

Public Document Pack
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
Bridgend County Borough Council

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



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

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



Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513
Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Democratic Services

Ein cyf / Our ref:
Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Thursday, 6 March 2025

Dear Councillor,

SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

A meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB/ remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 13 March 2025 at 10:00.**

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

5 - 8

To receive for approval the minutes of a meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 of the 17/01/25.

4 Forward Work Programme Update

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By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £02.32 in printing costs.

5 Library and Cultural Services

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Invitees:

Councillor Jane Gebbie - Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Sophie Moore – Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

7 Urgent Items

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

8 Exclusion of the Public

The report relating to the following item is not for publication as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation)(Wales) Order 2007.

If following the application of the public interest test that the Committee resolves pursuant to the Act to consider this item in private, the public will be excluded from the meeting during such consideration.

9 Children and Family Services Placement Commissioning Strategy 2025-2030

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Invitees:

Councillor Jane Gebbie - Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing

Claire Marchant - Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing

Laura Kinsey - Head of Children's Social Care

Jade Jones – Children's Commissioning and Sufficiency Lead

Daniel Bolton – Group Manager, Provider Services

10 Conclusions and Recommendations

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 Aspey

F D Bletsoe

C Davies

P Ford

GH Haines

D T Harrison

M Lewis

J Llewellyn-Hopkins

RL Penhale-Thomas

R J Smith

A Wathan

R Williams

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Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of the meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 dated 14 November 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	17 January 2025

18. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> Following detailed consideration and discussions with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers, the Committee made the following recommendation: Recommendation 1. The Committee expressed grave concerns regarding budget reduction proposals SSW 12 and 13, highlighting the widespread ramifications that would follow from redundancies and impact on the caseloads and wellbeing of remaining staff and the reputational risk they would create. The Committee therefore recommended that budget reduction proposals SSW 12 and 13 be removed and not pursued as savings.
Date Decision Made	17 January 2025

19. Assisted Transport Policy Consultation

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> Following detailed consideration and discussions with a Cabinet Member and Officers, the Committee made the following recommendations: Recommendations
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	2. The Committee recommended that the timescales of implementing the Policy needed to be clearer. 3. The Committee expressed concern that the Better Together Bridgend group lead by People First were developing the training plan but that People First had failed to respond to the consultation. The Committee therefore recommended that People First be contacted to ascertain their willingness to formulate and deliver the training plan. 4. The Committee recommended that the Assisted Transport Policy be added to the Committee's Forward Work Programme for future monitoring and that People First be invited for the Item.
Date Decision Made	17 January 2025

20. Forward Work Programme Update

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the Committee approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the inclusion of the recommendations below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP as approved by the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 1. The Committee recommended that there be an all Member briefing on the use of artificial intelligence within the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate and how it is envisaged it could safely aid a reduction in staff numbers. 2. The Committee requested that the following reports be added to their FWP: a. Placement Commissioning Strategy; b. Implementation of the Home Remodelling Programme across Adult Services; c. Policy Revision to include case studies from across the demographic; and d. Assisted Transport Policy (as above in Recommendation 4).
Date Decision Made	17 January 2025

Urgent Matters

Decision Made	None.
Date Decision Made	17 January 2025

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

The meeting closed at 12:29.

Meeting of:	SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
Date of Meeting:	13 MARCH 2025
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:	The Council's Constitution requires the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to develop and implement a Forward Work Programme for the Committee. 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. 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.

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 considered in January 2025, following which COSC coordinated 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 on 4 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 2
2024-25 Forward Work Programme

Monday 8 July 2024 at 10.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Building on Strengths, Improving Lives – A Three-Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council.	Pre-decision. The purpose of the report is to provide Members of the Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise the three-year plan for sustainable care and support for adults in Bridgend County Borough Council.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing. <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; and the Head of Adult Social Care; and Head of Adult Social Care; Social Work Lead in Adult Social Care; Group Manager - Direct Care Provider Services; Group Manager - Integrated Cluster Network Service; Group Manager - Learning Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Misuse.
Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination Report	To nominate one Member as its Corporate Parenting Champion to represent the Committee as an invitee at meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting in addition to the Chairperson of SOSC 2 who is automatically appointed.	N/A
Draft Outline Forward Work Programme		N/A

Monday 23 September 2024 at 10.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	To consider the current issues being experienced in the County Borough and specifically how the Authority is working with the Health Service to support individuals who require support at home including reablement care when discharged from hospital.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing. <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing. Head of Adult Social Care Social Work Lead in Adult Social Care Integrated Community Services Manager – Reablement Clinical Service Group Manager - Cwm Taf Morgannwg

