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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
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Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 /
643694 / 643513

Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Tuesday, 26 November 2024

Dear Councillor,

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB/ Remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Monday, 2 December 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 (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008 (including whipping declarations).
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 6
To receive for approval the minutes of the meeting of the 30/09/24.
4. Housing and Homelessness Update 7 - 14

Invitees:

Councillor Neelo Farr – Regeneration, Economic Development & Housing

Carys Lord - Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change

Martin Morgans – Head of Performance and Partnerships

Ryan Jones – Strategic Housing Commissioning Manager

Adam Provoost - Strategic Planning Policy Team Leader

Joanne Ginn – Housing Solutions Manager

Georgina Wayman – Environmental Health Officer

Helen Pembroke – Team Manager – Bridgend & Vale (Housing Enforcement & Pollution Control)

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5. Conclusions and Recommendations
6. Information report - United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Funds 15 - 38
7. Forward Work Programme Update 39 - 56
8. 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 would like to view this meeting live, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / 643159.

Yours faithfully

K Watson

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

Councillors:

S J Bletsoe
JPD Blundell
N Clarke
RJ Collins

Councillors

C Davies
P W Jenkins
MJ Kearn
W J Kendall

Councillors

J E Pratt
G Walter
I Williams
MJ Williams

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor JPD Blundell – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe

C Davies

MJ Williams

Present Virtually

N Clarke

RJ Collins

P W Jenkins

W J Kendall

J E Pratt

G Walter

I Williams

Apologies for Absence

Councillor MJ Kearn and the Corporate Director of Communities

Invitees:

Councillor Hywel Williams – Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

Councillor Paul Davies – Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment

Zak Shell – Head of Operations Community Services

Jen Sparrow – Cleaner Streets & Waste Contract Manger

Officers:

Lucy Beard

Scrutiny Officer

Stephen Griffiths

Democratic Services Officer - Committees

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jon-Paul Blundell – Prejudicial – Member of Cabinet when Item 4 considered.

This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> That the minutes of a meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 dated 16 July 2024, to be approved as true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	30 September 2024

Cllr Martin Williams was nominated as Chair and chaired the meeting for the following item only.

82. Future Waste Service Options

Decision Made	<p><u>Resolved:</u> Following consideration of the report and detailed discussion with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers the Committee made the following comments and Recommendations:</p> <p>Following consideration of the report on the options for delivering Waste Service post 2026 Members felt that more investigation was still needed to provide further information on the LATCo. and In-house options, in particular more detail on the following including the impact and associated risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staff recruitment;- Profit and loss to be expected;- Pay scales – protection of employees;- Commercial Waste and the Competitive market;- The IT system and the advantages and disadvantages of one system in place;- The control, challenge and flexibility of the options. <p>Members expressed that more time was required to explore with local authorities closer to home that had followed one of these options, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, particularly the LATCo. option, as either option would be a big change for the Authority and a fully informed decision would be required.</p>
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	The Committee recommended that there be a year’s extension to the current contract with Plan B, to allow more time for work to be done to really understand the LATCo and In-House options, the extent of risk and the full impact on resources.
Date Decision Made	30 September 2024

83. Information Report - 2023-24 Quarter 4 Performance

Decision Made	<u>Resolved:</u> The Committee noted the publication of the information report on 2023-2024 Quarter 4 Performance report.
Date Decision Made	30 September 2024

84. Forward Work Programme Update

Decision Made	<p><u>Resolved:</u> The Committee considered and approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appenidx A, Subject to inclusion of the items below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP, Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and any updates from the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, following consideration in this cycle of Committee Meetings.</p> <p>The Committee requested the following be included in the FWP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Member raised a potential item for inclusion of the FWP on major parks in the borough, be scoped and discussed at a future forward work planning meeting. 2. Members requested that the Porthcawl Regeneration and Pavilion Update, be scheduled for the February meeting alongside the Maesteg Town Hall report.
Date Decision Made	30 September 2024

Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	30 September 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#).

The meeting closed at 18.42.

Meeting of:	SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3
Date of Meeting:	2 DECEMBER 2024
Report Title:	HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS UPDATE
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	MARTIN MORGANS HEAD OF PARTNERSHIP AND HOUSING
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	<p>This report provides members of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 with an update on key areas of housing and homelessness, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affordable Housing - Empty Homes - Housing Support Programme Strategy - Housing Support Grant Uplift

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 on key areas of housing and homelessness, including progress on the delivery of affordable housing, reducing empty homes, funding for Housing Support Grant funded services and progress in delivering on the objectives set out in Bridgend County Borough Council’s (BCBC’s) Housing Support Programme Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1 In December 2023 Cabinet approved the adoption of a Housing Support Programme Strategy (HSP Strategy). The strategy was developed, following a comprehensive review and a period of public consultation, including a report to Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 in September 2023.

2.2 The HSP Strategy highlighted some key challenges facing the Council in delivering housing and homelessness services. These are summarised below:

- Increasing homelessness applications. Applications are consistently higher than in previous years. In 2023-24 1,006 homelessness applications were received. 67% of these applications were from single person households.
- Temporary accommodation placements have grown exponentially. At the end of 2019-20 BCBC were providing temporary accommodation to 83 households. At the end of October 2024 temporary accommodation was provided to 248 households, representing a 199% increase over this period.
- Individuals accommodated in temporary accommodation often have significant support needs, in relation to addressing their housing need or maintaining accommodation. Based on analysis undertaken in 2022 it is estimated that around 47% of households in temporary accommodation require some level of support. Housing Support Grant service outcomes suggest that ,of those that do require support, 60% of individuals require support in more than one area and 45% require support in more than two areas.
- The increase in temporary accommodation placements has led to a significant cost pressure to the Council. In 2019-20 the net spend on temporary accommodation from core budget was £135,260. At the end of 2023-24 the net spend from core budget was £3,096,559.
- The wider demand for social housing from those in housing need has also increased. At the end of 2019-20 there were 816 households registered on Bridgend's Common Housing Register. At the end of August 2024 this number had increased to 3254 households. There is a particular challenge around single person accommodation, larger family units and accessible accommodation.

2.3 One year on from the adoption of the HSP Strategy section 3 of this report will provide updates on key areas of progress, including in relation to the delivery of affordable housing, reducing empty homes and funding for Housing Support Grant funded services.

3. Current situation / proposal

Affordable Housing

3.1 The Bridgend Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-33 (LDP) was adopted in March 2024. During the plan period development proposals within the LDP are expected to deliver a target total of 1,711 affordable dwellings across the county borough.

3.2 The primary capital funding stream for the development of affordable housing is the Social Housing Grant (SHG). In recent years this has been supplemented by the Transitional Accommodation Capital Grant (TACP). On 28 July 2022 the Welsh

Government launched the £65 million TACP to support a wide range of projects by local authorities and registered social landlords to create extra housing capacity across Wales.

- 3.3 This funding seeks to deliver schemes more quickly by being flexible on things such as space standards, types of accommodation funded, acquisition of properties, and the acceptance of a 'meanwhile' use for refurbished buildings or undeveloped sites for a short/medium period of time. In 2023-24 £4.25 million of TACP was invested in Bridgend, creating an additional 41 units of accommodation. BCBC's TACP allocation for 2024-25 is £4.5 million, which will create an additional 30 units of accommodation.
- 3.4 SHG is the main capital grant provided by Welsh Government to fund the provision of affordable housing in Wales. Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Councils can access this funding for the provision of building new homes and the rehabilitation of existing buildings to provide homes at social and intermediate rent.
- 3.5 Expenditure of the SHG is approved and decided by Welsh Government after a series of concept, financial and technical scrutiny processes. The development journey can cross over several years to deliver. In 2023-24 £11,803,167 of spend was allocated to RSLs. This grant is provided for local housing development over a rolling 3 year programme called the Programme Delivery Plan (PDP).
- 3.6 In the current main programme, there are 370 homes in development which equates to £53,595,422 of SHG. The PDP is fluid and updated every quarter; it is estimated that the proposed number of new homes will increase beyond that currently committed in the programme. The Committee should note this is a guide as to the current PDP and this is likely to change over time, for example we expect new schemes to be added and amendments to existing schemes.
- 3.7 Monthly meetings with RSL partners are key to taking forward the above referenced funding streams and developments. A Bridgend Housing Partnership consisting of senior officers within the Council and RSLs ensures strategic oversight and quarterly meetings with colleagues in Welsh Government also support this area of work.
- 3.8 S.106 agreements, as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are negotiated with private developers, as part of statutory planning decisions and require private developers to carry out specific obligations. Examples include a developer providing units of accommodation to be made available for the purpose of affordable housing or a financial contribution to the Council to mitigate the impact of development. BCBC's position is always to seek the delivery of affordable units on-site, wherever possible.

Empty Homes

- 3.9 There are several strands of work in this area, with the aim to reduce empty properties across the county, to contribute towards the availability of housing. BCBC's Empty Property Strategy sets out the Council's intentions for bringing empty properties into beneficial use. The Council's current Empty Property Strategy is currently in the process of being renewed, with the intention of a new strategy

being developed in the near future. An Empty Property Coordinator and corporate Empty Property Working Group oversee this work.

