

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. Rhwch 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, 3 April 2025

Dear Councillor,

**COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Council will be held Hybrid in the Council Chamber Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB/Remotely via Microsoft Teams on **Wednesday, 9 April 2025 at 16:00.**

**AGENDA**

1 **Apologies for absence**

To receive apologies for absence from Members.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest from Members/Officers in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.

3 **Approval of Minutes**

5 - 32

To receive for approval the minutes of 26/02/25 and 12/03/25

4 **To receive announcements from:**

- (i) Mayor (or person presiding)
- (ii) Chief Executive

**By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £1.64 in printing costs**

- 5     To receive announcements by the Leader
- 6     Corporate Plan Review for 2025/26 33 - 56
- 7     Scrutiny Review 57 - 86
- 8     Notice of Motion Proposed by

**Councillor Ian Williams**

"In June 2020 this authority declared a climate emergency and has implemented all necessary measures to reduce its carbon footprint.

In 2021 the Welsh Government declared a nature emergency. What this means is that 17% of 3,902 species studied in Wales are at risk of extinction, with many others in decline.

The Following plans and acts are now in place:-

In 2015, the Welsh Government's Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP) recognised Wales was far from reaching national and international biodiversity goals. Data now shows that Welsh wildlife decreased on average by 20% between 1994 and 2023. And around 1 in 6 Welsh species were at risk of extinction in 2023.

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 aims to reverse the decline in biodiversity. Among other things, it places an enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty on public authorities. The Senedd has since declared a nature emergency and the Welsh Government has said it will embed its response to the climate and nature emergency in everything it does

This motion moves that this council resolves to sign up to the nature emergency declared by Welsh Government on 30th June 2021 and considers the impact of all decisions made by this authority on the wildlife, nature and biodiversity within our borough".

9     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](mailto: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

Distribution:

All Members

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 16:00**

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**Present**

Councillor H Griffiths – Mayor and Chairperson

A R Berrow  
RJ Collins  
N Farr  
S J Griffiths  
M R John  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
G Walter  
I Williams

S J Bletsoe  
HJ David  
J Gebbie  
GH Haines  
M Jones  
J E Pratt  
A Wathan  
E D Winstanley

JPD Blundell  
P Davies  
W R Goode  
M L Hughes  
W J Kendall  
JC Spanswick  
AJ Williams  
T Wood

E L P Caparros  
M J Evans  
RM Granville  
D M Hughes  
M Lewis  
JH Tildesley MBE  
HM Williams

**Present Virtually**

H T Bennett  
D T Harrison  
T Thomas

N Clarke  
RM James  
MJ Williams

C L C Davies  
P W Jenkins  
R Williams

P Ford  
I M Spiller

**Officers:**

Jackie Davies  
Mark Galvin  
Laura Griffiths  
Lindsay Harvey  
Rachel Keepins  
Carys Lord  
Janine Nightingale  
Michael Pitman  
Mark Shephard

Head of Adult Social Care  
Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees  
Principal Solicitor  
Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People  
Democratic Services Manager  
Chief Officer - Finance, Housing & Change  
Corporate Director - Communities  
Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services  
Chief Executive

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Kelly Watson

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

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**103. Apologies for absence**

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from the following members:-  Councillor M Kearn Councillor Alex Williams Councillor F Bletsoe Councillor R Smith
Date Decision Made	26 February 2025

**104. Declarations of Interest**

Decision Made	<p>The following declarations of personal interest were made by Members:-</p> <p>Councillor R Williams – Agenda items 3 and 5, as a member of Pencoed Town Council, due to the Town and Community Council Fund being referenced to in the report.</p> <p>Councillor Amanda Williams – Agenda items 3 and 5, as a Community Governor at Coety Primary School</p> <p>Councillor E Winstanley - Agenda items 3 and 5, as an employee of Awen Cultural Trust and a school governor at Afon y Felin Primary School and Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sger</p> <p>Councillor I Williams – Agenda items 3 and 5, as a school governor at Brynteg Comprehensive and Oldcastle Primary Schools and as a member of Bridgend Town Council.</p> <p>Councillor M John – Agenda item 3, as a school governor at Bryncethin Junior School</p> <p>Councillor J Gebbie Agenda items 3 and 5, as a school governor at Mynydd Cynffig Primary School</p> <p>Councillor M Evans – Agenda items 3 and 5, as a member of Pencoed Town Council</p>
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**This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**