APPENDIX A

Proposal to extend the Term of the Healthy Living Partnership with GLL / HALO Leisure	Pre-decision. The report offers Members the opportunity to scrutinise the benefits of an extension to the existing healthy living partnership agreement with GLL/Halo Leisure. The current agreement is due to end in March 2027 and the report will provide information on the legal and procurement considerations that the Council may need to make. The report will identify how the current partnership has delivered on outcomes for the Council and supported its wellbeing objectives whilst improving the leisure facilities and delivering financial savings. The report will identify the reasoning as to why an extended relationship may be a cost-effective way forward for the Council in comparison to alternatives.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing. Group Manager - Prevention and Wellbeing
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Thursday 14 November 2024 at 10.00am

Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	To consider the current issues being experienced in the County Borough and specifically how the Authority is working with the Health Service to support individuals who require support at home including reablement care when discharged from hospital.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing. <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing. Head of Adult Social Care Social Work Lead in Adult Social Care Integrated Community Services Manager – Reablement Clinical Service Group Manager - Cwm Taf Morgannwg
Proposal to extend the Term of the Healthy Living Partnership with GLL / HALO Leisure	Pre-decision. The report offers Members the opportunity to scrutinise the benefits of an extension to the existing healthy living partnership agreement with GLL/Halo Leisure. The current agreement	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing.

APPENDIX A

	is due to end in March 2027 and the report will provide information on the legal and procurement considerations that the Council may need to make. The report will identify how the current partnership has delivered on outcomes for the Council and supported its wellbeing objectives whilst improving the leisure facilities and delivering financial savings. The report will identify the reasoning as to why an extended relationship may be a cost-effective way forward for the Council in comparison to alternatives.	Group Manager - Prevention and Wellbeing
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Friday 17 January 2025 at 10.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29 and Budget Proposals		<u>Cabinet Members</u> Leader of Council; Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing; Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance; Cabinet Member for Resources (Job Share). <u>Officers</u> Chief Executive; Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Chief Officer - Finance, Housing and Change; Chief Officer - Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy; Head of Adult Social Care; Head of Children's Social Care; Deputy Head of Finance; and Finance Manager – Social Services & Wellbeing / Chief Executive's Directorate.
Assisted Transport Policy Consultation	Pre-decision.	<u>Cabinet Member</u> Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing. <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing.

APPENDIX A

Thursday, 13 March 2025 at 10.00am		
Report Topics	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Library and Cultural Services		<u>Cabinet Members</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing; <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; and Group Manager – Prevention and Wellbeing
Children and Family Services Placement Commissioning Strategy 2025-2030		<u>Cabinet Members</u> Deputy Leader/ Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing; <u>Officers</u> Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing; Head of Children's Social Care; and Children's Commissioning and Sufficiency Lead

Thursday, 1 May 2025 at 10.00am		
Report Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
TBD		

Briefings and Workshops:

Topic	Information Required / Committee's Role	Invitees
Member Briefing - SS - Part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014	Part 9 of the Act requires local authorities to make arrangements to promote co-operation with their relevant partners and others, in relation to adults with needs for care and support, carers and children.	Members and officers for the Briefing 7 January 2025 at 3pm.
Day Opportunities Review	- To advise Members of the proposals and the consultation - Allow Members the opportunity of asking any questions for clarification or queries raised with them over these subjects by their own constituents. - The report can then be scheduled for detailed pre-	Members and officers for the Briefing 29 January 2025 at 1pm.

	decision scrutiny near the end of the consultation or following the consultation to enable the Committee to provide their own views and recommendations towards the final decision of Cabinet.	
Accommodation Based Service Review	• To advise Members of the proposals and the consultation • Allow Members the opportunity of asking any questions for clarification or queries raised with them over these subjects by their own constituents. • The reports can then be scheduled for detailed pre-decision scrutiny near the end of the consultation or following the consultation to enable the Committee to provide their own views and recommendations towards the final decision of Cabinet.	Members and officers for the Briefing 29 January 2025 at 1pm.
The Elimination of Private Profit from the Care of Looked After Children	The Welsh Government introduced legislation, The Health and Social Care (Wales) Bill, on 20 May 2024. Amongst a number of aims, the Bill contains provisions to: • restrict the making of profit by providers of children's homes services, secure accommodation services and fostering services for looked after children. • require local authorities to submit a sufficiency plan to Welsh Ministers in respect of accommodation for looked after children, and to take all reasonable steps to secure sufficient accommodation provided by not-for-profit entities, either within or near to its areas to meet their needs.	Members and officers for the Briefing and Workshop – 31 January 2025 at 9.30am.

