabinet/Council	
<b>REVISION HISTORY</b>	
Revision History:	Date: April 2021
Ebulk – Electronic application system	
UK GDPR Legislation & Fair Processing Statements	
Inclusion of Basic DBS Checks	

DRAFT

Document Title	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy	Department	HR&OD
Publication date		Review Date	



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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of those accessing our services through the effective use of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and exercising its statutory duty of care towards vulnerable members of society. This duty, however, must be carried out with due regard to the rights of individuals.
- 1.2 Criminal record checks are undertaken with other pre – employment checks, to assess the suitability of an individual to ensure robust recruitment practices. Other checks include: identity confirmation; eligibility to work in the UK; verification of relevant qualifications; taking up references; medical clearance and establishing full employment histories.
- 1.3 This policy includes policy statements on the Employment of Ex-Offenders at Appendix 1 and the Handling of Disclosure and Barring Information at Appendix 2.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy will apply to employees, those who volunteer or undertake work experience or student placements and elected members who have provided their consent for a check to be undertaken. In addition, fostering and adoption arrangements, licencing and school transport arrangements and any other regulated positions will also come under the provisions of the policy. It will also apply to those directly employed by governing bodies.
- 2.2 The requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check relates to the nature of the duties being undertaken irrespective of the status of the contract.

## 3. Types of Disclosures and Barred List Checks

- 3.1 The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 has resulted in a differentiation between positions which can legally have an Enhanced DBS check and those which can also legally be checked against the Children or Adult Barred Lists. The full list of checks available are as follows:
  - **Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity (Children)** - used when an individual is undertaking [regulated activity relating to children](#). This check involves a check of the police national computer, police information and the children’s barred list.
  - **Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity (Adults)** - used when an individual is undertaking [regulated activity relating to adults](#). This check involves a check of the police national computer, police information and the adults barred list.
  - **Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity (Children and Adults)** - used when an individual is undertaking regulated activity relating to both children and adults. This check involves a check of the police national computer, police information and the children’s and adults barred list.
  - **Enhanced DBS Check** - used where an individual meets the [pre September 2012 definition of regulated activity](#). This level of check involves a check of the police national computer and police information.
  - **Basic & Standard DBS Check** - used where an individual meets the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#) or for roles requiring the check under the Baseline Personnel Security

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Standard (BPSS). These level of checks involve a check of the police national computer and does not include a check of police information or the children's or adults barred lists.

- 3.2 The minimum age at which someone can be asked to apply for a criminal record check is 16 years old.
- 3.3 The eligibility criteria to be followed to determine the level of check required is set out in Appendix 3. Further advice can be sought from the Human Resources (HR) Lifecycle Team.
- 3.4 All DBS applications include an identity checking process, which is undertaken by the nominated verification officer.

#### **4. E-bulk – Electronic application system**

- 4.1 The council has a service level agreement with Powys County Council relating to the provision of services for online DBS checks.
- 4.2 This enables the online submission of electronic application forms to the DBS and receipt of results.

#### **5. Fees**

- 5.1 The fees applicable for DBS checks are set by the DBS service. The cost of DBS checks for employees is met by the service/school.
- 5.2 Employees who choose to join the update service will meet the annual subscription cost themselves.
- 5.3 Checks for volunteers are free of charge.

#### **6. Recruitment**

- 6.1 All recruitment responsibilities are set out in the council's Recruitment and Selection Protocol and Managers' Guidelines.
- 6.2 Where a post requires a criminal records check, this will be identified on the advert and job pack.
- 6.3 Where a DBS check is part of the recruitment process, applicants are requested to disclose details of their criminal record at the application stage. The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are "protected" and are not subject to disclosure and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the [DBS website](#).
- 6.4 Failure to reveal relevant information may lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- 6.5 Details of disclosed criminal records will only be seen by those that need to as part of the recruitment process. Recruiting managers and Head teachers shortlisting applicants with a disclosed criminal record should take account of all relevant circumstances prior to the applicant's inclusion on the shortlist. Advice can be sought from a HR Business Partner.
- 6.6 It is an offence for the council or a Governing Body to employ someone to work in regulated activity if they have been barred by the DBS. Equally, if a barred person made an application they would be breaking the law. If the checks reveal that a candidate is on the barred list for regulated activity Human Resources will make a referral to DBS to notify them of the individual's attempt to apply for barred work.