3.10 Key strands of work in this area are summarised below:

- **Houses into Homes Empty Property Loan Scheme.** This is an interest free loan available to empty property owners that wish to improve the condition of their empty property with a view to renting it on the private market or selling it on.
- **Owner Occupier Empty Property Grants.** Empty property owners can apply for a grant of up to £25,000 to assist them to renovate their property to make it safe to live in and improve their energy efficiency. This is available for owners wishing to live in their empty property once the work is completed.
- **Transforming Towns Enforcement Fund.** In October 2024 Cabinet approved entering into interest free loan agreements for the purpose of accessing loan funding. This funding will enable the Council to proceed with two enforced sales and one compulsory purchase of long term empty properties. Future applications to the fund will be considered on a case by case basis.

3.11 The Empty Property Working Group puts a particular focus on 20 empty properties of most concern at any one time. These properties are determined after consideration of set criteria, including the length of time the property has been empty, the condition and the appearance. In 2023-24 of the 20 properties of most concern:

- **2** properties have been **sold**
- **2** properties are under **renovation**
- **2** properties have completed **probate**
- **2** properties have been served with an enforcement **notice**
- **3** property owners have been **successfully prosecuted** for non-compliance with an enforcement notice
- **1** property has been subject to **work in default**
- **1** property is subject to a **compulsory purchase order**, which is pending Cabinet approval in December 2024
- **8** properties are subject to **informal action**
- **3** properties are subject to no action at this stage.

(Please note that some properties may be subject to multiple actions).

3.12 In 2023-24 6.8% of all empty properties which had been empty for 6 or more months as of the 1st April 2023 were returned to use with direct action from the Council. In the same period 6.3% of all empty properties which had been empty for 12 or more months were returned to use with direct action from the Council.

3.13 In relation to Churches and Chapels the borough has a significant number of vacant and derelict churches and chapels, a problem that is faced by most Local Authority areas in Wales and an issue recognised by Cadw and other stakeholder

organisations in the historic environment. BCBC has no current programme or resource dedicated to the reuse of these historic buildings. As the majority are in private ownership and do not have a Class C3 residential use, officer engagement is often owner led, on an ad hoc case by case basis, via its statutory duties.

Housing Support Programme Strategy

- 3.14 As detailed at paragraph 2.1 the Council adopted a HSP Strategy in December 2023. The strategy includes an Action Plan, which details objectives, actions and timescales, linked to six strategic priorities. Key areas of progress taken forward in the last 12 months are detailed below:
- 3.15 **BCBC purchase of accommodation.** In March 2024, Cabinet approved a proposal, authorising the acquisition of Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) style properties for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation. Since March 2024 work has taken place alongside the Corporate Landlord department to purchase two properties, with a third purchase currently in progress. All three properties are HMO style properties. The average purchase price is £300,000. Capital funding has been provided via S.106 funding, as contained in BCBC's capital programme. Once the third property is purchased the three properties will deliver 16 units of accommodation to single persons.
- 3.16 Purchase of these properties has enabled BCBC to deliver increased temporary accommodation units directly. An agent has been appointed to support with day-to-day management of the accommodation. Individuals are supported via housing related support services, where necessary, to support move on as soon as possible. From a cost perspective delivery of these units costs around 70% less than the average alternative in a tourism style property. In September 2024 Cabinet approved a further three purchases to scale up the benefits of this work.
- 3.17 **Maple Tree House.** In addition to the purchase of new accommodation, work has been taken forward in recent months to utilise an existing BCBC owned building, Maple Tree House, to further increase the Council's stock of temporary accommodation.
- 3.18 After a vacant period, the building was re-opened in August 2024 to provide temporary accommodation. To support ongoing delivery, a housing related support provider has been commissioned to provide on-site support 24/7. Several improvements have also been made to the building, including CCTV, fob access, privacy windows and improved perimeter fencing. The building will provide 9 units of accommodation, again enabling less reliance on other types of accommodation and supporting cost reduction.
- 3.19 **Leasing Scheme Wales.** In November 2023 Cabinet approved the implementation of Leasing Scheme Wales in the borough. The scheme enables the Council to lease properties from private landlords and owners of empty homes.
- 3.20 All properties made available through the scheme are let to tenants with the intention that good quality accommodation is available on an ongoing basis, providing longer term security of accommodation. Properties are prioritised for

households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, to reduce the need for temporary accommodation.

3.21 In return for leasing their property to the Council property owners receive:

- Guaranteed rent for the length of the lease at the relevant Local Housing Allowance rate.
- Where necessary, a grant of up to £5,000 to bring properties up to an agreed standard. Additional grant funding of up to £25,000 is available for long term empty properties.
- Management of properties for the length of the lease, including property inspections, repairs, and maintenance Support to tenants throughout the tenancy.

3.22 Bridgend Leasing Scheme Wales went live in early 2024. Since going live we have had 135 queries from property owners. There are currently 6 properties which are live and occupied by individuals who would otherwise be in temporary accommodation. A further 14 properties are currently going through the process of being considered for the scheme.

Housing Support Grant Uplift

3.23 The Housing Support Grant (HSG) is a key and long standing funding stream for housing related support services. It is an early intervention grant programme to support activity which prevents people from becoming homeless, stabilises their housing situation, or helps potentially homeless people to find and keep accommodation.

3.24 For 2024-25 Welsh Government provided an additional £13 million uplift across Wales, distributed in line with the existing HSG distribution formula. For BCBC this meant an uplift of £610,661. BCBC's total HSG allocation for 2024-25 is £8,572,183.86.

3.25 The Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government allocated this additional funding with the clear expectation that this should be used to address pay pressures across the sector in the first instance and assist commissioners in supporting providers to deliver on Welsh Government's broader commitment to Fair Work and the Real Living Wage. This is in acknowledgement of the importance and value of the workforce and to support the sector in achieving the Real Living Wage. In Bridgend 72% of HSG funding is used to commission services via third sector providers. Commissioning arrangements are undertaken in line with BCBC's Contract Procedure Rules.

3.26 Following notification of the uplift and expectations, engagement took place with HSG commissioned providers on a one to one basis. Through engagement we sought to understand the position with regards to providers' current funding, in particular whether funding is sufficient to ensure contracts are not in a deficit position. This work established that whilst some contracts are adequately funded, a number of contracts were in a financial deficit to varying degrees. Where a contract deficit was identified work was undertaken to ensure this is a genuine position and to explore all options to resolve, including maximising all funding streams and restructuring staff teams.

3.27 In July 2024 to ensure no HSG commissioned contracts are in a deficit position Cabinet approved contract uplifts to support providers effective from 1st April 2024 and in place for the remaining lifetime of the contract. The total value of the uplifts is £274,605.92 per annum. The remainder of the HSG uplift funding not required to increase contracts (£336,055.08 per annum) has been allocated in accordance with existing processes, with governance via a cross directorate Lead Forum, Chaired by the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change.

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 Tackling homelessness is a Welsh Government priority. The report contributes to the following goals within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- A prosperous Wales – Reducing homelessness supports a prosperous Wales by reducing cost to the public purse.
- A resilient Wales – Our Housing Support Programme Strategy aims to prevent and relieve homelessness, increasing the resilience of both individuals supported and the general structures in place to support the goal of achieving a position where homelessness in Wales is rare, brief and non recurrent.
- A Wales of cohesive communities – Preventing individuals from becoming homeless will support cohesive communities.
- A globally responsive Wales – Homelessness is an issue across the globe. These strategic documents set out the approach Bridgend will take to support Wales in its efforts around this agenda.

5.2 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 The prevention and relief of homelessness supports the agenda around climate change. In considering BCBC's housing need, supply and demand and the intention of delivering affordable housing schemes to meet these needs, schemes will be developed in line with Welsh Government planning and standards requirements, which support moves to tackle climate change.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 Homelessness and housing support services play a key role in supporting BCBC's safeguarding agenda, both from an individual perspective with services often supporting vulnerable individuals, known to safeguarding agencies.

7.2 The priorities set out in the Housing Support Programme Strategy reference a need to improve collaboration with key stakeholders, with specific objectives around improving collaboration to implement the national care leavers and accommodation and support framework, a key part of Corporate Parenting implications.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 consider and provide comment on this report.

Background documents

None

Agenda Item 6

Meeting of:	SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3
Date of Meeting:	2 DECEMBER 2024
Report Title:	INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOTING
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY
Responsible Officer:	MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER - SCRUTINY
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	To inform the Committee of the Information Report for noting regarding the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Funds.

1. Purpose of Report

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

2. Background

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Council it was resolved to approve a revised procedure for the presentation to the Committee 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 the Committee:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Published</u>
United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Funds	25 November 2024

3.2 Availability of Document

The document has been circulated to Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3

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 the Committee acknowledges the publication of the report referred to in paragraph 3.1 of this report.