Date Decision Made	26 February 2025

**105. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report, on the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which set out the spending priorities for the Council for the next 4 years alongside a detailed budget for 2025-26.</p> <p>The report outlined:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The financial, legislative and policy context within which the draft budget has been prepared alongside more detailed information on the services to be provided by the Council over the period of the MTFS.</li> <li>• That the proposed MTFS is driven by the Council's 13 MTFS principles, along with additional budget principles requested by Cabinet for the forthcoming financial year and, has been developed by Cabinet and Corporate Management Board, taking into account discussions with, and the recommendations of, the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the School Budget Forum. The public had also been invited to take part in the consultation</li> <li>• That Welsh Government announced its draft budget on 10 December 2024 before the announcement of the provisional local government settlement on 11 December 2024.</li> <li>• In terms of the provisional local government settlement, the all-Wales increase in Aggregate External Funding (AEF) was 4.3%. The increase for Bridgend is 3.9%.</li> <li>• That no information was provided on future years' funding although indications are it will still be extremely challenging.</li> <li>• That there were a number of transfers of specific grants into and out of the settlement.</li> <li>• That the proposed budget for 2025-26 is £383.338 million, and this includes anticipated pay and price pressures of £13.3 million, service budget pressures of £14.454 million, budget reductions of £8.379 million and a council tax increase of 4.5%. The breakdown of the budget for 2025-26 is set out in Table 10.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MTFS set out a most likely savings target of £39.516 million over the next 4 financial years.</li> <li>• The Council's general capital funding had increased by £602,000 to £8.582 million.</li> <li>• That the Section 151 officer has a statutory duty to set a balanced and robust budget.</li> <li>• That the final settlement is not due to be announced until the end of February. As a result this budget is being proposed on the basis of the provisional settlement received in December 2024. Changes in the Final Settlement, such as the transfer in of specific grants, and additional funding, will be reported to Council in due course, but it is not envisaged that this will impact upon council tax.</li> </ul> <p>The Mayor announced that an amended MTFS had been submitted by the Bridgend County Independent (BCI) Group in line with a provision of the Council's Constitution and this had been accepted by the Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change. This had been sent to all members and the Corporate Management Board (CMB) in advance of the meeting. The Mayor invited the Group Leader of the BCI's to outline the main principals of the alternative budget.</p> <p>The Group Leader, BCI group stated that the alternative proposal protected schools and the counselling service and reduced this cut from 1% as shown in the MTFS to 0.5% from the Schools delegated budget. She explained that this reduction would support the educational and mental health and wellbeing needs of pupils as well as giving increased support to teaching staff. This would in turn reduce cases of CAHMS.</p> <p>There were two main areas to protect, namely the school counselling services in full due to the emerging mental health crisis facing young people and a reduction in cuts from £1.186m to £593k. This would come from cuts to other Council services as detailed in the alternative proposals. The alternative budget, also proposed methods by which BCBC could generate additional funding through other means.</p> <p>The Group Leader BCI's suggested that regardless of which budget was agreed to today, that the BREP, CCMB and opposition groups/members meet very early in the new financial year, in order to look at the local authorities finances and that these are regularly and continually monitored at the earliest opportunity in order to best prepare for the finalising of MTFS proposals for 2026-27 (moving forward).</p> <p>A member asked what would arise if some small schools were to be closed as a result of the above reductions, as was referenced to in the alternative budget.</p> <p>The Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People advised that as Welsh Government</p>
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	<p>guidance protects small and rural schools, a formal Options Appraisal would have to be undertaken if the Council were to agree to such closures. This would mean if agreed to, that the earliest these schools could close would be around September 2027. Therefore, no savings from the proposal would be made in the coming year's MTFS. Also, if agreed to, there would be further costs generated from transport costs and making other schools larger to accommodate pupils from the schools that would be subject to closing. Therefore, he considered that the savings suggested (as referred to in EV1 of the report) amounting to £239k would not be achieved.</p> <p>A member felt that the proposals so made would also have an impact longer term on the level of the Council's reserves, which had already been expressed to be lower than that which was considered desirable.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change concurred with the above, not so much for the coming year of 2025-26, but as was stated in future years. She stated this as though Welsh Government settlements beyond the coming year were not yet known, analysts had already predicted that these were expecting to be challenging.</p> <p>The Group Leader, Llynfi Independents suggested that the Constitution possibly be reviewed in terms of the budget setting process, to better enable any alternative proposals from opposition members to be considered at an earlier stage than has been the case this year, with the alternative budget.</p> <p>A member asked in respect of the budget cut proposed of £50k to close the Civic offices one day a week throughout the year, how this had been calculated and did it include capital costs, a response to which confirmed that this included capital but not revenue costs, as the MASH team would still be coming into the building full time to occupy Floor Level 4. The Corporate Director – Communities estimated that utility costs to accommodate this would outweigh any proposed savings.</p> <p>A member asked what the total amount of funding was that had been cut from the Education budget since May 2022, to which the Cabinet member for Education replied that he did not know this but would find out and come back to the member outside of the meeting. The Cabinet member for Education added however, that 39% of the Council's total budget was being committed to schools.</p> <p>As the amended budget had been proposed and seconded, the Mayor at this point in proceedings suggested that a vote take place on this, the result of which was as follows:-</p> <p> <u>For (the amended budget)</u> <u>Against</u> <u>Abstain</u> </p>
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	12	32	1
	<p>The amended budget therefore was not agreed.</p> <p>The Mayor then invited any statements or questions on the substantive budget that was included in the agenda pack.</p> <p>The Cabinet member – Finance and Performance thanked the Finance team for all the hard work they had committed to the MTFS. He felt that this last year had seen an improvement in process whereby the Budget book had been available to all members. A considerable amount of effort had been committed by members and officers to settling a balance budget, with all statutory and non-statutory services having being looked at in terms of where essential cuts could be best made. A considerable number of budget recommendations made through the scrutiny process had also been accepted by Cabinet. He added further that moving forward, there would be a Cross-Party group set-up supported by Officers and teaching staff to further analyse school funding in the future, a proposal initiated by Welsh Government.</p> <p>The Leader also added his support to the budget with the proposed rise in Council Tax being one of the lowest, if not the lowest in Wales. He stated that authority during its consideration of all proposals had attempted to protect community facing services as best it could, whilst protecting its most vulnerable in society.</p> <p>A member was concerned with the cuts to the schools budget and welcomed in future more meaningful budget engagement with the residents of the County Borough, as that received from those that actively participated and gave feedback, was not that positive, at least in his particular Ward. He felt that a push should be made for a) longer term budget settlements, if possible b) a review of the Barnett formula, so Wales obtains a fair proportion of UK funding, and c) A reformation of welsh local authorities.</p> <p>A member pointed that the cut proposed to counselling services would compromise the support to children at school at a time when there was an alarmingly high rate of self-harming by young people.</p> <p>A member noted that there was no mention in the report where the budget allocation had been found to reinstate the proposed cut to the music service (total cost 726k), as he noted in the draft Cabinet budget report considered in January 2025, no 'spare' monies had been mentioned for this purpose.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change stated that in paragraph 3.6.3 of the Cabinet report it was mentioned that we had not allocated all the budget funding at that time, although it was not mentioned specifically how much that would be, in order to provide some flexibility for the final MTFS determination.</p>		