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## **7. Validity and Portability of DBS Disclosures**

- 7.1 There is no period of validity for a DBS Disclosure. Whilst accurate at the time of issue, it is technically out of date following the date issued as a new conviction; caution etc. may be recorded against the individual at any time after the issue date.
- 7.2 All employees are required under their contract of employment to advise their manager if they are convicted or cautioned etc. Failure to do so will lead to disciplinary procedures being invoked.
- 7.3 Portability refers to the re-use of DBS Disclosures obtained for a position in one organisation and subsequently used for a position in another organisation. The council does not accept portable Disclosures for any position.
- 7.4 Where an individual has undertaken a DBS Disclosure for a position and they move to another position within the council, the DBS Disclosure will be acceptable in the following instances:
- the type of DBS Disclosure (i.e. Enhanced / Enhanced and relevant barred list check) is the same for the old and new post and
  - the individual has not had a break in service of more than three months and
  - the new work does not represent a significant increase in responsibility for, and contact with, children and/or adults.

## **8. Commencing employment prior to receipt of DBS Disclosure**

- 8.1 In all circumstances every effort must be made to ensure a DBS Disclosure is obtained prior to an individual commencing employment. Only in exceptional circumstances can an employee take up employment without the full results of the DBS Disclosure being known.
- 8.2 Approval for this must be provided by the relevant Corporate Director or Headteacher, via a risk assessment form to confirm that sufficient safeguards are in place to ensure the individual has no unsupervised access to children or adults. This should also provide confirmation that: the correct recruitment and selection procedure has been followed; other pre-employment checks are satisfactory; whether a completed DBS Disclosure application form has been submitted.
- 8.3 The risk assessment form must remain in place until a satisfactory disclosure is received.

## **9. Recruiting from Overseas and UK Applicants who lived abroad**

- 9.1 DBS Disclosures do not record convictions that were committed abroad. When recruiting candidates who have spent some time living or working abroad, a DBS Disclosure must be obtained in the normal way and a criminal records check or 'Certificates of Good Character' should be requested in accordance with home office guidance. Further guidance is available on the [DBS website](#).

## **10. The Update Service and Applicant Only Checks**

- 10.1 If a DBS applicant has joined the DBS update service, the council can check a DBS certificate online, providing it has a legal entitlement to carry out the check and the applicant's permission.
- 10.2 The DBS update service enables applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date online and allows employers to check a certificate on line. Registration lasts for one year.

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10.3 The DBS operates an “Applicant Only Certificates” policy. The e-bulk system that council uses identifies whether the check is clear or “adverse”.

## 11. Adverse Disclosures

11.1 When the council is notified of an adverse disclosure, the applicant must provide a copy of the full disclosure to the HR Lifecycle Team.

11.2 In cases where a DBS check reveals details of a criminal record or details of concern, the line manager or Head teacher will be informed and provided with advice on the next steps. Consideration will need to be given to all relevant circumstances including: the nature of the conviction; the nature of the appointment; date of the offence; frequency of the offence; and the outcomes.

11.3 In accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, a criminal conviction may not automatically bar an individual from employment.

11.4 In relation to recruitment processes, the final decision on the appointment will be made by the relevant Head of Service or Head teacher

## 12. Rechecks for Employees

12.1 There is a statutory requirement to undertake rechecks every three years for employees governed by the Care Standards Act 2000.

12.2 Compliance with the rechecking policy is monitored regularly and referrals are made to the nominated Officer for resolution. Monthly updates are also provided to the Corporate Safeguarding Board for review.

12.3 Failure to engage with the rechecking policy by completing the DBS application form and providing appropriate evidence will have implications on continued employment. In such cases, employees will no longer be able to fulfil their duties and continue in their role and disciplinary procedures will be invoked.

12.4 Where an existing employee’s DBS Disclosure reveals details of a criminal record the procedure as outlined in paragraph 11 will apply.

## 13. Data Protection

13.1 All sensitive personal information is held securely, and only accessed by those entitled to see it in the course of their duties. All information will only be stored for as long as necessary, and then confidentially destroyed in accordance with the policy statement on Handling of Disclosure and Barring Information (Appendix 2).