Background documents

None

Meeting of:	SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3
Date of Meeting:	2 DECEMBER 2024
Report Title:	UNITED KINGDOM SHARED PROSPERITY FUND GRANT FUNDS
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
Responsible Officer:	IEUAN SHERWOOD, GROUP MANAGER ECONOMY, NATURAL RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABILITY
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the Council's policy framework or procedure rules as a result of this report.
Executive Summary:	<p>The purpose of this report is to update Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 on the following grant funds, funded via the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridgend Valley Placemaking Property Improvement Grant • Empty Property Survey Grants • Community Feasibility Fund • The Business Development Grant • Bridgend County Business Future Scoping Programme • Bridgend County Tourism Events Support <p>In addition, the report updates Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 on the Prosperity Framework.</p> <p>The report also updates Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 on UKSPF resources for 2025/26.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 on the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) grant funds and the Prosperity Framework. The report also updates Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 on UKSPF resources for 2025/26.

2. Background

- 2.1 The UKSPF is a key part of the UK government's funding, forming part of complementary funding, including the Levelling Up Fund and Community Ownership Fund.
- 2.2 The primary aim of the fund is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. Underpinning this aim are three investment Priorities: communities and place; supporting local business and people and skills.
- The **Communities and Place** investment priority will enable places to invest to restore their community spaces and relationships and create the foundations for economic development at the neighbourhood-level. The intention of this is to strengthen the social fabric of communities, supporting in building pride in place.
 - The **Supporting Local Business** investment priority will enable places to fund interventions that support local businesses to thrive, innovate and grow.
 - The **People and Skills** investment priority will help reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment and education. Places can also target funding into skills for local areas to support employment and local growth.
- 2.3 As part of the People and Skills priority there is a dedicated and ringfenced element of the UKSPF called Multiply which seeks to improve adult numeracy skills.
- 2.4 The UKSPF allows Local Authorities to deliver activity via a range of mechanisms, namely:
- o In-House Delivery
 - o Commissioning
 - o Procurement
 - o Grant Funds
- 2.5 In July 2022 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) Cabinet delegated authority to the Corporate Director Communities to submit the Bridgend County Local Investment Plan to Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCTCBC) for inclusion in the overall submission of the South East Wales Local Investment Plan to the UK Government. As part of the funding process there was, and remains, a need to appoint one local authority to assume the role of the 'Lead Local Authority' for the region for the UKSPF. It was agreed by BCBC Cabinet that RCTCBC performs this role.
- 2.6 In March 2023 the Corporate Director Communities exercised the authority delegated by BCBC Cabinet in July 2022 to authorise entering into a regional funding agreement regarding the UKSPF with RCTCBC, under decision reference CMM-ED-23-046.
- 2.7 A report was produced for Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 in June 2023 which resulted in a further update and report to Cabinet in June 2023. This was required to set up the grant funds for businesses and community organisations to apply to. To facilitate the award of grants a series of unforeseen amendments were required to the Council's Scheme of Delegation of Functions in relation to Cabinet Functions.

2.8 Following the end of the 2023-24 financial year Corporate Management Board (CMB) requested a report to update on progress of the UKSPF. That report was presented in May 2024 and the spend to date and forecast spend information at that time was presented. CMB gave a mandate to the Economic Programme Board for a process to be undertaken, led by BCBC finance colleagues, of 1-2-1 project reviews with each project lead. The focus was on options relating to offsetting, reallocation and possible transfer of funds to other Local Authorities.

2.9 In August 2024 CMB endorsed the exercise undertaken by all UKSPF project leads and the Economic Programme Board to work towards fully utilising the UKSPF funds and agreed the proposals to move forward. A report was presented to Cabinet and Corporate Management Board (CCMB) in September 2024 to set out the process undertaken.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 A summary of the delivery of each of the UKSPF grant funds is set out below.

The Business Development Grant

3.2 The Business Development Grant was set up to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Bridgend County Borough to diversify, decarbonise and grow which contributes to creating a vibrant and strong local economy. The grant covers the whole County and provides 50% of eligible capital project costs. The minimum grant is £5,000 and the maximum grant available is £25,000 (excluding VAT). Table 1 below gives a summary of grant awards through this grant fund.

Table 1 Business Development Grant summary

Business	Project Summary	Grant approved	Total Project Costs
Comgem Limited	Purchasing additional IT equipment which will facilitate expansion and development.	£10,254.49	£20,508.98
Vision Print Solutions LTD	Purchasing Digital production print machine	£9,813.49	£19,626.98
Ginkgo Garden Services	Purchase equipment associated with establishing a new works depot to store plants and materials.	£25,000.00	£51,428.64
Picton Stone Ltd	Purchase a mobile office unit and furniture to allow a more sustainable and accessible office at their Pyle site.	£5,893.00	£11,786.00
Unisan Limited	Purchase Injection moulding tools to make newly designed recycling bins to ensure the bin components can be assembled faster.	£25,000.00	£55,000.00

Engineering Industrial Solutions Ltd	Purchasing an industrial acoustic imaging camera designed for compressed air leak detection.	£8,084.58	£16,169.17
YC Plastics Manufacturing Ltd	Oversheet current roof to make the premises a safer and healthier facility.	£25,000.00	£50,800.00
Godspeed brakes ltd	Purchase a new CNC Machine.	£25,000.00	£60,000.00
Burts The Bakers Ltd	Purchase of a labelling machine for the products.	£12,270.00	£24,540.00
A- Head of The Game Enterprises	Purchasing kitchen equipment to assist with a culinary school expansion project.	£22,024.29	£44,048.57
Bridgend Ravens Rugby Club Limited	Purchase a digital screen.	£25,000.00	£54,000.00
Club Penybont Limited	Provide base and ground works and electricity, water connections for Portable Female, Officials Changing Accommodation and Merchandise Shop.	£20,000.00	£40,000.00
Enhanced Consultancy Ltd	Website, flooring, various medical equipment and building work at Apollo Business Village	£16,827.83	£33,655.65
La Cocina Tapas	Purchasing of food lift and tables and full shop fit out.	£25,000.00	£56,022.83
Anstee Landscapes and Tree Felling Contractors Ltd	Purchase a mobile elevated work platform (MEWP), which will allow the business to conduct tree work safer and more efficiently.	£25,000.00	£79,000.00
Drainforce Ltd	Purchase Solar panels and batters to charge plant and equipment.	£24,500.00	£49,000.00
Edwards Steel Services Limited	Purchase CNC plasma cutting machine	£25,000.00	£107,000.00
LMG Solutions Ltd	Purchasing IT equipment, ensuring compliance with the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR).	£6,682.24	£13,364.47

Rhymney Brewery Limited	Purchase PV solar panels and battery, new artificial slate roof to incorporate solar installation, Hyper efficient water cooler, Energy saving glass washer, Energy saving Cellar Cooling and Smart Cellar	£25,000.00	£50,300.00
Pyle and Kenfig Golf Club	2 x Samsung TVs, Sliding door double fridge, Computer till system, Development of Club's website, Installation of disabled ramp, Furniture for Clubhouse lounge area,	£15,334.20	£30,734.34
RJ Chumley Ground Maintenance	Purchase of tree shears and land clearing grab.	£24,750.00	£49,500.00
Bespoke-UK Ltd	Purchase a Falach Cube 20 Briquette Machine, the installation of more energy efficient LED warehouse lighting and the purchase of a more up to date and more efficient edge bander machine	£11,380.00	£22,760.00
Summitk2 Limited	Make the business compliant with the disability discrimination act, including purchase and installation of new turnstile, accessible doors and flooring.	£12,157.32	£24,314.64
Armex Tech Limited	Purchasing Ajax Systems control alarm panel x 6, Ajax Systems outdoor motion detector x 30, Ajax Systems outdoor siren x 12, Kiosk Housing Unit, Vinyl Graphics, SmartSolar Battery Units & Solar Panels.	£5,184.92	£10,369.84
R W Christopher Crane Hire Ltd	Purchasing Rolling Road to Test & Certify Vehicles	£17,630.00	£35,260.00
Odyssey Pensions Limited	Capital expenditure on property improvements, PC equipment and website re-design	£12,371.91	£25,278.00
S D M Glass Ltd	Complete sheet roof covering.	£23,375.00	£46,750.00
InfoTeam International	Apple 14 inch MacBook Pro Computers x 5, Apple 15 inch MacBook Air Computers x 5, Apple 13 inch MacBook Air Computers x 5, Office furniture:- Chairs, Desks, Various Storage, Drawers, Shelving Units, Desk Lamps	£21,740.84	£43,481.67