	<p>This is where however, the extra funding had come from to save the cut originally proposed to the music service.</p> <p>It was then moved, seconded and agreed that a vote take place on the report’s recommendations, the result of which was as follows:-</p> <table><tr><td><u>For (the recommendation)</u></td><td><u>Against</u></td><td><u>Abstain</u></td></tr><tr><td>27</td><td>16</td><td>0</td></tr></table> <p>Therefore, it was</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>That the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025-26 to 2028-29, including the 2025-26 revenue budget and the Capital Programme 2024-25 to 2034-35, with particular reference to the following, be approved:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The MTFS 2025-26 to 2028-29 (Annex 3 of the report).</li><li>• The Net Budget Requirement of £383,338,259 in 2025-26.</li><li>• A Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,916.96 for 2025-26 (Table 17 of the MTFS).</li><li>• The 2025-26 budgets as allocated in accordance with Table 10 in paragraph 4.1.3 of the MTFS.</li><li>• The budget pressures outlined in Appendix C for 2025-26 to 2028-29.</li><li>• The budget reductions outlined in Appendix D for 2025-26 to 2028-29.</li><li>• The Capital Programme 2024-25 to 2034-35, attached at Appendix G of the MTFS.</li></ul>	<u>For (the recommendation)</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	27	16	0
<u>For (the recommendation)</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>					
27	16	0					
Date Decision Made	26 February 2025						