13.2 The council’s HR fair processing statement includes reference to DBS checks.

13.3 Powys County Council’s fair processing statement in relation to electronic DBS applications can be found on the [‘Ebulk’ website](#). When completing the online application form, applicants are required to consent to the secure, confidential transfer of personal data to the DBS for the purposes of processing the application.

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## 14. Schools

- 14.1 All school based employees fall within the regulated activity definition and therefore an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check is required.
- 14.2 There is no requirement for routine DBS checks for governors unless they undertake additional duties that include regular work in the presence of children, or care for, train, supervise or are in sole charge of children.

## 15. Elected Members

- 15.1 Elected members are subject to a Basic Disclosure to demonstrate to the public that they can have trust and confidence in their elected representatives. This will also apply to the Mayor's consort.
- 15.2 In addition, Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs, in line with their responsibilities to "discharge functions" relating to the social care of vulnerable people and children, are subject to an Enhanced DBS check to reflect the important role they play in scrutinising services that are delivered in relation to safeguarding and education functions.
- 15.3 All Members and the Mayor's Consort will need to individually consent to a DBS check being undertaken.

## 16. Agency Workers

- 16.1 The agency is legally the employer of agency workers and the responsibility to obtain a relevant DBS check is theirs. The manager or Head teacher requesting the agency worker should indicate the level of DBS required.
- 16.2 When using an agency worker, the line manager or Head teacher should have written confirmation from the agency that each worker supplied to them has had a satisfactory DBS check and checks against the Children's and/or Adult's barred list as required for that area of service.

## 17. Contractors

- 17.1 Where contractors require a DBS check, the manager or Head teacher should include this in the procurement documentation.
- 17.2 The organisation providing the contractor is legally the employer of any contractors and the responsibility to obtain a relevant DBS check is theirs.
- 17.3 The line manager or Head teacher should have written confirmation from the employer that each worker has had a satisfactory DBS check and checks against the Children's and/or Adult's barred list as required for that area of service.

## 18. Volunteers

- 18.1 Volunteers who are undertaking activity which meets the criteria for a DBS check are required to undertake a relevant DBS check.
- 18.2 With regard to volunteers, when determining whether a check is required, consideration needs to be given to whether or not they are "supervised" (to a reasonable level) by someone who has been barred list and enhanced DBS checked.

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18.3 The Department for Education has produced [statutory guidance](#) on the definition of supervision in relation to regulated activity with children. This guidance sets out what constitutes a reasonable level of supervision – that is, it describes the level of supervision that, if in place, means that an activity with children is not regulated with regard to volunteers in schools.

18.4 Head teachers will need to determine, on the basis of this guidance, whether volunteers are undertaking regulated activity and are therefore required to undertake a DBS check.

## 19. Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

19.1 Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006 Act there is a legal duty to refer information to the DBS if an individual is dismissed or removed from working with children and/or adults (in what is legally defined as Regulated Activity) because they meet the referral criteria. The council has a duty to refer information to the DBS as both a regulated activity provider and as a local authority with safeguarding responsibilities.

## 20. Review

20.1 This policy will be subject to review to ensure that it takes account of updated regulation and guidance. The practical implementation of this policy will also be reviewed in accordance with new guidance and procedures adopted by the DBS.

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### Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Bridgend County Borough Council (the council) complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
2. The council is committed to the fair treatment of its employees, potential employees or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
3. This policy is available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
4. The council actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. Selection is based on skills, qualifications and experience.
5. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all application forms, job packs will contain a statement that a DBS check is required.
6. Where a DBS check is required, all applicants should provide details of their criminal record with their application form, except for certain spent convictions and cautions which are 'protected' so not subject to disclosure to employers and that cannot be taken into account. Any information not subject to this filtering can be sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within the council and this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
7. Unless the nature of the position allows the council to ask questions about an entire criminal record, except for certain spent convictions and cautions which are 'protected', the Council will only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
8. At interview, or in a separate discussion, arrangements will be made to ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment
9. Every subject of a DBS check will be made aware of the existence of [the Code of Practice](#) which will be made available on request.
10. In all cases where information is revealed in a DBS check that this will be discussed with the person seeking the position before withdrawing an offer of employment.

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## Handling of DBS Certificate Information

### 1. General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Bridgend County Borough Council (the council) complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

### 2. Storage and access

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

### 3. Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

To note: those registered care homes which are inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), those organisations which are inspected by Ofsted and those establishments which are inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW ) and Estyn certificates may be retained until the next inspection..