	The aim is to ensure that public money invested in accommodation for care experienced children is not extracted as profit, but instead is reinvested back into the system to support sustainable and better outcomes, services and professional development. The initial briefing for all Members, and the subsequent Workshop for Members of SOSC 2, will explore what this could mean for the future care of children in the Borough.	
The Replacement System for CareDirector (WCCIS)	The Committee requested a briefing on COR-2024-01 on the Corporate Risk Assessment: The threat to business continuity if the Council is unable to procure and implement major ICT systems which support critical services such as a replacement system for CareDirector (WCCIS). <i>CareDirector</i> is a Cloud-based case management solution for social care organisations that supports integrated working across health and social care.	Members and officers for the Briefing and Workshop – TBD.

Other Items:**Reports to be scheduled for pre-decision scrutiny near the end of the consultation:**

- Day Opportunities Review
- Accommodation Based Service Review

15 April postponed report:

- A 3 Year Sustainability Plan to Improve Outcomes for Children and Family Services in Bridgend: Year 1 Report on Progress – 2023/24 - updated version to be provided as an Information Report during 2024-25.

Reports requested by the Committee:

- Progress on the Learning Disability Transformation Programme – 6 monthly updates to be provided during 2024-25.
- Direct Payments – TBD.

Other Potential Items:

- The Social Partnership.

Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2

RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING ACTION SHEET 2024-2025

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	Given the need for increased partnership working, Members recommended that there was a need to ensure that the proposals for the future of Sustainable Care for Adults were integrated with and compatible with the work of Employability Bridgend.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	The Committee expressed concern over the lack of performance data which made the evaluation of future plans difficult and recommended that this be considered for the future plan and reports.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	Members were complimentary regarding the Plan and felt the Service Area needed to promote it further to highlight the work that had been undertaken in developing the Plan, the proposals and the resulting positive outcomes for the community as a whole. The Committee therefore recommended there was an urgent need to demonstrate further and promote the value of the new operating model, as a potential exemplar to other services areas in terms of how to deliver	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		services differently within defined budgetary constraints.			
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	The Committee recommended that there was a need to revisit the correspondence with the local member of the Senedd about attending the mental health round table, and that a follow-up request should be sent.	Scrutiny	Scrutiny Team actioning with Scrutiny Chair.	
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	The Committee requested that relevant performance data should be sent to Members as soon as it is available, rather than waiting for future meetings.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	The Committee requested that Members receive information about the BAVO consultation exercise by email.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	Recommendations circulated requesting response - to be provided. Chased.	
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	The Committee requested that Members receive a copy of the Quality Assurance Framework via email.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
8 Jul 24	Building on Strengths, Improving Lives - A Three- Year Plan for Sustainable Care and Support for Adults in Bridgend County Borough Council	In addition to the mental health round table, there was a need to identify other local groups and fora that provide relevant services but the workings of which are not necessarily known to Members.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here
8 Jul 24	Forward Work Programme Update	The Committee requested a briefing on COR-2024-01 on the Corporate Risk Assessment: The threat to business continuity if the Council is unable to procure and implement major ICT systems which support critical services such as a replacement system for Care Director (WCCIS).	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED - response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here
8 Jul 24	Forward Work Programme Update	There was a need to resolve which scrutiny committee addresses the issue of Disabled Facilities Grants.	Scrutiny	To be discussed in Work Planning Meeting / with Scrutiny Chairs.	
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	The Committee welcomed the comprehensive report and responses provided by the Cabinet Member and Officers, however the report highlighted issues and performance on a regional basis, and it was challenging to understand and scrutinise the specific issues in Bridgend County Borough. The Committee recommended that future reports based on services provided on a regional basis need to provide at least in	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing / Head of Adult Social Care	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here

APPENDIX B

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		part, an overview and a critical analysis of specific issues and performance in Bridgend County Borough.			
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	The Committee recommended that Employability Bridgend be utilised on an on-going basis to undertake specific targeted campaigns in a local area to recruit people to work in social care.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	The Committee recommended that the Chair write to the responsible Welsh Government Minister to outline Members concerns about the demand for services and the resources available to provide them.	Scrutiny / Chair of SOSC 2	Scrutiny Team actioning with Scrutiny Chair.	
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	Members discussed that in addition to a ward in the Princess of Wales Hospital, there were beds in community hospitals in the other two local authority areas in the region that were not allocated per local authority area, and commented that for a variety of reasons, these might not be suitable for patients from Bridgend and their families. The Committee welcomed that there were currently discussions at the design and development stage, to re-develop Maesteg Community Hospital and requested that a further update be provided on the re-development of	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024. Update circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here