**106. Council Tax 2025-26**

Decision Made	The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report, the purpose of which, was to
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	<p>provide Council with details of the council tax requirement for the County Borough Council, following Council having approved the Medium-Term Financial Strategy on 26 February 2025, together with the requirements of the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales and Town and Community Councils, and to ask the Council to note the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band for 2025-26.</p> <p>She explained that Paragraph 3.1.2 (g) of the Financial Procedure Rules (FPRs) requires her to recommend the level of Council Tax to be levied for the forthcoming year. The Council as the local authority for the area, also has to fulfil its requirement under Section 33 and 34 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p> <p>The following were key points that should be noted from the report:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Council Tax requirement is £131,226,134.</li> <li>• The total Council Tax requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council is £106,698,377.</li> <li>• The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales precept is £21,076,848.</li> <li>• The total Council Tax requirement from Town and Community Councils is £3,450,909.</li> <li>• The Bridgend County Borough Council Band D equivalent is £1,916.96.</li> <li>• The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales Band D equivalent is £378.67.</li> <li>• The average Community/Town Council precept is £62.00.</li> <li>• The increases in council tax are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Bridgend County Borough Council 4.5%</li> <li>o Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales 7.37%</li> <li>o Average Town and Community Council 7.88%</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Cabinet Member – Finance and Performance advised the public and reminded members, that the Council Tax also covered a number of levies, that included the South Wales Central Coroner Services, the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and Margam Crematorium Service amongst others.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b></p> <p>As Council earlier in the meeting approved the proposed net budget requirement for Bridgend County Borough Council of £106,698,377 for 2025-26 and a Band D Council Tax for Bridgend County Borough Council of £1,916.96 for 2025-26, Council further agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note the level of the precept from the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales, as set out in</li> </ul>
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	<p>Table 3 of the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• note the total Council Tax charges for Band D properties for 2025-26 for each of the Community Council areas as outlined in Table 6 and the aggregate charge for each Community Council area for each council tax band as outlined in Appendix A (to the report).</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	26 February 2025

**107. Capital Strategy 2025-26**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change presented a report on the Capital Strategy 2025-26 to 2034-35 (Appendix A of the report referred), which included the Prudential Indicators against which the Council measures itself during the financial year and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2025-26 (Section 7 of Appendix A), for approval.</p> <p>The report highlighted that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Control on capital expenditure is governed by legislation;</li><li>• The Capital Strategy had been produced in accordance with CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;</li><li>• The Capital Strategy sets guiding principles for capital expenditure, and a framework for the management of capital finance;</li><li>• The Capital Strategy is currently based on financial information as reported in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</li></ul> <p>A member noted that there was a spend proposed amounting to £120m for 2025-26. In respect of an allocation of £82m of this towards educational improvements, he asked, for further details where this was being committed to.</p> <p>The Corporate Director – Education, Early Years and Young People, confirmed that this figure was largely for new builds for Band B schools at Heronsbridge for a state of the art special school, a new school at Mynydd Cynnfig, due to the failure of the Infant build there. With regards to the Welsh and Education Strategic Programme, there were also replacement new schools proposed for the Bro Ogwr school at Brackla and at Cornelly, including at Afon – y - Felin Primary school.</p> <p>A member referred to the Public Works Loan Board and the rules restricting what funding can be accessed</p>
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	<p>through loans, including any restriction on borrowing for commercial activities. He stated that presumably that would not preclude any 'spend to save schemes', for example such as on solar energy, which would cut our costs as opposed to external revenue generation.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change advised that there would be some flexibility in respect of the above, as long as the local authority were not seeking to make any financial gain from any proposal. She added that, BCBC could also borrow to help improve either the financial viability of the Council and/or a valuable service, but not to buy any speculative buildings, such as some local authorities in England had.</p> <p>A member noted that last November Council had considered a report requesting an increased budget allocation for the new Heronsbridge School. Then at Council in January 2025, this scheme was further debated with an added proposal to move Harwood House. She asked why these schemes were not included in the report before members today, included any projected overspends for the projects.</p> <p>The Deputy Head of Finance, Housing and Change confirmed that added funding for Heronsbridge School had been committed, however, the Council were awaiting the finalising of a Business Case which was pending for this scheme, to include a match funding contribution from Welsh Government. In relation to Harwood House, she added that no funding had as of yet been agreed for this project, however, this could be supported through grant funding, which the Deputy Leader then expanded on for the benefit of Council.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council approved the Capital Strategy 2025-26 to 2034-35, including the Prudential Indicators 2025-26 to 2034-35 and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2025-26, at Appendix A of the report.</p>
Date Decision Made	26 February 2025