### 4. Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

### 5. Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints, or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

### 6. Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any

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copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, and the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

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## Eligibility for a DBS Check

### Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity (Children)

HM Government has produced a factual note on [regulated activity relating to children](#)

In summary, the post September 2012 definition of regulated activity relating to children comprises only:

- (i) Unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children;
- (ii) Work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: for example, schools, children's homes, childcare premises. Not work by supervised volunteers;

Work under (i) or (ii) is regulated activity only if done regularly. There is [statutory guidance](#) about supervision of activity which would be regulated activity if unsupervised.

- (iii) Relevant personal care, for example washing or dressing; or health care by or supervised by a professional;
- (iv) Registered childminding; and foster-carers.

### Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity (Adults)

The Department Of Health has produced a factual note on [regulated activity relating to adults](#). In summary there are six categories of people who will fall within the new definition of regulated activity:

- (i) Providing health care
- (ii) Providing personal care
- (iii) Providing social work
- (iv) Assisting with general household matters, assistance with a person's cash, bills and/or shopping.
- (v) Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs
- (vi) Conveying

### Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity (Children and Adults)

The criteria, as outlined above, for both regulated activity for children and adults must be met to apply this level of check

### Enhanced DBS Check

Positions within the pre-September definition of regulated activity will remain eligible for enhanced DBS checks, whether or not they fall within the post-September definition of regulated activity. The [pre September 2012 definition of regulated activity](#) is contained within extracts of Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)

The types of work with adults are work that fits all of the following three factors referring to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) before it was amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012:

- (vii) adults with whom the person works are within the definition of vulnerable adults previously in section 59 of the SVGA; and

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- (viii) the person provides any of the activities relating to adults previously in Part 2 of Schedule 4 to the SVGA; and
  - (1) the person undertakes the work regularly (as defined previously in Part 3 of Schedule 4 to the SVGA).

If the person fits all factors, an organisation can require an enhanced check

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<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOTING</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>MARK GALVIN – SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER - COMMITTEES</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>To update Council with a report for Members information and noting on the Budget.</b>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the Information Report for noting that has been published since its last scheduled meeting.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 At a previous meeting of Council, it was resolved to approve a revised procedure for the presentation to Council of Information Reports for noting.

## 3. Current situation / proposal

### 3.1 Information Report

The following Information Report has been published since the last meeting of Council:-

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Published</u>
<b>Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2022-23</b>	<b>10/04/2024</b>

### 3.2 Availability of Document

The document has been circulated to Elected Members electronically via email and placed on the Bridgend County Borough Council website. The document is available from the above date of publication.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 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. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact assessment in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations Implications and Connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

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

#### **6. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 There are no Climate Change Implications from this report.

#### **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications from this report.

#### **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

#### **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 That Council acknowledges the publication of the report referred to in paragraph 3.1 of this report.

#### **Background documents**

None

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>17 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 – FINAL</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING &amp; CHANGE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>ANDREW WATHAN HEAD OF REGIONAL INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Governance and Audit Committee approved the Annual Report of the Governance and Audit Committee 2022-23 at its November 2023 meeting and recommended it be presented to full Council for noting.</li> <li>• The draft report was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 28 September 2023. Following comments, a section outlining improvements that members of the Committee could make going forward will be incorporated into next year's report. No further comments were received.</li> <li>• This report demonstrates how the Committee has met its terms of reference in accordance with the Council's Constitution as set out by the Local Government Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.</li> <li>• The Committee has achieved this by concentrating on its core responsibilities during 2022-23.</li> <li>• The outcome of the 2022-23 self-assessment process, consistent with previous years, demonstrates that the Council has sound arrangements in place in respect of its Governance and Audit Committee, noting that the level of knowledge and experience of members was good or satisfactory.</li> </ul>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Governance and Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2022-23 to Council for noting.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Governance and Audit Committee has responsibility for ensuring that there are procedures in place to guarantee the adequacy and effectiveness of financial control and corporate governance arrangements.

- 2.2 A key component of good governance for all organisations is to have in place a Governance and Audit Committee. Bridgend County Borough Council complies with this requirement; the Terms of Reference of the Committee, as included within the Council's Constitution, are set in line with the Local Government Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The responsibilities of the Governance and Audit Committee, as required by the above legislation, are included in **Appendix 1** of the Annual Report (**Appendix A**).