Resolution Care Services Ltd	Office Reconfiguration for Training, Social Media & Support Service Growth and Creation of New Website and Social Media Platform	£10,942.00	£21,884.00
Severnside Car Company	Purchasing Mobile phones x 2, Phone System, Laptops x 2, Desks x 3, Desk Chairs x 3, Customer Chairs x 8, Uniform, Printer	£5,096.33	£10,192.65
R & R Coles	Conversion of unused space to an additional surgical treatment room.	£20,417.50	£49,001.99
Tyre Boss Ltd	Hydraulic bead breaker kit, specialist attachment teletruck, Hydraulic OTR tyre press, Shipping Container and Compressor	£21,412.00	£42,824.00
J H Apsee & Sons	Supply and fit of new fire alarm system to warehouses	£5,175.00	£10,350.00
Club Penybont Limited	Ground works re Electrical Armoured Cable to Portacabin Car Park Entrance and Main Gate Entry and Gate/Carpark Lighting	£2,159.20	£4,318.39
Dragon Café	Purchasing a coffee machine, kitchen equipment, furniture and kitchen canopy fan.	£16,500.44	£33,000.87
Phil's News & Café	Purchasing Rational icombi pro cooking centre, Merrychef Connex 12 High Speed Oven x 2, Front of House Display Refrigeration, Classeq Duo Dishwasher	£15,580.49	£31,160.97
Engsolve Ltd	Office furniture, Laptops x 5, computer monitors x 3, Video Conferencing Camera, Nero Executive Boardroom Table.	£8,459.96	£16,919.91
Euroschools Plus Ltd	Purchasing Melco EMT16X embroidery machine	£13,725.00	£27,450.00
Talgarth Bakery Limited	Purchasing Blast Chiller, Welsh Cake Hot Plates, Canopy Extraction	£25,000.00	£61,195.00
Waterstone Mirrors & Frames LTD	Purchase of a new UV Flatbed Printer to allow us to produce glass wall art.	£21,958.50	£43,917.00
Leaping Wing Ltd.	Purchase an aerial LiDAR scanning unit, and the necessary ancillary equipment and software to enable this roll-out.	£8,805.84	£17,620.05

Dollcast Limited	Purchase of Overhead Gantry Crane	£25,000.00	£50,012.00
Infinite Renewables Ltd	Purchase of BestWatt 10 Mobile Wind Turbine	£25,000.00	£81,132.78
Clear View Surgical Ltd	Air conditioning & Ventilation System, Specialist medical kit, Computer hardware, Electrical & Building works	£25,000.00	£50,000.00
G & S Roberts Ltd – Steak & Stamp Restaurant	Purchasing Fire Detection & Alarm System and Fire Suppression System	£5,191.50	£10,383.00
Gemini Digital Colour Ltd	Hewlett Packard Indigo 7K Digital Printing Press,	£25,000.00	£290,000.00
The Steel Shop Ltd	Airless Paint Set, CNC Machine, Forklift, Pillar Drill and Magnetic Drilling Machine	£25,000.00	£50,000.00
	TOTAL	£810,697.87	£2,026,062.39

The Business Feasibility Grant

3.3 The Business Feasibility Grant was set up to support businesses to explore feasibility of longer-term options to diversify, decarbonise and grow including:

- Preparation of plans and studies, e.g. Business Plans/Feasibility Studies
- Before purchasing a piece of machinery, the study could determine the market for increased production or new product is financially viable.
- Explore using space in retail, hospitality to introduce new service / product e.g. new hotel spa
- Cost benefit analysis to introduce Green procurement

3.4 The grant covers the whole County and provides 100% of eligible revenue projects costs. The minimum grant is £5,000 and the maximum grant available is £25,000 (excluding VAT).

Table 2 Business Feasibility Grant summary

Business	Project Summary	Grant Approved
Markes International	Feasibility study to identify potential partners and markets within the Middle Eastern region	£25,000.00
LMG Solutions Ltd	Fund the engagement of an external consultant who specialises in the targeted sectors to expand the customer base to a wider European market.	£25,000.00

Codel Software Ltd	Marketing feasibility study on the HR software marketing in the UK and Internationally	£13,500.00
IARA Ltd t/a KK Solutions	Commission a feasibility study into the market potential for bespoke wallpaper production and installation.	£6,300.00
Corilla Plastics (Bridgend) Ltd	Feasibility study into erecting a solar panel farm on, or in the grounds of the company, to provide renewable energy instead of gas	£25,000.00
Harlequin Home Care Ltd	Feasibility study into exploring sustainable energy solutions	£21,623.00
Club Penybont Ltd	Feasibility study for the club to assess how to increase revenues streams from all and any diversified business opportunities	£25,000.00
Old Industries Limited	Feasibility study to explore long-term options for the business to diversify, decarbonise and grow	£10,098.00
Brewery Field Limited	Feasibility study to assess how to generate diversified alternative income through a range of measures including the creation of a new hotel development adjacent to the Club	£24,950.00
	TOTAL	£176,471.00

The Tourism Events Grant

3.5 The Tourism Events Grant was set up to support tourism events which:

- have strong potential to attract visitors from outside the local area, whether that is from other regions or other countries.
- have a positive impact on the local economy, such as by generating revenue for local businesses, creating jobs, or promoting the region as a tourist destination.
- have cultural significance or highlight a unique aspect of the local area's history, culture, or identity.
- have the potential to raise the profile of the county borough in a positive way

3.6 The Fund covers the whole county. Tier 1 applications can be supported with up to 50% of eligible revenue costs to a maximum of £2,500 grant, and Tier 2 applications can be supported with up to 20% of eligible revenue costs to a maximum of £10,000.

Table 3 Tourism Events Grant summary

Event / Organiser	Type of Event	Grant amount	Grant Tier	Total event cost
Between the Trees	Music Festival	£9,995	20% Tier2	£123,625
Bridgend County Show	Outdoor Show	£7,600	20% Tier2	£40,000
Porthcawl Triathlon Club	Sporting event	£2,500	50% Tier1	£5,710
Porthcawl 10K	Sporting event	£9,950	20% Tier2	£97,114
Rabbit Run	Sporting event	£5,200	20% Tier2	£26,000
Bridgend Town Council	Christmas Event	£6,450	50% Tier1	£13,000
Maesteg Town Council	Christmas Event	£4,000	50% Tier1	£55,159
Porthcawl Town Council	Christmas Event	£5,200	50% Tier1	£13,000
Ogmore Valley Community Council	Christmas Event	£ 3,840	50% Tier1	£8,000
Garw Valley Community Council	Christmas Event	£ 3,840	50% Tier1	£8,000
	TOTAL	£58,575		£389,608

The Bridgend Community Feasibility Fund

3.7 The Bridgend Community Feasibility Fund has been set up to test the feasibility of longer-term community-led ideas. It provides communities in the Borough the opportunity to gather evidence to support locally led community project ideas. Focusing on Health, Climate and Economy they will provide the required data, knowledge and understanding with the ambition to lead to future funding bids and continue community planning. The fund covers the whole County and can provide up to 100% of required funding via a grant.

Table 4 Bridgend Community Feasibility Grant summary

Beneficiary / Recipient	Project	Grant amount
Public Service Board	The PSB Climate Change Risk Assessment - The risk assessment will provide a clear view of the PSB's resilience to the future challenges of climate change and options for further joint strategic action.	£12,000
Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) - Community Asset Transfer (CAT)	Bridgend Energy Efficiency Project - The project provided bespoke energy efficiency surveys for 39 community & sports facilities. The aim is for the surveys to provide relevant evidence needed, to secure future capital grants for environmental sustainability and a reduction in running costs.	£40,000

Porthcawl Veterans Hub	Porthcawl Veterans Hub - The Veterans Hub was supported with a feasibility study to identify self-contained accommodation to help enhance their services and community impact. Currently operating in shared accommodation, the Hub faces challenges, lacking privacy for one-to-one interactions and hindering their full potential.	£7,875
Coity Higher Community Council	Coity Higher Community Council (CHCC) are seeking a freehold asset transfer of Coity Higher & Litchard Cross Community Centre. A feasibility study was developed for the pre-construction period. The study explored the condition of the building; considered structural reconfiguration; accessibility, vehicular access and parking; mains services and costings for remedial works.	£24,479
Ogmore Valley Community Council	Caedu Park Memorial Garden - Professional landscape design and feasibility assessment was requested, to create a community wellness and memorial garden in Caedu Park, a former nursery site at Park Avenue, Ogmore Vale.	£8,944
South Cornelly Renewable Energy CIC	The CIC was established to be the vehicle used by the village to achieve its ambition of creating a "Net Zero Village". The aim of the feasibility study is to investigate how the Local Energy Market can be expanded and integrated with a proposed electrolyser producing green hydrogen, from community owned solar and wind assets, for the decarbonization of heat within the village.	£24,850
BCBC CAT / OVCC	Ogmore Valley All Weather Pitch - CAT & OVCC worked together to progress the project and required a study to look into determining the most suitable type of all-weather pitch to reflect potential demand / usage, funding constraints and the current suitability of infrastructure, e.g. changing facilities.	£9,750
Maesteg Celtic Sports Facilities Ltd	Maesteg Celtic Sports Facilities Ltd requested a study to look into options for Garth Park Pavilion: expanding changing facilities, renovating the building and bringing the facility up to date with modern sporting guidelines.	£17,420
BCBC Climate Change Response	Bedford Park Surveys & Study - This project involved developing a preparatory study to ascertain the viability of an on-site building development proposal. The proposed building or buildings will be for a remote 'work-hub' space and to accommodate volunteer tool storage and necessary facilities.	£25,350