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Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		Maesteg Community Hospital, when available.			
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	The Committee requested more detailed information on the composition, work programme, and performance of the Integrated Discharge Delivery Board.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing / Head of Adult Social Care	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	The Committee requested that they be sent the most recent Annual Report of the CTM Regional Partnership, the Market Stability Report, and the Commissioning Strategy Reports.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here
23 Sep 24	Community Resource Team Package of Care Delays (PoCD)	The Committee requested information about current and proposed consultations on an on-going basis, so that opportunities are not missed to input to service developments locally, regionally, and nationally.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here
23 Sep 24	Proposal To Extend the Term of the Healthy Living Partnership with GLL / HALO Leisure	Members noted the controls, including determining the number of leisure centres and their opening hours, the Council would maintain if the current contract with HALO Leisure was extended in the short-term. These controls provided the Council with opportunities to achieve budgetary efficiencies through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and a short-	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		term extension of the partnership agreement would provide the time needed to confirm the Council's longer term strategic direction and for greater economic stability to emerge. As such, Members expressed confidence in the approach presented in the report in respect of the benefits of extending the relationship with HALO Leisure in the short-term and on that basis, the Committee recommended that the Partnership with HALO Leisure be extended in the short-term.			
23 Sept 24	Proposal To Extend the Term of the Healthy Living Partnership with GLL / HALO Leisure	a. The Committee recommended that a further report be submitted at the appropriate time regarding the ongoing long-term strategy and the consequent practical implications for delivering well-being services for the people of the County Borough and that the report should contain more critical analysis of all the options available to the Council. b. The Committee recommended that representatives of HALO leisure be invited to future Scrutiny Committee meetings that consider the Healthy Living Partnership with GLL / HALO Leisure.	Scrutiny / Corporate Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 13 November 2024.	Follow link here
23 Sep 24	Proposal To Extend the Term of the	The Committee requested more information on the exercise being	Scrutiny / Corporate	ACTIONED – response and	Follow link here

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Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
	Healthy Living Partnership with GLL / HALO Leisure	undertaken with external partners to determine a long-term strategy for well-being services. The report identifies how a short-term extension of the partnership agreement may provide the time needed to confirm the Council's longer term strategic direction and for greater economic stability to emerge.	Director -Social Services and Wellbeing	information circulated 13 November 2024.	
23 Sept 24	Forward Work Programme Update	Members recommended that, given the number of pre-decision reports that are likely to need scrutiny in the coming months, that consideration be given to organising an additional meeting of the Committee before Christmas.	Scrutiny	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 8 November 2024.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Bridgend	The Committee requested a copy of the presentation regarding the residential rehabilitation centre visit and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg residential rehabilitation framework.	Manager – Regional Substance Misuse Team	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Bridgend	The Committee requested a breakdown of the number and location of rehabilitation placements.	Manager – Regional Substance Misuse Team / Group Manager - Learning Disability, Mental Health and Substance Misuse	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here

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Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
14 Nov 24	Integrated Substance Misuse Service in Bridgend	With reference to the tables on page 11 of the agenda pack relating to drug and alcohol related deaths in Bridgend, the Committee requested national comparative data with the rest of Wales and the UK.	Group Manager - Learning Disability, Mental Health and Substance Misuse	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee recommended that data be included within the 'Workforce' section of the report, with input from Human Resources, clarifying what is meant by compliance or non-compliance with the Council's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee considered that the Key Performance Indicator relating to completion of the mandatory safeguarding e-learning module for social workers who undertake extensive, in-person safeguarding training skewed the representation of the Directorate's performance on the uptake of the e-learning module and recommended that this be reflected in the report.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee recommended that an update be included in the report regarding the new Early Intervention and Prevention front door team to include information regarding the Action Plan and detailing how it will be monitored by a Project Management	Head of Adult Social Care	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here