**108. Treasury Management Strategy 2025-26**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change submitted a report, the purpose of which, was as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To present to Council the Capital Strategy 2025-26 to 2034-35, which includes the Prudential Indicators, and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2025-26.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note that control on capital expenditure is governed by legislation.</li> <li>• To acknowledge that the Capital Strategy has been produced in accordance with CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.</li> <li>• To advise that the Capital Strategy sets guiding principles for capital expenditure, and a framework for the management of capital finance.</li> <li>• To reinforce to Council, that the Capital Strategy is currently based on financial information as reported in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</li> </ul> <p>She explained that the Council's Financial Procedure Rules (para 3.5.1) required the Chief Finance Officer to prepare a Capital Strategy for submission to the Council for approval prior to the start of the financial year. The Strategy must demonstrate that capital expenditure and investment decisions are in line with service objectives and properly take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change, added that Capital Strategy must comply with the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.</p> <p>She then elaborated on some key points contained in the report for the benefit of members, before the Mayor asked them if they had any questions on the issues highlighted within the report.</p> <p>A member stated that matters of treasury management were looked at periodically through the Overview and Scrutiny process. He noted from page 242 of the report, that there was a list of approved sources that the Authority has business dealings with, which included other local authorities. He further noted that certain English local authorities (LA's) were facing severe financial restraints, some of which had even gone bankrupt. He therefore asked what safeguards BCBC had in place to ensure that if or when we have financial dealings with any English based LA's that any money we invest with them we can either get returned in full or alternatively re-invested.</p> <p>The Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change confirmed that BCBC had a sound track record when it came to managing any risks to our investments and to that end, we had an approved list of regular counterparties that we have agreed that we'll invest with. If this list were to change in any way, then this would require the approval of Council. BCBC also had two other safeguards in place, which was a limit on any investment with another organisation (which was capped), as well as a maximum time limit for the placing of such investment. The Council also received advice from its Treasury Management Advisors on who to invest with or lend to. The above processes in place, therefore ensured that any risks are mitigated as much as they possibly can be.</p>
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	<p>A member also pointed out that with diminishing capital reserves due to the current financial climate, there may be a need for the Authority to borrow more going forward. In conjunction with this, he felt that there should be a requirement for the LA to be as accurate as possible when forecasting and scheduling capital projects in future, ie both in terms of their amount and timing of the works for their completion.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council approved the Capital Strategy 2025-26 to 2034-35, including the Prudential Indicators 2025-26 to 2034-35 and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2025-26, at Appendix A to the report.</p>
Date Decision Made	26 February 2025

**109. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	There were no urgent items
Date Decision Made	26 February 2025

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

The meeting closed at 18:36.



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 12 MARCH 2025 AT 16:00**

**Present**

Councillor H Griffiths – Chairperson

H T Bennett  
S Easterbrook  
RM Granville  
JC Spanswick  
MJ Williams

E L P Caparros  
M J Evans  
GH Haines  
T Thomas  
E D Winstanley

HJ David  
N Farr  
M Jones  
JH Tildesley MBE  
T Wood

P Davies  
W R Goode  
J E Pratt  
HM Williams

**Present Virtually**

S Aspey  
C L C Davies  
D M Hughes  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
G Walter  
R Penhale-Thomas

F D Bletsoe  
P Ford  
RM James  
R J Smith  
AJ Williams

S J Bletsoe  
S J Griffiths  
M R John  
I M Spiller  
R Williams

N Clarke  
M L Hughes  
M Lewis  
A Ulberini-Williams  
A Wathan

**Apologies for Absence**

JPD Blundell and D T Harrison

**Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Elaine Winstanley - Personal interest in agenda item 8 as an Employee of AWEN Cultural Trust

**Officers:**

Deborah Exton  
Lindsay Harvey  
Rachel Keepins

Deputy Head of Finance  
Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People  
Democratic Services Manager

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Janine Nightingale  
Michael Pitman  
Oscar Roberts  
Mark Shephard

Corporate Director - Communities  
Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services  
Business Administrative Apprentice - Democratic Services  
Chief Executive

**110. Approval of Minutes**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That the minutes of the 05/02/2025 be approved as a true and accurate record subject to the amendment below:</p> <p>A Member stated that there was an issue with the minutes at item 9 whereby the motion referred to the previous question erroneously and she therefore asked for the following amendment to be made:</p> <p><i>‘Councillor H Bennett gave an introductory speech outlining reasons for proposing the Notice of Motion on the Crown Post Office, as detailed on the meeting Agenda at item 101. This Motion was duly seconded by the Deputy Leader.</i></p> <p><i>Following some discussion by Members on the above, it was subsequently agreed that Council wholeheartedly supports the Notice of Motion.’</i></p>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**111. To receive announcements from:**