Lads & Dads Wellbeing CIC	The CIC approached us to develop a study and a 5 year business plan. The study researched and surveyed the group's members, their capacities and capabilities, in order to help progress their current offer and work towards their goal of becoming self-sustainable with paid members of staff.	£9,825
Porthcawl Town Council	The PTC applied for feasibility study to be carried out to identify options for a new community building to accommodate the PTC and respond to local community needs.	£24,960
Tondu RFC	A feasibility study to consult and test the project of developing Pandy Park and Tondu RFC to incorporate playing fields (rugby and football) together with parking areas, public open space and the changing pavilion.	£34,840
Cornelly Outreach Group	Cornelly Outreach Group - The Cornelly Outreach Group applied for a feasibility study to create a clear direction in the form of a 5-year strategy for the group, based on information from the committee, members and service users. Their top priority is securing a suitable premises from which to run their confidential Services.	£14,960
The Contact Zone	The Contact Zone applied to the Feasibility Fund to investigate the possibility of the organisation obtaining a premises. The study will also undertake a financial assessment, produce a five-year action plan and to undertake an assessment of comparable operations in other areas in relation to services offered.	£14,960
Bridgend Town Council	Carnegie House - Bridgend Town Council are keen to explore options for the vacant Carnegie House in Bridgend as an arts and cultural centre. A feasibility study is needed to establish how it can be best put to use within the confines of the covenant and take into consideration the BCBC Town Centre Masterplan.	£25,000
BCBC/ Garw Valley Community Council	Parc Calon Lan - BCBC and the Garw valley Community Council are co-working on a study test the viability of a remote work-hub being installed at Parc Calon Lan. The work-hub will provide further potential to increase visitors to the Park and provide a warm safe space for isolated remote homeworkers.	£28,800

Westward Community Centre Committee	West Ward Community Centre - Building Improvements. The community centre committee requested a building condition survey and landscape designs and drawings. The aim is to attract future capital funding for much needed renovation work at the centre.	£25,000
Nantymoel Boys & Girls Club (The Mem)	The Nant Y Moel Boys & Girls Club (The Mem) has a state-of-the-art infrared heating system but the electricity costs are preventing this being used properly. The study requested that several renewable energy options are considered for the trustees of the centre to take forward for capital funding grants.	£7,500
Llangynwyd Rangers	The Reach team are working with Llangynwyd Rangers on developing feasibility report and masterplan to enhance community and sport provision at Llangynwyd Playing Fields, including improved playing, training and social facilities.	£25,000
The Noddfa Youth Development Project	Blaencaerau School Site - The Noddfa Youth Development Project are working with the Reach team to undertake a feasibility study that will develop options for the usage of the site at Blaencaerau school in Maesteg.	£9,988
Llynfi BMX Racing Club	Llynfi BMX Bike Tracks Park - Llynfi BMX approached the Reach team for a study that would assist the group in for a Community Asset Transfer of the former Coegnant Colliery Site. The feasibility study will include consultation with local young people, development options for the site, consideration of floodlighting, a standalone building including toilets and changing facilities, as well as costings for the acquisition and development of the site and the identification of potential capital funds to deliver the project, presented in a report that will inform future funding bids.	£9,988
St.Ceins Church	A feasibility study is needed to investigate costed options for improvements to the church building, which currently has no running water or facilities for community use and renovate an 'out of bounds' church tower.	£14,960
Rest Bay Sports Ltd	Rest Bays Sports Ltd are looking for a 5-year business plan to revise the club's priorities and work towards capital funding opportunities for renovations and pitch improvements.	£10,000
	TOTAL	£426,449

The Bridgend Valleys Placemaking Property Improvement Grant

3.8 The Bridgend Valleys Placemaking Property Improvement Grant contains two elements:

- To enhance building frontages and bring vacant commercial floor space back into beneficial use, by supporting commercial property frontage improvements, along with other external and internal works.
- To convert vacant upper-floor space into new residential accommodation above commercial units, including internal and external works to bring vacant space back into use for residential purposes.

The grant was originally set up to support the District Centres and Local Service centres in the valleys of the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore (excluding Maesteg Town Centre). However, due to a lack of applications the area of support was broadened to a wider geographical area. The grant supports a maximum of 80% of reasonable eligible costs, up to a maximum grant award of:

- o £30,000 for occupied properties
- o £50,000 for properties that have been vacant for more than 6 months

Table 5 Bridgend Valleys Placemaking Property Improvement Grant summary

Premises/Company	Project Summary	Total Project Costs	Grant Committed
Station Hotel, Caerau, S&E Properties Ltd	Internal and external improvements to bring vacant ground floor commercial unit back into use on the high street. (with residential on first floor supported by BCBC Sustainable Renewable Housing team)	£90,922.00	£49,999.00
Ogmore Vale Family Dental	External and internal property improvements, safeguarding the commercial property on the high street	£58,000.00	£30,000.00
Ogmore Valley Dragons Boxing	External and internal property improvements to bring vacant commercial space into use and safeguard the commercial property on the high street.	£35,459.75	£28,367.80
Pontycymmer Rugby & Community Sports Ltd	External and internal property improvements to bring the vacant premises back into use on the high street	£57,280.00	£48,880.00
Margam Ministry Ltd	External and internal improvements to safeguard the commercial property on the high street	£15,247.20	£12,197.76
Pretty Hot & Tattooed	External and internal improvements to safeguard the commercial property on the high street	£30,000.00	£24,000.00

Talbot Community Centre	External improvements that will safeguard the commercial property on the high street	£10,000.00	£8,000.00
G&S Roberts Ltd	External and internal improvements to bring vacant commercial space into reuse, safeguarding the commercial property on the high street	£8,033.00	£6,426.40
	TOTALS	£304,941.95	£207,870.96

- 3.9 A further grant, the Empty Property Survey Grant, was set up to offer applicants the opportunity to undertake building condition surveys/architectural assessments and concept designs in order to progress the redevelopment of empty commercial properties. It was established to cover the District Centres and Local Service centres in the valleys of the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore (excluding Maesteg Town Centre). The intention has been to provide up to £2,000 for Condition Surveys (depending on size of property) and up to £3,000 for Architectural Assessments and Concept Designs. However, interest in the grant was for residential interventions that were better suited to other grant funders within the local authority, for example the Housing team. As the grant fund was drawn from revenue budget, it was absorbed into the revenue budget to support agents fees for the Bridgend Valleys and District Centres Property Improvement Grants.
- 3.10 To date the above grant funds have committed support to the creation of 135 jobs, the safeguarding of 468 jobs, 65 community organisations and 29 community led projects.
- 3.11 A grant panel exists to oversee and make recommendations for approval for the grants outlined above. The panel includes relevant BCBC departments, e.g. finance, regeneration and enterprise.
- 3.12 Decisions relating to award of grants are made in line with the Scheme of Delegation.
- 3.13 Any required statutory consents (e.g. planning permission, SuDS Approving Body) remain the responsibility of any grant applicant for any of the grant funds.
- 3.14 Each grant has its own assessment criteria which is robust but proportionate, depending on the different level of financial assistance available. Details of these are available on the BCBC website.

The Bridgend County Prosperity Framework

- 3.15 In addition, BCBC has operated the Prosperity Framework. This has been used as a standalone commissioning tool, sitting alongside and adding value to backbone projects, as well as an offsetting tool for BCBC. An overview of commissioned and offset activity is set out below. It is to be noted that whilst the Prosperity Framework performs as an additional commissioning tool, many of the backbone projects have also undertaken extensive commissioning activity to external delivery partners within the scope of project delivery.

Table 6 The Bridgend County Prosperity Framework commissioning summary

Contract Name	Brief Contract Description	Contract Value	Contracted Organisation	Sector – Public/Private/3rd
Resilient communities mapping and research	The project researched Bridgend’s charities, community groups, community & town councils, networks, third sector organisations and volunteer groups that are currently operating in Bridgend.	£35,000	The Means	Private
Resilient communities engagement and capacity building	Helping clubs, community groups and venues protect and improve the services/opportunities they offer. Providing tailored funding advice, funding events such as funding fayres and bid writing guidance so that community services and venues can attract inward investment and manage/grow their work.	£73,184.00	BAVO	3rd
Resilient communities: community facilities and activities	Strengthening and broadening the existing Creative Wellbeing programme. The project includes creative wellbeing events and workshops in the community.	£73,184.00	Awen Cultural Trust	3rd
Energy efficiency advice and guidance	The project provides advice and guidance to businesses/residents of Bridgend County Borough on how they can implement energy saving measures in their place of work/home.	£275,000	Challoch Energy Ltd	Private
Quickstart Bridgend	The Quickstart Bridgend project aims to support short term, paid work placements across the county borough with a view to participants gaining a permanent job within their host business at the end of that period.	£900,000	Whitehead Ross Education	Private
Thriving Communities Local Democracy Resources	The project is creating and pilot resources that can be used to raise awareness amongst young people across the county borough of the local democracy process; to encourage their participation in local decision making and local regeneration.	£40,000	Children In Wales	3rd

Thriving Communities Local Democracy Engagement	The project raises awareness amongst young people across the county borough of the local democracy process. A series of musical theatre sessions will be delivered with participants ages 11-15. The workshops will focus on devising an original musical theatre piece/show all about local democracy, including educating participants on how local government works and how they can best get involved, and why that matters.	£24,999	Tanio	3rd
Quickstart Bridgend Evaluation	To provide an evaluation report on the process and impact of the Quickstart Bridgend Scheme.	£35,000	Miller Research	Private
	TOTAL	£1,456,367		
LIVE TENDERS				
Bridgend Sustainable Food Economy	The successful organisation will seek to develop a sustainable food network in Bridgend County Borough.	£10,000	Unknown – not yet awarded	Unknown – not yet awarded
Bridgend Business Forum Feasibility Study	A study to explore options to grow and sustain the Bridgend Business Forum.	£40,000	Unknown – not yet awarded	Unknown – not yet awarded
Manufacturing and Engineering Skills for Young People	Delivery of the Manufacturing and Engineering Skills for Young People project in connection with secondary schools.	£30,000	Unknown – not yet awarded	Unknown – not yet awarded
	TOTAL	£80,000		

3.16 The Prosperity Framework has enabled BCBC to offset core spend with UKSPF funding. In simple terms it has enabled BCBC to use UKSPF funding for activity that would otherwise have incurred core BCBC spend, and in doing so it has enabled BCBC to reduce its in-year overspend.