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Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
		Board chaired by the Head of Adult Social Care.			
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee recommended that representatives from Education and Human Resources be invited for scrutiny of future Annual Corporate Safeguarding Reports.	Scrutiny	Noted.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee recommended that a letter be sent on behalf of the Committee to Welsh Government to express their concern regarding the statutory responsibilities placed on local authorities to tackle homelessness which are not fully funded putting significant pressure on public finances.	Scrutiny	Scrutiny Team actioning with Scrutiny Chair.	
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee recommended that future Annual Corporate Safeguarding Reports contain comparative data from comparable Welsh local authorities.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here
14 Nov 24	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2023/24	The Committee requested the terms of reference for the independent audit that has been commissioned to look at numbers of children becoming looked after and details of who is conducting it.	Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing	ACTIONED – response and information circulated 20 December 2024.	Follow link here
17 Jan 25	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29	The Committee made recommendations and requested additional information.	Scrutiny / Chair of COSC	ACTIONED - Recommendations formally reported to COSC and onward to Cabinet on 4	Follow link here

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Outcome	Response
				February 2025 for consideration and response.	

Meeting of:	SUBJECT OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
Date of Meeting:	13 MARCH 2025
Report Title:	LIBRARY AND CULTURAL SERVICES
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	SOPHIE MOORE GROUP MANAGER PREVENTION & WELLBEING
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.
Executive Summary:	The report updates scrutiny on the progress made, following Cabinet recommendations related to the Awen Culture contract. The report also includes the details for a public engagement for the development of a strategy for community hubs, library, and cultural services. This is the duty of the statutory duties under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and the Equality Act 2010 to provide a comprehensive library service and consult with the community on changes. In May 2024, Cabinet approved a number of recommendations including to progress the required public engagement in relation to the development of the strategy for community hubs, library and cultural services in the County Borough which will be the subject of a future Cabinet report. A total saving of £360,000 was agreed for 2024-25, with £65,000 already achieved, with £65,000 already achieved. BCBC recognises the importance of cultural and library services to people and communities and their importance in preventing escalating needs to statutory services. It is also important that the services are value for money and are as integrated as possible. The Council has successfully delivered previous savings through the partnership with Awen and aims to develop a long-term plan for community hubs, library, and cultural services. The 2024-25 budget reduction requirement is £360,000, with public support for reducing library-related expenditure expressed in the 2025-2026 budget consultation.

	Public Engagement will take place in Spring 2025 following Cabinet’s recommendations for the need for public engagement and consultation on the future of community hubs, library, and cultural services.
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress made, following Cabinet recommendations in relation to the Awen Culture contract. The public engagement documentation and time frame in relation to the development of the strategy for community hubs, library and cultural services is attached as **Appendix A** for Scrutiny consideration.

2. Background

- 2.1 In May 2024 Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out below:

To approve the issue of the immediate legal notices required to enact contract changes with Awen to remove the subsidy to Bridgend Youth Theatre and reduce the book fund by £50,000 in 2024-25 and to progress the required public engagement in relation to the development of the strategy for community hubs, library and cultural services in the County Borough which will be the subject of a future Cabinet report.

- 2.2 As part of the agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in 2024-2025 a saving of £360,000 was agreed. Towards the total savings Cabinet have already agreed a saving of £65,000 linked to the removal of the subsidy to Bridgend Youth Theatre and to reduce the book fund by £50,000 to date. In 2024-25 savings have been mitigated by maximisation of grant income. The Council now needs to ensure the full savings are achieved. Therefore the remaining amount of £295,000 is still to be determined.
- 2.3 In accordance with the Partnership Agreement between the Council and Awen, it is for the Council to inform Awen where it wishes to seek changes or reductions in its service requirements. A change notice is issued to request further information on any implications that can be identified. This process also sets out to identify any costs that cannot be mitigated that may fall to the Council should such change be implemented.
- 2.4 The Partnership Agreement is specific regarding responsibilities for library services and recognises that the Council retains a statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service with a core library offer that is free at the point of use and open to all. The Partnership Agreement identifies that the Council also retains statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 to fully consult with the local community in relation to any potential changes to access to library services, with particular regards to location, opening hours and access for people with disabilities.
- 2.5 In relation to the above, the Council acknowledges that it is fully responsible for determining what is a “comprehensive and efficient” library service and for undertaking any consultation requirement arising from any proposed changes in library service.

- 2.6 Based on the scale of reduction in financial support being proposed there will be implications for future library services and facilities and as such there is a need for the Council to progress public engagement to co-produce the development of a strategy and then progress formal consultation on the future of community hubs, library and cultural services in Bridgend.