Decision Made	<p>Announcements were received from the following Cabinet Members and Chief Executive (No decisions required/made):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mayor;</li><li>• Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Health;</li><li>• Chief Executive</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**112. To receive announcements by the Leader**

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the Leader (No decisions required/made)
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**113. Related Party Transactions 2024-25 for Statement of Accounts**

Decision Made	<p>The Deputy Head of Finance presented a report which informed Council of the requirement for Members to formally declare any related party transactions for the 2024-25 financial year by completing the declaration attached at Appendix A, even if it is a nil return, and that this must be completed no earlier than 31 March 2025 and returned by Wednesday 9 April 2025.</p> <p>Following recommendation from Audit Wales, it was suggested that Council were formally informed of their requirement of completing and submitting their annual related party return by the deadline set by the Finance Department; and to ensure that any outstanding related party returns are always pursued promptly. Guidance for this was attached at Appendix B.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council noted the requirement for Members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formally declare any related party transactions for the 2024-25 financial year;</li> <li>• complete and date the return no earlier than 31 March 2025;</li> <li>• submit the return by Wednesday 9 April 2025.</li> </ul>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**114. Fleet Replacement Programme**

Decision Made	<p>The Corporate Director Communities presented a report which outlined the proposed costs for the replacement of existing council fleet for inclusion in the Capital Programme. It identified the types of vehicles and items of plant and equipment that are scheduled for replacement which are age expired and need to be replaced for operational expediency.</p> <p>The report also sought agreement from Council to approve a capital budget of £1.2 million for inclusion in the capital programme to accommodate the Council's requirements for fleet replacement, which is to be funded from prudential borrowing, and met from service department revenue budgets. She advised that 31 of the 186 vehicles in the BCBC fleet are now identified as needing to be replaced alongside replacement plant and equipment during 2025-26 at a cost of circa £1.2m.</p> <p>A Member asked how of the fleet would be British made. The Corporate Director Communities did not have the exact information to hand but could provide this following the meeting. She added however that where possible BCBC will always endeavor to source British made goods and services</p> <p>A Member asked why we were not using our own capital reserves to fund this , rather than borrowing. The Deputy Head of Finance stated that much of our capital reserves were already committed to other schemes over the next financial year or two and therefore would not be viable to draw from for this level of funding.</p> <p>A Member asked in relation to ULEV and what the capacity was to make the switch to these vehicles. The Corporate Director Communities stated that we want to move to this particularly to align with our climate change goals, however not all fleets were suitable for this change at the current stage.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council approved a capital budget of £1.2 million be included in the capital programme, to be funded from prudential borrowing, to enable the Fleet Replacement Programme to continue.</p>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