Table 7 The Bridgend County Prosperity Framework off setting summary

DIRECT DELIVERY (OFFSETTING)			
Cosy Corner Play	£103,000	Communities	Capital
Bridgend Resource Centre and Bryn Y Cae Decarbonisation	£290,993	Communities	Capital
Porthcawl Metro Link	£500,000	Communities	Capital
Pathways into Employment	£643,000	Social Services and Wellbeing	Revenue
TOTAL	£1,536,993*		

**At its meeting of 15 November 2024, the Economic Programme Board agreed a proposal to allocate a further £275,000 to enhance the existing offsetting of Social Service and Wellbeing Pathways to Employment delivery. If finalised, following due diligence, the total offsetting would increase to £1,811,993.*

UKSPF 2025/26

3.17 Whilst the UK Government has recently announced funding for UKSPF for the period 2025/26, details are high level and much remains unknown.

3.18 The UK Government have confirmed the following:

- The UKSPF will be extended for 2025-26 at a reduced level of £900 million. £900m is the UK-Wide figure for UKSPF in 2025/26. The quantum of funding for Wales, or individual LA allocations, will be published in due course.
- Ringfenced funding for adult numeracy, through the Multiply programme, will not be in place for the transition year, but councils still receiving UKSPF will be able to spend on adult numeracy should they wish to do so.
- This transitional arrangement will allow places to continue investing in local growth in advance of wider funding reform. UK Government will update the UKSPF prospectus and confirm funding allocations as soon as possible.
- In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the UK Government will work collaboratively with delivery partners, Devolved Governments and Territorial Offices, to ensure that the extended UKSPF programme is investing in local needs and growth priorities.
- Any underspend within the current UKSPF delivery window (i.e. existing allocations up until March 2025), will be returned to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), as previously confirmed.

3.19 The confirmed UK wide reduction to £900 million is estimated to be a 40% reduction from the 2024-25 allocation at a UK level.

3.20 Indications from Civil Servants are that Ministers from the UK Government and Welsh Government are engaged in meetings to agree Nation level allocations and the methodology for the allocations to the local level. Civil servants have indicated their preferred approach is to ensure a smooth transition between funding and delivery in 2024/25 and 2025/26, with a desire to minimise change where possible in relation to the legal agreements and delivery and performance frameworks that are currently in place.

3.21 There are a range of legal matters which may require consideration, depending on the approach taken by UK Government in relation to funding allocation and delivery in 2025/26.

- 3.22 The advice received from Human Resource colleagues indicates that a cross-directorate restructure report may be required to capture all BCBC staff currently funded through UKSPF, as the reason for potential change is the same. The Council may also need to formally notify Department of Work and Pensions
- 3.23 If a situation arises where funding available cannot support the current staff capacity then those staff whose contracts currently end on 31 March 2025, and who have 12 weeks' notice requirements, will need to be under formal notice by 6 January 2025 if their roles are not continuing in 2025/26. If this situation arises, prior to this a restructure report, capturing organisational change, will need to be completed and signed off, Trade Unions and affected staff will need to be met with and notified and consultation meetings will need to take place and be completed.
- 3.24 The current allocation of UKSPF funding for the Bridgend County projects for 2024/25 are set out below with a modelled scenario of 40% cut applied evenly to all projects, capital and revenue.

Table 8 Current 2024/25 UKSPF budget and potential 2025/26 budget with 40% cut

		2024/25 current budget		2025/26 40% cut (current)	
		Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital
Communities and Place					
BCP1	Bridgend County Local Resilience Planning	£572,154	£0	£343,292	£0
BCP2	Bridgend County Thriving Communities (COMMS)	£168,970	£625,096	£101,382	£375,058
BCP2	Bridgend County Thriving Communities (SSWB)	£691,200	£68,800	£414,720	£41,280
BCP3	Bridgend County Green Spaces Enhancement Scheme	£179,323	£432,647	£107,594	£259,588
BCP4	Bridgend County Community Future Scoping Programme	£318,819	£0	£191,292	£0
BCP5	Bridgend County Prosperity Co-production Framework (cross-cutting)	£511,134	£103,001	£306,680	£61,800
Communities and Place (sub-total)		£2,441,600	£1,229,544	£1,464,960	£737,726
Supporting Local Business					
BLB1	Bridgend County Business Prosperity Programme	£49,225	£748,379	£29,535	£449,027
BLB2	Bridgend County Business Future Scoping Programme	£229,100	£0	£137,460	£0
BLB3	Bridgend County Centres of Enterprise	£0	£3,075,750	£0	£1,845,450
BLB4	Bridgend County Local Enterprise Support Programme	£257,083	£35,000	£154,250	£21,000
BLB5	Bridgend County Tourism Events Support	£199,566	£125,040	£119,740	£75,024
BLB6	Bridgend County Local Destination Management and Marketing	£71,603	£0	£42,962	£0
BCP5	Bridgend County Prosperity Co-production Framework (cross-cutting)	£274,014	£290,993	£164,409	£174,596
Supporting Local Business (sub-total)		£1,080,591	£4,275,163	£648,355	£2,565,098
People and Skills					
BPS1	CELT+ Bridgend Inspire 2 Work / Achieve	£1,562,423	£0	£937,454	£0
BPS2	CELT + Employability -Bridgend County	£2,678,110	£0	£1,606,866	£0
BCP5	Bridgend County Prosperity Co-production Framework (cross-cutting)	£1,545,174	£0	£927,105	£0
People and skills (sub-total)		£5,785,708	£0	£3,471,425	£0
				£0	£0
Multiply		£3,150,822	£0	£1,890,493	£0
UKSPF Core totals		£12,458,721	£5,504,706	£7,475,233	£3,302,824

Next steps – approach

- 3.25 Based on a working assumption that BCBC will be allocated a gross financial figure, reduced by 40% in line with the reduction seen at UK level, with a requirement for a split between capital and revenue, it is proposed that the following steps are considered.

Step 1

3.26 Once the gross Bridgend County financial allocation is known either step 1(a) or 1 (b) is followed:

Step 1 (a) – Decisions made at gross financial value level. Options for decisions in relation to capital and revenue may be:

- o Maintain existing BCBC offsetting at same level
- o Top slice for CJC allocation
- o Discontinue certain projects
- o Allocation of capital budget to fund balance on 2024-25 projects where project completion has extended into 2025-26.

Step 1 (b) - No deductions at gross value level

Step 2

3.27 Following step 1, one of step 2 (a), (b), (c) or (d) will need to be applied for revenue allocation values:

- Step 2 (a) – Headline deduction percentage (say 40%) be applied consistently to all SPF funded projects (based on their original 2024-25 allocation and not including roll-forward), thereby reducing budgets available for all projects, but potentially all projects continuing in some way. Individual project leads to determine project level funding allocations within reduced budget.
- Step 2 (b) – All project leads to identify required budgets for 2025/26. Budget requests to be met based on a (forecast) outputs and outcomes performance basis, starting with the highest performance, until a point where funding is allocated. Projects 'below the line' to end, 'above the line' projects to continue.
- Step 2 (c) – Prioritise minimising redundancy liability to BCBC – estimated that majority of 2025-26 revenue allocation would be needed to fund all BCBC staff in 2025-26 including 2024-25 pay rise and NI contribution increases. Any remaining resource to be allocated via either the performance approach or consistent percentage approach, thereby reducing budgets available for all projects but potentially all projects continuing in some way.
- Step 2 (d) – All project leads to identify required budgets for 2025/26. Budget requests to be met based on a grant fund/external commission basis, starting with the highest financial value of grant fund/external commissions, until a point where funding is allocated. Projects 'below the line' to end, 'above the line' projects to continue.