3. Current situation/ proposal

- 3.1 The value of cultural and library services to local communities is recognised and understood but the financial position that the Council is facing means that financial efficiencies are sought across all areas of service within the Council. The Council was proactive in developing a partnership approach to delivering cultural services and this has already successfully delivered previous savings whilst ensuring that some, though not all, of the risk in operating those services sits outside of the Council.
- 3.2 There is an agreed 2024-2025 MTFS budget reduction relating to the cultural services being delivered on the Council's behalf but also a recognition that there is a need to develop the next longer-term plan for community hubs, library and cultural services. The last review was in 2010, and the related engagement processes will inform and shape Bridgend's long term community hubs, library and cultural strategy and subsequent consultation.

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. Initial screening shows that a full equality impact assessment will be needed for the proposals set out in this report following the public engagement and consultation process.

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

- 5.1 The provision of cultural services including the library and broader wellbeing services contributes to the wellbeing of local people and communities in the following ways:-

Involvement -	The engagement of residents and utilising their contributions to help shape services as well as developing the cultural third sector and related participation is a positive feature of the local partnership. This has been recognised in the Welsh public library standards (in full) reports.
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Long Term -	Bridgend has been progressing its long-term approach to providing library and cultural services since the establishment of the partnership agreement in 2015. In line with Welsh Government plans there is an opportunity to develop a longer-term cultural strategy for Bridgend.
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Prevention -	The broad range of cultural venues are connecting people to their communities, supporting information advice and assistance
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and developing social prescribing opportunities in partnership with communities and stakeholders.

Integration - Through the partnership agreement and service development planning there are connections to health, social care, education and broader third sector and community development.

Collaboration - The partnership supports joint planning and development to achieve population level outcomes. Awen have proven successful in relations with external bodies such as Arts Council, Health Board, Heritage Fund and more.

- 5.2 In regard to the Council's Wellbeing Objectives the cultural range of services and venues contribute to the following objectives: -
A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable.
A County Borough with thriving valleys communities.
A County Borough where we help people meet their potential.
A County Borough where people feel heard, valued and part of their community.
A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There is no impact or link to Bridgend County Borough Council's climate change aspirations as a result of this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The Partnership Agreement between the Council and Awen ensures that appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of service users and staff.
- 7.2 The services that Awen provide ensure that our most vulnerable residents and those requiring connection to information and assistance can be supported by acting as Council Information Points.
- 7.3 Awen, as the Council's delivery partner of library services, are actively engaged in the corporate parenting strategy and steering group.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 When the partnership with Awen was established in 2015 it delivered early efficiencies of £625,000. The savings have been managed to date with little service reduction. The current MTFS requirement for 2024-25 is £360,000 and the Council needs to determine the specific areas of reductions in its requirements to meet this.
- 8.2 In the budget consultation exercise undertaken January 2025, the public were in principle supportive of the need to reduce the level of expenditure on library related services.
- 8.3 Due to the public engagement & consultation timeframe, the full £360,000 budget reduction proposal is unlikely to be delivered in full in 2024-25. The Social Services

and Wellbeing Directorate will have to identify one-off efficiencies within 2024-25 to mitigate any shortfall in the first instance.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to note and scrutinise the public consultation that will be commencing shortly to co-produce a library, community hub and cultural strategy which will be subject to subsequent public consultation.

Background documents

None

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Draft Public Engagement: Phase 1 Initial Engagement Questionnaire

Let's Talk Libraries

GDPR Notice

All information received is stored using secure servers and in accordance to the Data Protection Act (1998). When gathering data it is our policy to take all necessary steps to ensure personal information is processed lawfully. Your personal information will never be shared externally.

The council will take all reasonable precautions to ensure confidentiality and to comply with data protection legislation. Your information will be retained in accordance with the Council's Data Retention Policy.

You have a number of rights under data protection legislation. You may also withdraw your consent and ask us to delete your personal information at any time by contacting us. Further information about this is available on our website or you may contact the Data Protection Officer.

If you are dissatisfied with the manner in which we process your personal data then you have the option to make a complaint to the Data Protection Officer and the Information Commissioner's Office.

Introduction

Library services in Bridgend are well used and well valued by people and communities, but as the world is changing, with more of us making use of digital technology, and more of us looking for local access to a range of services, there is an opportunity to review how libraries and other related services work together in Bridgend. We need to make sure we are operationally as efficient as possible and bring services together where we can. As part of this effort, the Council, in partnership with AWEN Trust and other partners, is focusing on developing a new library strategy with a community-centric, evidence-based approach.

We hope this strategy will centre around a vision of expanding community hubs. This has been successfully implemented in a number of Life Centres across Bridgend County including Bridgend, Pyle and the Ogmore and Garw Valleys where leisure and library services are colocated. By creating these hubs, the Council hopes to enhance accessibility and bring a wider range of services and partners to the community through libraries.