- 2.3 The Governance and Audit Committee and its Members are required to:

- Report to Council on the Committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements and internal and external audit functions.
- Report to Council on an annual basis and to publish an annual report on the Committee's work, its performance in relation to its Terms of Reference and its effectiveness in meeting its purpose including a conclusion on compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022.

- 2.4 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 determined that former Audit Committees would be re-named Governance and Audit Committees, from May 2022 the chair of the Governance and Audit Committee had to be a lay member and that one third of its membership had to be lay members. Bridgend's Governance and Audit Committee had its full quota of 4 lay members and 8 elected councillors during 2022-23. The Committee held 6 meetings during the municipal year.

- 2.5 The Governance and Audit Committee focused on its core responsibilities:

- Reviewing the draft financial statements;
- Scrutinising and being satisfied with the Council's Annual Governance Statement, to demonstrate how governance supports the achievement of objectives, and monitor management action in-year to further improve arrangements;
- Monitoring the Council's internal audit function in terms of overseeing independence, objectivity, performance and professionalism, through the regular reporting of performance and finalised audit assignments;



- Considering the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements;
- Considering reports and recommendations of external audit in respect of the Council;
- Supporting the ongoing development and effectiveness of Governance and Audit Committee; and
- Ensuring compliance with legal requirements, namely the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, in respect of overseeing the Council's performance assessment and the arrangements for handling complaints.

### **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 **Appendix A** sets out the Governance and Audit Committee's Annual Report for 2022-23, how it has complied with its terms of reference, and outlines its performance during the year, together with a self-assessment against the CIPFA publication 'Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities & Police 2022 Edition'.
- 3.2 The outcome of the 2022-23 self-assessment process, consistent with previous years, demonstrates that the Council has sound arrangements in place in respect of its Governance and Audit Committee, noting that the level of knowledge and experience of members was good or satisfactory.
- 3.3 The draft report was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 28 September 2023. A Member noted that there did not seem to be any strong improvements recommended as part of this report and queried if there could be a section outlining what Members could do to improve; this will be incorporated in the 2023-24 report. Members were given the opportunity to feedback any further comments to the Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service; no further comments were received.
- 3.4 The final report was approved by the Governance and Audit Committee at its November 2023 meeting.

### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 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.

### **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

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

### **6. Climate Change Implications**

6.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

**7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

**8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**9. Recommendation**

9.1 It is recommended that the Governance and Audit Committee's Annual Report 2022-23 be noted by full Council.

**Background documents**

Local Government Measure 2011

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

CIPFA publication 'Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities & Police 2022 Edition'

Bridgend CBC Governance and Audit Committee agendas and minutes for 2022-23



**Subject**                      **Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23**

**Directorate:**                **Finance, Performance & Change**

**Meeting:**                    **Governance and Audit Committee**

**Date:**                        **9 November 2023**

**Division/Wards Affected**    **All**

## 1. **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the Governance and Audit Committee's Annual Report for the Committee to determine whether it forms a balanced summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2022-23 and to approve its presentation to full Council.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 On behalf of the Governance and Audit Committee, the annual report for 2022/23 is submitted for consideration by the Governance and Audit Committee. It shows that, over this period, the Committee has fulfilled its role as defined in its terms of reference.
- 2.2 The report shows that the workings of the Committee continue to be both valuable and productive and that it provides assurance to the Council regarding the Committee's activities in the effective governance of financial affairs and other matters by the Authority.
- 2.3 That Governance and Audit Committee endorse this report and recommend its presentation to Council.

## 3. **INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 The Council's Governance and Audit Committee has responsibility for ensuring that there are procedures in place to guarantee the adequacy and effectiveness of financial control and corporate governance arrangements.
- 3.2 A key component of good governance for all organisations is to have in place a Governance and Audit Committee. Bridgend County Borough Council complies with this requirement; the Terms and Reference of the Committee, as included within the Council's Constitution, are set in line with the Local Government Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The responsibilities of Governance and Audit Committee, as required by the above legislation, are included at **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 3.3 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 determined that former Audit Committees would be re-named Governance and Audit Committees and from May 2022 the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee had to be a lay member and that one third of its membership had to be lay members. Bridgend's Governance and Audit Committee had its full quota of 4 lay members and 8 elected councillors during 2022/23. The Committee held 6 meetings during the municipal year.
- 3.4 Changes to the way the Council is operating since Covid-19, including new risks as a result of different ways of working, remote and digital working and other service changes have continued to influence the delivery of Council services.