Next steps – governance

3.28 It is unclear when this will all have to be completed by ahead of April 2025.

- 3.29 The above proposed steps were discussed by the Economic Programme Board on 15 November 2024. The meeting was chaired by the Leader and Cllr Farr was in attendance also.
- 3.30 The Economic Programme Board were broadly in agreement with options set out in the proposed steps in 3.25 – 3.27 above. It was agreed that a template would be sent to all UKSPF project leads to complete, gathering a range of information to assist in decision making relating to UKSPF funds for 2025/26. That work is underway.
- 3.31 The exception was that the Programme Board did not consider a top-slice for the Corporate Joint Committee to be a suitable use of Bridgend County's potential UKSPF funds for 2025/26.

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 BCBC is committed to promoting sustainable development and to discharge its duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. A summary relating to the five ways of working and how they connect to the Corporate Well-being Objectives is below:

Long-term: The grant funds outlined were identified following discussion with key stakeholders and in relation to current understanding of the potential long-term challenges on the County Borough. Building on the process of developing and creating the Economic Strategy, the Local Development Plan (LDP) and the Wellbeing Plan for the County Borough it has been possible to set out a long-term response.

Prevention: BCBC has for many years worked closely with stakeholders and the local business community to support the local economy in a wide variety of proactive ways. As well as a continuation of BCBC's ability to react to local situations, the development of the UKSPF Local Investment Plan and the grant funds contained within it builds on strengths to plan for the future, take proactive action and support local businesses and local communities.

Integration: The work to develop the UKSPF Local Investment Plan is closely aligned with the BCBC Corporate Plan, the Local Development Plan and the Public Service Board's Well-being Plan and the Bridgend County Economic Strategy.

Collaboration: The development of the UKSPF Local Investment Plan has been steered by a BCBC officer group and will be delivered in partnership with key stakeholders.

Involvement: For the UKSPF Local Investment Plan to successfully operate it requires the involvement of senior members of local public sectors organisations, community leaders, business leaders, representatives of business sectors and trade bodies and other key stakeholders.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 The grant funds contain within their criteria detail relating to the expectations of applicants to support BCBC Climate Change and Decarbonisation ambitions.

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 The total current allocation for UKSPF in Bridgend County for 2024/25 is set out in table 8 below.

Table 9 Total UKSPF allocation 2024/25

	Total Allocation 24/25
Communities and Place	£3,671,144
Local Business	£5,355,754
People and Skills	£5,785,708
MULTIPLY	£3,150,822
Management & admin	£326,312
Total	£18,289,740

8.2 The amounts available through the grant funds outlined in section 3 above are contained within the overall programme budget.

8.3 Regular monitoring, reporting and claims ensure that commitments and expenditure are in line with the funding agreement and its associated profiles.

8.4 The current, high level estimated redundancy liability for BCBC for the 97 staff funded through UKSPF is £1.2m.

8.5 The estimated overall annual staff budget required for BCBC staff currently funded by UKSPF is £4 million.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3

- o notes the report;
- o Note the 2 step process for decision making in relation to UKSPF funding for 2025/26 set out in 3.24 – 3.30

Background documents

None.

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Agenda Item 7

Meeting of:	SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3
Date of Meeting:	2 DECEMBER 2024
Report Title:	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES, HR & CORPORATE POLICY
Responsible Officer:	MERYL LAWRENCE SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – SCRUTINY
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	The work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council’s Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution to be updated.
Executive Summary:	<p>The Council’s Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.</p> <p>The Council’s Constitution also provides for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee to propose items for the Forward Work Programme having regard for the Council’s Corporate Priorities and Risk Management framework, for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have oversight and refer any cross-cutting topics to a Committee or Research and Evaluation Panel.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider and agree its Forward Work Programme, identify any specific information it wishes to be included in and any invitees they wish to attend for the reports for the next two Committee meetings, identify any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the criteria set out in the report, consider the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet and note that the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be reported to the next meeting of COSC.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Present the Committee with the Forward Work Programme updated at the previous Committee meeting (**Appendix A**) for discussion and consideration;
- b) Request any specific information the Committee identifies to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;
- c) Request the Committee to identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.6 of this report;
- d) Present the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet (**Appendix B**) to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Advise that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as updated by the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with those from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

2. Background

2.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee.

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

Best Practice / Guidance

2.3 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) Good Scrutiny Guide recognises the importance of the Forward Work Programme. In order to 'lead and own the process', it states that Councillors should have ownership of their Committee's work programme, and be involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating it. The Good Scrutiny Guide also states that, in order to make an impact, the scrutiny workload should be coordinated and integrated into corporate processes, to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of corporate objectives, and that work can be undertaken in a timely and well-planned manner.

2.4 Forward Work Programmes need to be manageable to maximize the effective use of the limited time and resources of Scrutiny Committees. It is not possible to include every topic proposed. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members need to be selective, while also being able to demonstrate clear arguments for including or excluding topics.

- 2.5 The CfGS's guide to effective work programming 'A Cunning Plan?' makes the following reference to the importance of good work programming:

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

3. Current situation / proposal

Forward Work Programme

- 3.1 Following the approval of the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meeting dates at the Annual Meeting of Council on 15 May 2024, the standing statutory reports to Scrutiny Committees of: the Corporate Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget, Performance and Budget Monitoring, etc. have been mapped to the appropriate timely meeting dates into a Forward Work Programme.
- 3.2 The Forward Work Programmes for each Scrutiny Committee have been prepared using a number of difference sources, including:
- Corporate Risk Assessment;
 - Directorate Business Plans;
 - Previous Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme report topics / minutes;
 - Committee / Member proposed topics;
 - Policy Framework;
 - Cabinet Work Programme;
 - Discussions with Corporate Directors;
 - Performance Team regarding the timing of performance information.
- 3.3 There are items where there is a statutory duty for Policy Framework documents to be considered by Scrutiny, e.g., the MTFS including draft budget proposals scheduled for consideration in January 2025, following which COSC will coordinate the conclusions and recommendations from each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees in a report on the overall strategic overview of Cabinet's draft Budget proposals to the meeting of Cabinet in February 2025.
- 3.4 An effective Forward Work Programme will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear plan. However, at each meeting the Committee will have an opportunity to review this as the Forward Work Programme Update will be a standing item on the Agenda, detailing which items are scheduled for future meetings and be requested to clarify any information to be included in reports and the list of invitees. The Forward Work Programme will remain flexible and will be revisited at each COSC meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee reported and any updated information gathered from Forward Work Programme meetings with Corporate Directors.
- 3.5 The Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programmes will be reported to the next meeting of COSC, with the comments from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee for coordination and oversight of the

overall Forward Work Programme. The SOSC Forward Work Programmes will be included in the standing Forward Work Programme Update report from then on with any feedback from each SOSC meeting included.

Identification of Further Items

- 3.6 The Committee are reminded of the Criteria Form which Members can use to propose further items for the FWP which the Committee can then consider for prioritisation at a future meeting. The Criteria Form emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation and to maximise the impact scrutiny can have on a topic and the outcomes for people. Criteria which can help the Committee come to a decision on whether to include a referred topic, are set out below:

Recommended Criteria for Selecting Scrutiny Topics:

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

Reasons to Reject Scrutiny Topics:

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

Corporate Parenting

- 3.7 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards care experienced children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the

outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'Corporate Parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for care experienced children and young people in Bridgend.

- 3.8 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 3.9 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.
- 3.10 The Forward Work Programme for the Committee is attached as **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.
- 3.11 The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings is attached as **Appendix B**.

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 Act provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 Ways of Working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 Ways of Working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:
 - Long-term - The approval of this report will assist in the planning of Scrutiny business in both the short-term and in the long-term on its policies, budget and service delivery.
 - Prevention - The early preparation of the Forward Work Programme allows for the advance planning of Scrutiny business where Members are provided an opportunity to influence and improve decisions before they are made by Cabinet.
 - Integration - The report supports all the wellbeing objectives.
 - Collaboration - Consultation on the content of the Forward Work Programme has taken place with the Corporate Management Board, Heads of Service and Elected Members.

- Involvement - Advanced publication of the Forward Work Programme ensures that stakeholders can view topics that will be discussed in Committee meetings and are provided with the opportunity to engage.

5.2 When setting its Forward Work Programme, the Committee should consider how each item they propose to scrutinise assists in the achievement of the Council's 7 Wellbeing Objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** as follows :-

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

6. **Climate Change Implications**

6.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects climate change, the Council's Net Zero Carbon 2030 target and how it meets the Council's commitments to protect and sustain the environment over the long term. There are no Climate Change Implications arising from this report.

7. **Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

7.1 The Committee should consider how each item they scrutinise affects care experienced children and young people, and in what way the Committee can assist in these areas. Safeguarding is everyone's business and means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. There are no Safeguarding and 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 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Consider and approve the Forward Work Programme for the Committee in **Appendix A**.
- b) Identify any specific information the Committee wishes to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wish to attend;

- c) Identify whether there are presently any further items for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 3.6 of this report.
- d) Note the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in **Appendix B** to track outstanding responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings;
- e) Note that the Committee's Forward Work Programme as approved by the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC), with those from each respective Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SOSC), following their consideration in this cycle of Committee meetings.

Background documents

None.