Our approach to developing a new library and community hub strategy will be community led, evidence based, and partnership focused. Strong engagement and consultation with our communities involving residents, partners, businesses, and stakeholders will inform the co-design of a new library strategy for Bridgend County Borough. We are developing this library strategy based on two phases of public consultation.

To shape this new library strategy, a two-phase consultation, "Let's Talk Libraries," is planned:

Phase One: Initial Engagement

The first phase will take place in Spring 2025 and invites open discussions with the community, partners, and stakeholders, aimed at understanding what library patrons value, what might attract new users, and exploring collaborative opportunities. Surveys and workshops will play a central role in reaching diverse voices, especially those from traditionally underrepresented groups. These efforts will provide insights into the barriers people face in accessing library services, guiding the co-creation of a draft library strategy.

Phase Two: Refinement and Prioritisation

In the Summer 2025 the draft strategy will be shared in phase two of the consultation, seeking further feedback from the public, businesses, and other stakeholders. Through workshops and embedded consultation questions within the strategy, the Council will gather insights to prioritise and refine the proposed action plans. This phase aims to collaboratively design actionable delivery plans with community input.

The final strategy, incorporating feedback from both phases, will be submitted for review by the Council's Cabinet in Autumn 2025. This community-led process underscores Bridgend's commitment to building a sustainable library service that meets the evolving needs of its residents, all while balancing the realities of the Council's financial situation.

Initial Engagement Questionnaire: Exploring a Hub Model

Section 1: Library Usage

Are you a current user of Bridgend library services?

☐ Yes

☐ No, please go to **Section 3: Potential Changes and Impacts**

Which library location do you visit most frequently?

☐ Aberkenfig

☐ Betws

☐ Bridgend

☐ Garw

☐ Maesteg

☐ Ogmore

☐ Pencoed

☐ Porthcawl

☐ Pyle

☐ Sarn

☐ Digital

☐ Other (please specify):

Which day(s) and time(s) are most important to you for library usage?

(Tick all that apply)

Day	Morning	Lunchtime	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tuesday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wednesday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Thursday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Saturday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sunday	☐	☐	☐	☐

How often do you use the library?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

Section 2: Current Services and Community Hub Concept

Which of the following library services do you use? *(Tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Borrowing books/audiobooks
- ☐ Attending children's events or workshops
- ☐ Attending adult events or workshops

- ☐ Using public computers/Wi-Fi
- ☐ Accessing digital resources (eBooks/audiobooks)
- ☐ Study/workspace
- ☐ Warm space
- ☐ Community meetings and activities
- ☐ Assistance with council services (e.g., forms, benefits)
- ☐ Other (please specify):

A community hub model would bring together library services with additional community support services (e.g., council services, social events, workshops). How appealing do you find this concept?

- ☐ Very appealing
- ☐ Somewhat appealing
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not appealing

Section 3: Potential Changes and Impacts

If some smaller libraries were to close to create centralised community hub library locations, how would this affect your access to library services?

- ☐ Major impact
- ☐ Minor impact
- ☐ No impact

Would you support increased opening hours, including lunchtime and evening access, to accommodate a wider range of visitors?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No opinion

What time(s) would be most convenient for you to visit a community hub library?

(Tick all that apply)

Day	Morning	Lunchtime	Afternoon	Evening
Monday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tuesday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wednesday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Thursday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Saturday	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sunday	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4: Books on Wheels and Outreach Services

Do you or a household member use the Books on Wheels service?

☐ Yes

☐ No; please go to **Section 5: Additional feedback**

How would you feel about expanding the books on wheels outreach services to maintain access in communities without a nearby community hub?

☐ Supportive

☐ Neutral

☐ Opposed

Section 5: Additional Feedback

What features or services should a community hub include to best serve the community?

(Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Community meeting spaces
- ☐ Cafés or refreshment areas
- ☐ Study and quiet zones
- ☐ Technology and digital learning hubs
- ☐ Arts and cultural exhibitions
- ☐ Children's play and learning areas
- ☐ Fitness and wellbeing classes
- ☐ Workshops and training facilities
- ☐ Book lending and reservations
- ☐ Digital resources (eBooks, audiobooks, databases)
- ☐ Local history and genealogy resources
- ☐ Public access computers and Wi-Fi
- ☐ Printing, scanning, and photocopying
- ☐ Help with form-filling (e.g., housing, benefits)
- ☐ Information on local services and resources
- ☐ Support for digital access to council services
- ☐ Community advice and referral services
- ☐ Health Checks/Screening (e.g. blood pressure check, footcare, women's health)

How would you feel if there were charges for non-library service activities within libraries or hubs (e.g. activities such as sewing, bounce and rhyme or educational talks) to support the sustainability of the service?

- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Opposed

What concerns or suggestions do you have regarding the proposed changes to library services?

(Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Accessibility for those with limited mobility
- ☐ Availability of parking and public transport
- ☐ Suitability for different age groups
- ☐ Inclusion of Welsh language services
- ☐ Support for digital inclusion
- ☐ Retention of essential library resources (books, research materials)
- ☐ Maintaining community events and programs

Do you use or intend to use any of these community buildings/Community Hubs?

(Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Awel-y-mor
- ☐ Betws Life Centre
- ☐ Blaengarw Workmen's Hall
- ☐ Bryngarw House (including Y Nyth)
- ☐ Grand Pavillion

- ☐ Maesteg Town Hall
- ☐ Richard price centre
- ☐ Bridgend life centre
- ☐ Garw Valley life centre
- ☐ Ogmore Valley life centre
- ☐ Pyle life centre
- ☐ Other (please specify):

For what purpose do you visit these building?

- ☐ Cafés or refreshment areas
- ☐ Arts and cultural events (e.g. theatre/movie nights)
- ☐ Children's play groups or events
- ☐ Fitness and wellbeing classes
- ☐ Creative workshops or classes
- ☐ Accessing the outdoor space (e.g. park area)
- ☐ Workshops and training events
- ☐ Parties or social events (e.g. music events or dinners)
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Which area of Bridgend do you live in?

☐ Bridgend town

☐ Maesteg

☐ Porthcawl

☐ Pencoed

☐ Pyle

☐ Ogmore Valley

☐ Garw Valley

☐ Llynfi Valley

☐ Other (please specify):

Equalities Monitoring

Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have characteristics. This question is optional.

How would these proposals affect you because of your:

Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Disability, Sexuality, Religion / belief, Gender identity, Relationship status, Pregnancy, Preferred language?

We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be?

How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Please also explain how you believe the proposals could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language and ensure there are no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.

To help us ensure that we are providing services fairly to everyone who needs them, we would be grateful if you could answer a few more questions about yourself.

The information you supply will be kept confidentially and will only be used for the purposes of equalities monitoring.

Completion of these questions is not required as part of the questionnaire. You do not have to answer any of the questions if you do not wish to do so.

Alternatively, you can choose to answer some and not others by selecting the 'prefer not to say' options

Are you happy to answer a few more questions about yourself? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you consider yourself as disabled? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Prefer not to say

Please select your age category: *(Tick one option)*

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Under 18 | ☐ 35 – 44 | ☐ 65 - 74 |
| ☐ 18 – 24 | ☐ 45 – 54 | ☐ 75 + |
| ☐ 25 – 34 | ☐ 55 – 64 | ☐ Prefer not to say |

How would you describe your nationality? *(Tick one option)*

- | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| ☐ Welsh | ☐ Scottish | ☐ English |
| ☐ Northern Irish | ☐ Prefer not to say | |
| ☐ Other (please specify): | | |

What is your ethnic group? *(Tick one option)*

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ White | ☐ Asian/ Asian British |
| ☐ Black/African Caribbean/Black British | ☐ Prefer not to say |
| ☐ Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups | |
| ☐ Other (please specify): | |

What is your religion or belief? *(Tick one option)*

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| ☐ No religion | ☐ Hindu | ☐ Jewish |
| ☐ Christian | ☐ Muslim | ☐ Prefer not to say |
| ☐ Buddhist | ☐ Sikh | |
| ☐ Other (please specify): | | |

How do you describe your gender? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ In another way (please specify):

Are you pregnant? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Have you given birth in past 26 weeks? *(Tick one option)*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your sexual orientation? *(Tick one option)*

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Heterosexual/Straight | ☐ Gay man | ☐ Bisexual |
| ☐ Gay woman/Lesbian | ☐ Prefer not to say | |
| ☐ Other (please specify): | | |

What is your marital status? *(Tick one option)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Single | ☐ Divorced |
| ☐ Partnered | ☐ Widowed |
| ☐ Married/Civil Partnered | ☐ Prefer not to say |

Are you able to? *(Tick all that apply)*

	Not at all	A little	Fairly well	Fluently	Prefer not to say
Speak Welsh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Read Welsh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Write Welsh	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
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