The Governance and Audit Committee was mindful of this in setting its workplan for the year and also of the need for robust and proportionate oversight of the Council's governance, internal control and risk managements to be in place. The Governance and Audit Committee focussed on its core responsibilities:

- Reviewing the draft financial statements;
- Scrutinising and being satisfied with the Council's Annual Governance Statement, to demonstrate how governance supports the achievement of objectives, and monitor management action in-year to further improve arrangements;
- Monitoring the Council's internal audit function in terms of overseeing independence, objectivity, performance and professionalism, through the regular reporting of performance and finalised audit assignments;
- Considering the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements;
- Considering reports and recommendations of external audit in respect of the Council;
- Supporting the ongoing development and effectiveness of Governance and Audit Committee; and
- Ensuring compliance with legal requirements, namely the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, in respect of overseeing the Council's performance assessment and the arrangements for handling complaints.

3.5 All reports presented to the Governance and Audit Committee during 2022/23 are shown at **Appendix 2**.

#### **4. WORK DELIVERED IN 2022/23**

4.1 The CIPFA Guidance ('Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities & Police 2022 Edition') identifies 'Core Functions' of a Governance and Audit Committee along with what it refers to as possible 'wider functions' of a Governance and Audit Committee. The Committee undertook its role during 2022/23 by receiving a comprehensive suite of reports in line with its work programme for the year, as shown at **Appendix 2**.

4.2 *Be satisfied that the Council's assurance statements, including the annual governance statement (AGS), properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it, and demonstrate how governance supports the achievement of the Council's objectives.*

4.2.1 The Draft AGS for 2021/22 was reported to the Governance and Audit Committee; the Committee endorsed it and recommended its certification by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive for inclusion within the Council's 2021/22 Statement of Accounts. As part of this process, the Review of Effectiveness and proposals for improvement have been reviewed and challenged by the Council's Corporate Management Board and Governance and Audit Committee.

4.2.2 For information, the draft AGS for 2022/23 was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in July 2023.

4.3 *Internal Audit functions:*

- *oversee its independence, objectivity, performance and professionalism;*
- *support the effectiveness of the internal audit process;*
- *promote the effective use of internal audit within the assurance framework.*

4.3.1 From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 the Council's Internal Audit Service transferred to a Regional Internal Audit Service, hosted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council and comprising four local authorities: Bridgend County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council.

4.3.2 The Covid-19 pandemic required Council Services to quickly adapt and implement changes to service delivery arrangements to ensure continued provision of essential frontline services. Although the situation settled during 2022/23, an assessment of key risks and changes in service delivery arrangements were taken into account as part of compiling the Internal Audit Annual Strategy and Risk Based Internal Audit Plan 2022/23.

4.3.3 The Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022/23 was reported to and approved by the Governance and Audit Committee. The Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service outlined that the proposed plan would need to continue to recognise particular risks and challenges arising from revised working arrangements, such as remote ways of working.

4.3.4 During the year, the Governance and Audit Committee received Internal Audit performance updates, details of all finalised audit assignments and progress on implementation of audit recommendations; this suite of information has enabled Members to consider the effectiveness of the Internal Audit process for 2022/23.

4.3.5 A key part of the Governance and Audit Committee's role is to support the Council's Internal Audit Service to remain independent, assess whether it has adequate resources available to it and to monitor the performance and quality of work delivered throughout the year. The Internal Audit Service fulfilled this requirement through its Internal Audit Charter, that was presented to and approved by the Governance and Audit Committee and provided the Committee with information to assess the independence of the Internal Audit Service.

4.4 *Monitor the effectiveness of the control environment, including arrangements for ensuring value for money, supporting standards and ethics and for managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption.*

4.4.1 Only 1 *Limited Assurance* audit report was issued in 2022/23 which was reported to the Governance and Audit Committee within Internal Audit's (IA) 'Progress against the IA Risk Based Plan 2022-23 reports during the year. The results of Internal Audit's work for the financial year is brought together in the form of the *Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report*, which for 2021/22 was reported to Committee in June 2022. For 2022/23 the *Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report* was reported in the first half of the 2023/24 financial year.