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Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3
2024-25 Forward Work Programme

Monday 16 July 2024 4.00pm		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Valleys Regeneration Strategy	<p>The development of a commercial property enhancement grant for the Valley high streets to make them look better and bring properties back into commercial use.</p> <p>The development of funding bids for Valleys to enhance the economy and stimulate new job opportunities.</p> <p>The increase in the amount of land and premises available for businesses including industrial starter units, in the Valleys.</p> <p>Accessibility for people from the Valleys to wider public transport.</p>	<p><u>Cabinet Members</u> Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Development and Housing</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Corporate Director Communities</p> <p><u>External</u></p>

Monday 30 September 2024 4.00pm		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Future Waste	<p>Setting out of future direction. What is going to be done. How the future service will look. Outcome of consultation.</p>	<p><u>Cabinet Members</u> Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change Head of Partnerships</p> <p><u>External</u></p>

APPENDIX A

Monday 2 December 2024 4.00pm		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
<p>Housing and Homelessness Update</p> <p>And</p> <p>Information Report: Update on the Shared Prosperity Funding</p>	<p>Affordable; Accessible; Social; Energy efficiency housing; Registered Social Landlords</p> <p>Progress on Empty homes in the County Borough, including the number, the Empty Homes Policy and Grants available – as requested by Members of SOSC 3 at 22 April meeting.</p> <p>The Committee requested the above to also include churches and chapels – asked for by Members of SOSC 3 at 16 July meeting.</p> <p>How grants are progressing in terms of spend, who the recipients are, feedback on the process.</p>	<p><u>Cabinet Members</u> Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Corporate Director Communities Head of Operations - Community Services</p> <p><u>External</u></p>

Monday 20 January 2025 4.00pm		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29</p>		<p><u>Cabinet Members</u> Leader of the Council Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member of Social Services and Health Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Legal Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Chief Executive Chief Officer Finance, Performance and Change Corporate Director Communities</p>

Monday 17 February 2025 4.00pm		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Maesteg Town Hall Review	Lessons Learned - COSC delegated the Lessons Learned report to SOSC 3 to consider, when the project has been completed. (Possible information report or member briefing)	<p><u>Cabinet Members</u> Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Wellbeing</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Corporate Director Communities</p> <p><u>External</u></p>
Valleys to Coast Housing		

Monday 7 April 2025 4.00pm		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Climate Change Decarbonisation	<p>Update on progress and future priorities given current and future budget implications</p> <p>Electric charging points update</p>	<p><u>Cabinet Members</u> Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment</p> <p><u>Officers</u> Corporate Director Communities</p> <p><u>External</u></p>

Member Briefing sessions

- Infrastructure Delivery - including specifically condition of the highways in include; repairs and maintenance, road resurfacing and potholes, network management of utilities, and the development of internal metrics for repairs and closing referrals – all Members Briefing
- Corporate Joint Committees Regional Responsibilities – all Members Briefing
- Communities Directorate Target Operating Model (TOM)
- Community Transfers (CAT) - Position Update

Information reports

- Audit Wales 'Springing Forward Asset Management Inspection Report' – including associated Action Plan

Potential Items

- Scrutinise the regeneration of Bridgend Town Centre
- Sickness levels in the Authority and its effect on decision-making in the Directorate
- Members have requested that the Porthcawl Regeneration and Pavilion Update, be scheduled for the February meeting alongside the Maesteg Town Hall report.
- Major parks in the Borough

Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3

RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET 2023-2024

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
22 April 2024	Caerau Heat Scheme	Members discussed the financial implications, what the final cost of the scheme had been spent on over the lift of the project and requested the break down/summary on the funding spent on the project, that the Corporate Director of Communities had advised could be shared with Members.	Corporate Director of Communities	ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 26 November 2024.	https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s33980/CaerauHeatSchemeSOSC3financialsummary.pdf
16 July 2024	Valleys Regeneration Strategy	The public consultation to inform the strategy asked respondents to rate a list of elements within the Valleys area(s) from excellent to very poor, respondents were also given the opportunity to provide comments on other elements in the area, and the comments received were collated by theme in a table in the report. Members discussed various elements and the funding that would be needed to progress them in the future and going forward the Committee recommended that when looking at the Corporate Plan the elements identified to inform the Strategy be filtered into that process, and that their funding is considered when looking at the budget process.	Corporate Director of Communities / Group Manager, Strategic Regeneration	ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 24 September 2024.	https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSD/DisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD959&ID=959&RPID=23330943&sch=doc&cat=13526&path=13490%2c13494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
16 July 2024	Valleys Regeneration Strategy	Members expressed concern regarding managing expectations and the need to be mindful of not creating false hope within the Valleys, and balancing that with what the Council was able to deliver. Officers agreed it was a challenge, to manage what the Council could deliver on work on the strategy and elements that could be delivered in the Valleys. The Committee recommended that the draft strategy be reported to SOSC 3 for pre-decision scrutiny before it is reported to Cabinet later in the municipal year and that local members who do not sit on the Committee be invited to the meeting for that report.	Corporate Director of Communities / Group Manager, Strategic Regeneration / Scrutiny	ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 24 September 2024.	https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSD/DisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD959&ID=959&RPID=23330943&sch=doc&cat=13526&path=13490%2c13494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0
16 July 2024	Valleys Regeneration Strategy	The Committee reflected that the report received was the basic framework of what was to come and felt they had the opportunity to shape the Valley Regeneration Strategy going forward. The Committee recommended that the draft strategy should be meaningful and deliverable, taking into consideration that although it was one strategy there were three distinct valleys and the identities of each should be maintained and reflecting on experiences from other Regeneration strategies it was important going forward with the Valleys Regeneration Strategy to	Corporate Director of Communities / Group Manager, Strategic Regeneration	ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 24 September 2024.	https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSD/DisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD959&ID=959&RPID=23330943&sch=doc&cat=13526&path=13490%2c13494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<p>establish a simple road map that could be articulated, under which smaller improvements could be recognised and achieved, maintaining a little and often approach, balancing managing residents' expectations with delivering what is proposed in the Strategy.</p>			
<p>16 July 2024</p>	<p>Valleys Regeneration Strategy</p>	<p>Members discussed the role of the Consultants and the depth of questioning included in the consultation to inform the Strategy and the Committee recommended that consideration be given in future to whether information and data could be gathered in house, or by someone brought in to gather and maintain data/information, to enable if and when consultants are used the data to be looked at and insights drawn to help get a corporate understanding of the areas and better establish a baseline , as well as potentially getting better value for money from any use of consultants.</p>	<p>Corporate Director of Communities / Group Manager, Strategic Regeneration</p>	<p>ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 24 September 2024.</p>	<p>https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSD/DisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD959&ID=959&RPID=23330943&sch=doc&cat=13526&path=13490%2c13494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0</p>
<p>16 July 2024</p>	<p>Valleys Regeneration Strategy</p>	<p>The Committee recommended that the draft strategy should include graphics for the areas which Local Members could share in their Valleys communities which could assist with raising awareness of the draft strategy and could potentially</p>	<p>Corporate Director of Communities / Group Manager, Strategic Regeneration</p>	<p>ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 24 September 2024.</p>	<p>https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSD/DisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD959&ID=959&RPID=23330943&sch=doc&cat=13526&path=13490%2c13494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0</p>

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		increase the number of consultation responses.			3494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0
16 July 2024	Valleys Regeneration Strategy	Information regarding the Bus Network Grant (BNG), how the Grant was received, how the additional money was had been spent and how it was allocated. Officers advised in the meeting they would speak to the Public Transport Officer to gain the information for circulation to Members of the Committee.	Corporate Director Communities	ACTIONED: Response and information circulated confidentially 2 October 2024.	
16 July 2024	Valleys Regeneration Strategy	The Consultants used and the cost of the work. Officers advised in the meeting that they could provide this information for circulation to members of the Committee from the tender assessment.	Corporate Director of Communities / Group Manager, Strategic Regeneration	ACTIONED: Response and information circulated 24 September 2024.	https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ecSD/DisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD959&ID=959&RPID=23330943&sch=doc&cat=13526&path=13490%2c13494%2c13502%2c13526&LLL=0&LLL=0
30 September 2024	Future Waste Service Options	Following consideration of the report on the options for delivering Waste Service post 2026 Members felt that more investigation was still needed to provide further information on the LATCo. and In-house options, in particular more detail on the following including the impact and associated risks:	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment, Corporate Director of Communities / Head of Operations Community	Recommendations circulated requesting response – to be provided. Chased 19 November 24	

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff recruitment; - Profit and loss to be expected; - Pay scales – protection of employees; - Commercial Waste and the Competitive market; - The IT system and the advantages and disadvantages of one system in place; - The control, challenge and flexibility of the options. <p>Members expressed that more time was required to explore with local authorities closer to home that had followed one of these options, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, particularly the LATCo. option, as either option would be a big change for the Authority and a fully informed decision would be required.</p> <p>The Committee recommended that there be a year’s extension to the current contract with Plan B, to allow more time for work to be done to really understand the LATCo and In-House options, the extent of risk and the full impact on resources.</p>	<p>Services / Cleaner Streets and Waste Contracts Manager</p>		

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