4.4.2 Based on the internal audit reviews completed during 2021/22, the overall opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and internal control for 2021/22 was *Reasonable* - is 'Effective with a small number of areas identified for improvement'. In addition, no significant cross-cutting control issues have been identified that would impact on the Council's overall control environment and the weaknesses that have been identified are service specific.

4.4.3 1 audit assignment completed to final report stage during 2021/22 received an audit opinion of *Limited Assurance*, there were no *No Assurance* opinions. This audit was followed up during 2022/23 and was given a *Reasonable Assurance* audit opinion.

4.4.4 With regard to the risks of fraud and corruption:

- In July 2022 the Annual Corporate Fraud Report 2021/22 was presented. This update provided assurance on the Council's arrangements to tackle potential fraud and covered the internal control environment that supports this area.
- The Anti-tax Evasion Policy was reported to Committee prior to it being presented to Cabinet for approval.

4.5 *Consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements and the control environment, reviewing the risk profile of the organisation and assurances that action is being taken on risk-related issues, including partnerships and collaborations with other organisations.*

4.5.1 Quarterly updates were presented to Committee throughout the year which enabled officers and Members to identify and assess trends and the crosscutting nature of risks with the ability to drill down to the detail of risks as and when required.

4.5.2 The draft AGS was presented prior to its inclusion with the Statement of Accounts.

- 4.5.3 In line with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Committee reviewed the Council's draft Self-Assessment for 2021/22 (incorporating the Council's Corporate Performance Report) in advance of consideration at a meeting of the full Council (noting that the self-assessment included information in respect of partnership / collaboration arrangements).
- 4.6 *Review the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.*
- 4.6.1 Governance and Audit Committee were presented with the draft 2021/22 Statements of Account for the Council and Audit Wales provided a verbal update on the progress on the audit of those accounts; they informed the Committee that no significant matters had been identified to date although there were delays due to the issues around infrastructure assets.
- 4.6.2 Following review by Committee, the Council's 2021/22 audited Statement of Accounts were reported back through Cabinet and approved by full Council; an unqualified opinion was issued by Audit Wales (i.e. clean bill of health).
- 4.6.3 The Council's Treasury Management and Investment Strategy was updated and presented to Committee for review prior to it being reporting to full Council.
- 4.7 *Consider the reports and recommendations of external audit and inspection agencies and their implications for governance, risk management or control.*
- 4.7.1 At the first Governance and Audit Committee meeting of the 2022/23 Municipal Year, Audit Wales reported the 2022 Audit Plan for the Council, and thereafter provided quarterly Audit Wales Work Programme Updates during the year to enable the Committee to be kept up-to-date with the work of Audit Wales and providing opportunity to seek clarity / further information where deemed required.
- 4.7.2 Audit Wales presented finalised reports to the Governance and Audit Committee during the year (accompanied by Council progress updates on the implementation of recommendations / proposals for improvement contained within the reports):
- Direct Payments for Adult Social Care
  - Assurance and Risk Assessment Review for 2021/22
  - Springing Forward – Strategic Workforce Management – Bridgend County Borough Council
  - Springing Forward – Strategic Asset Management – Bridgend County Borough Council



- Transformational Leadership Programme Board – Baseline Governance Review – Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Partnership Board
- Performance Management Review - Bridgend County Borough Council

## 5. **SELF-ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE CIPFA PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES & POLICE 2018 EDITION**

- 5.1 The self-assessment checklist based on the CIPFA Guidance was circulated to members of the Committee in order to assess the existing skills, knowledge and areas of expertise of members and to identify any gaps or training requirements.
- 5.2 88% of responses from members of this Committee indicated that their level of knowledge and experience across the 10 statements, as shown in **Appendix 3**, was good or satisfactory. The areas where little knowledge or experience was indicated as highest were Complaints Handling and Council Performance Self-Assessment.
- 5.3 The results indicate that Governance and Audit Committee members have an overall sound base of knowledge and experience in the areas of responsibility for this Committee.

## 6. **CURRENT SITUATION**

- 6.1 The draft report was presented to Governance and Audit Committee on 28 September 2023. A Member noted that there did not seem to be any strong improvements recommended as part of this report and wondered if there could be a section to do with how Members could do better next year; this will be incorporated in next year's report. Members were given the opportunity to feedback any further comments to the Head of the Regional Internal Audit Service; no further comments were received.

## 7. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 During 2022/23 the Council's Governance and Audit Committee has reviewed and challenged a range of topic areas, including the work of Internal and External Audit, the Committee's responsibilities as set out in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and its responsibility in respect of reviewing and scrutinising the Council's Treasury Management arrangements.
- 7.2 From a review of the coverage of Governance and Audit Committee's work and oversight during the year, as set out in Section 2, it is considered that the Committee has delivered its workplan and responsibilities in line with its Terms of Reference.

- 7.3 The Annual Report also sets out, in Section 5 / **Appendix 3**, the results of the self-assessment undertaken against the checklist included within the CIPFA Guidance. The outcome of the 2022/23 self-assessment process, consistent with previous years, demonstrates that the Council has sound arrangements in place in respect of its Governance and Audit Committee, noting that the level of knowledge and experience of members was good or satisfactory.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE IN LINE WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2011 AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) ACT 2021**

**Chapter 2, section 81 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (revised)**

**Local authorities to appoint governance and audit committees**

A local authority must appoint a committee (a "Governance and Audit Committee") to—

- a) review and scrutinise the authority's financial affairs,
- b) make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's financial affairs,
- c) review and assess the risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements of the authority,
- d) make reports and recommendations to the authority on the adequacy and effectiveness of those arrangements,
- (da) review and assess the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively,
- (db) make reports and recommendations in relation to the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively
- e) oversee the authority's internal and external audit arrangements, and
- f) review the financial statements prepared by the authority.

A local authority may confer on its Governance and Audit Committee such other functions as the authority considers suitable to be exercised by such a committee.

It is for a Governance and Audit Committee to determine how to exercise its functions.

**Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021**

**Council Performance Arrangements**

- (i) To consider the Council's draft Annual Performance Self-Assessment report and if deemed necessary may make recommendations for changes to the Council.
- (ii) To receive the Council's finalised Annual Self-Assessment report in respect of a financial year as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of that financial year.
- (iii) At least once during the period between two consecutive ordinary elections of councillors to the Council, consider the independent Panel Performance Assessment report into which the Council is meeting its performance requirements.
- (iv) To receive and review the Council's draft response to the report of the independent Panel Performance Assessment and if deemed necessary may make recommendations for changes to the statements made in the draft response to the Council.

**Complaints Handling**

- (i) To review and assess the Council's ability to deal with complaints effectively.
- (ii) To make reports and recommendations in relation to the Council's ability to deal with complaints effectively.



Treasury Management							
Treasury Management Outturn Report 2021-22		✓					
Treasury Management Half Year Report 2022-23					✓		
Treasury Management Strategy 2023-24						✓	
Risk Assurance							
Corporate Risk Assessment	✓				✓	✓	
Counter Fraud							
Corporate Fraud Report 2021-22		✓					
Anti Tax Evasion Policy							✓
Others							
Complaints Process							✓
Disabled Facilities Grants				✓			
Annual Self Assessment of the Council's Performance	✓			✓			

**Self-assessment of Good Practice**

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL - GOVERNANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE - ANALYSIS OF THE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

	Good Knowledge	Satisfactory Knowledge	Little Knowledge	Total	Any Comments
1. Organisational Knowledge	4	5	1	10	
2. Governance and Audit Committee Role and Functions	5	4	1	10	
3. Internal Audit	5	4	1	10	
4. Financial Management and Accounting	4	5	1	10	
5. External Audit	5	4	1	10	
6. Risk Management	4	4	2	10	
7. Counter Fraud	4	4	2	10	Further work to consider councils arrangements.
8. Values of Good Governance	5	4	1	10	
9. Council Performance Self-Assessment	4	5	1	10	
10. Complaints Handling	3	6	1	10	

**All comments received**

I have very limited knowledge in these areas and welcome any training opportunities.

Training and briefings provided so far have been most useful.

Keen to understand further the Council’s specific arrangements across compliants handling, risk management (including fraud)

Training has provided a working knowledge to be supplemented over the coming months

I have the required support and glad the Council Team is available at all time to support.