#### 115. Capital Support For The Grand Pavilion Porthcawl Project

Decision Made	<p>The Corporate Director Communities presented a report which requested that Council revise the capital programme to include an anticipated capital payment to be made to BCBC by Welsh Government (WG) upon completion of the new Owners Agreement to support the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl project.</p>
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	<p>She explained that the new Owners Agreement for Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration Area includes a shared title arrangement for Salt Lake and Hillsboro North resulting, in BCBC and WG jointly owning this land, in line with the amendment to the original longstanding Owners Agreement for Sandy Bay. Pursuant to the terms of the new Owners Agreement, a payment of £4m will be made to BCBC from Welsh Government, when the Owners Agreement completes. Further details were at section 3 of the report. The Corporate Director Communities stressed that if the transaction does not complete as anticipated, or Council does not approve the allocation, Page 29 then the contract for the Grand Pavilion will not be awarded. In this case the Council would risk losing the £18m LUF funding and the site becoming stalled.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted the information within the report relating to both the Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration Area Owners Agreement and the Grand Pavilion Porthcawl project costs.</li> <li>• Agreed that, upon the completion of the Owners Agreement, to revise the capital programme to include additional funding of £3,867,125 million to support the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl project.</li> </ul>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**116. Independent Remuneration Panel For Wales Annual Report 2025-26**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which advised Council of the Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) in respect of the level and range of remuneration the Authority must make available to its elected members for the 2025-2026 municipal year. Council was asked to approve and adopt the determinations of the Panel, approve the posts who will received a senior/civic salary as agree the revised Scheme of Remuneration effective from 1 April 2025</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council noted the Annual Report for 2025-2026 and approved:</p> <p>a) The adoption of the relevant Determinations of the Panel contained within the Annual Report (attached as Appendix 1);</p>
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	<p>b) Those posts (shown in the revised Members' Schedule of Remuneration at Schedule 1 of Appendix 2) who will receive a senior / civic salary;</p> <p>c) The revised Members' Schedule of Remuneration (Appendix 2) and for it to become effective from 1 April 2025;</p> <p>d) That the Members' Schedule of Remuneration be updated with any changes subsequently made by Council at the Annual Meeting of Council or during the 2025-2026 municipal year.</p>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**117. Pay Policy Statement - 2025/26**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy stated that as this item related to Chief Officers, all relevant officers left the meeting during this item.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member Resources presented a report which sought Council approval for the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/2026. This is in response to legislative requirements and to provide openness and accountability in relation to how the Council rewards its staff.</p> <p>The updated Pay Policy Statement for approval was attached at Appendix 1 which included the NJC pay scales as well as the JNC pay scales.</p> <p>A Member asked in relation to 10.4.1 and 10.4.7 of the appendix it had personal information relating to the current Chief Executive and asked what the reason for this was. The policy would be out of date quickly should it be approved.</p> <p>The Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development agreed to remove the name of the Chief Executive, however the Pay Policy Statement report was published at a point in time where the post itself was relevant to include.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader stated that the trade union negotiations had taken many months to complete and asked what the impact of this had been to the lower earners who rely so heavily on accurate pay for any benefits they may receive.</p>
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	<p>The Group Manager - Human Resources and Organisational Development agreed that for staff as well as the Payroll service it would be beneficial if agreements were far sooner. The impact on staff would be great as there would have been a number of months worth of backdated pay which would not reflect accurately their actual pay.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader urged trade unions to begin and settle the negotiations earlier to ensure that staff were able to receive their new pay on time with minimal detriment.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council approved the Pay Policy Statement 2025/2026 attached as Appendix 1.</p>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**118. Revised Contract Procedure Rules**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer – Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which sought approval for an amendment to the Scheme of Delegation of Functions in relation to Council Functions as set out at paragraph 3.2 of this report; 1.1.2 note the revised Contract Procedure Rules (attached as Appendix 1) will take effect from 1st April 2025 subject to Cabinet’s approval of them on 11th March 2025; 1.1.3 note that the Constitution will be amended to incorporate the revised Contract Procedure Rules.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> that Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) approved the amendments to the Scheme of Delegation of Functions in relation to Council functions as set out in paragraph 3.2;</li> <li>(ii) noted that the revised Contract Procedure Rules attached as Appendix 1 will take effect from 1st April 2025 subject to Cabinet’s approval of them on 11th March 2025;</li> <li>(iii) noted that the Constitution will be amended to incorporate the revised Contract Procedure Rules.</li> </ul>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

119. **Information Reports For Noting**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Officer Legal &amp; Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy presented a report which informed Council of Information Reports for noting that have been published since its last scheduled meeting.</p> <p>The reports were detailed at section 3 of the report for noting.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council acknowledged the publication of the reports referred to in paragraph 3.1 of this report.</p>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

120. **To receive the following Question from:**

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u> Councillor Heidi Bennett to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment – Response circulated to Members prior to the meeting.</p> <p>A supplementary question was asked by Cllr Heidi Bennett</p>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

121. **Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Gary Haines**

Decision Made	<p>Councillors Gary Haines outlined his Notice of Motion, the wording of which was as follows:</p> <p><b>Motion for the Return of Crown Estate Revenues to the Welsh Government</b></p> <p>This motion is submitted in recognition of Wales' right to control and benefit from its own natural wealth, ensuring that the economic and social well-being of its citizens is prioritised.</p>
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	<p><b>This Council</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognises that the Crown Estate in Wales generates significant revenue from Welsh natural resources, including offshore wind, marine resources, and land holdings.</li> <li>2. Notes that revenue from the Crown Estate in Wales is currently collected and managed by the UK Treasury, with profits allocated to the UK Government.</li> <li>3. Acknowledges that Scotland has successfully secured the devolution of Crown Estate revenues, ensuring that income generated from Scottish assets is reinvested in Scotland's economy and communities.</li> <li>4. Believes that the revenue generated from Welsh Crown Estate assets should be returned to the Welsh Government to ensure that it is reinvested in social and economic development within Wales.</li> <li>5. Calls upon the UK Government to devolve Crown Estate revenues to the Welsh Government, enabling direct investment in essential public services, housing, renewable energy projects, and economic opportunities for communities across Wales.</li> <li>6. Urges the Welsh Government to advocate for the return of these funds and develop a strategic framework for their use in addressing social needs, alleviating poverty, and supporting sustainable growth in Wales.</li> </ol> <p><b>This Council resolves to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support all measures that seek the devolution of the Crown Estate in Wales.</li> <li>2. Call upon the UK Government to engage in meaningful discussions regarding the fair distribution of revenues generated from Wales' natural resources.</li> </ol> <p>Members debated the motion and it was moved and seconded following an amendment to point 5.</p> <p>Members also agreed for the Leader to write to the First Minister to further engage with the treasury and liaise with UK and Scottish Government to gain a greater understanding of governance structures required and financial consequences of the devolution of the Crown Estate. However Cllr Jonathan Pratt did not support the amendment regarding devolution and wished for this to be placed on record.</p>
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**RESOLVED:** The amended motion was agreed as follows:

**Motion for the Return of Crown Estate Revenues to the Welsh Government**

This motion is submitted in recognition of Wales' right to control and benefit from its own natural wealth, ensuring that the economic and social well-being of its citizens is prioritised.

**This Council**

1. Recognises that the Crown Estate in Wales generates significant revenue from Welsh natural resources, including offshore wind, marine resources, and land holdings.
2. Notes that revenue from the Crown Estate in Wales is currently collected and managed by the UK Treasury, with profits allocated to the UK Government.
3. Acknowledges that Scotland has successfully secured the devolution of Crown Estate revenues, ensuring that income generated from Scottish assets is reinvested in Scotland's economy and communities.
4. Believes that the revenue generated from Welsh Crown Estate assets should be returned to the Welsh Government to ensure that it is reinvested in social and economic development within Wales.
5. Calls upon the UK Government to devolve Crown Estate revenues to the Welsh Government, enabling direct investment in essential public services.
6. Urges the Welsh Government to advocate for the return of these funds and develop a strategic framework for their use in

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Support all measures that seek the devolution of the Crown Estate in Wales.
2. Call upon the UK Government to engage in meaningful discussions regarding the fair distribution of revenues generated from Wales' natural resources.

	3. Call upon the Leader of the Council to write to the First Minister to further engage with the treasury and liaise with UK and Scottish Government to gain a greater understanding of governance structures required and financial consequences of the devolution of the Crown Estate.
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**122. Notice of Motion Proposed By Councillor Jane Gebbie, Deputy Leader**

Decision Made	<p>Councillor Jane Gebbie outlined her Notice of Motion, the wording of which was as follows:</p> <p>This Council notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The significant increase in need for emergency food in Bridgend County, with Bridgend County Foodbank providing more than 8,000 emergency food parcels in the last 12 months, a 21% increase on the same period in 2018/19.</li><li>• 62% of beneficiaries of Bridgend County Foodbanks are households with children and 28% of those are families with 3 or more children. This demonstrates that a higher proportion of households with children are experiencing hunger, poverty and hardship.</li><li>• That around 5 in 6 low income households on Universal Credit are going without at least one essential like food, a warm home or toiletries [1], which shows that the social security system is not providing people with enough to afford the essentials.</li><li>• That 9.3 million people in the UK face hunger and hardship, meaning their household is more than 25% below the Social Metrics Commission poverty line. This represents one in seven people in the UK, and one in five children. Without action, a further 425,000 people are projected to face hunger and hardship by 2026/27 [2].</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Council resolves:</li><li>- To support the promotion of the campaign by Bridgend County Foodbank, Trussell and Joseph Roundtree Foundation to introduce an Essentials Guarantee[3] , a law which would ensure that the basic rate of social security support is always enough to afford the essentials that we all need to live.</li><li>- To ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor and Secretary to the Department for Work and Pensions in favour of the introduction of an Essentials Guarantee.</li><li>- To ask the Leader of the Council to write to Chris Elmore MP for Bridgend, Stephen Kinnock MP for Aberafan Maesteg and Chris Bryant MP for Rhondda and Ogmore, to request that they write to both the Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs, as well as Chancellor and Secretary to the Department for Work and Pensions, in favour of the introduction of an Essentials Guarantee.</li></ul> <p>[1] Joseph Rowntree Foundation: <a href="https://www.jrf.org.uk/social-security/guarantee-our-essentials-reforming-universal-credit-to-ensure-we-can-all-afford-the">https://www.jrf.org.uk/social-security/guarantee-our-essentials-reforming-universal-credit-to-ensure-we-can-all-afford-the</a></p> <p>[2] The Cost of Hunger and Hardship, Trussell, 2024: <a href="https://www.trussell.org.uk/news-and-research/publications/report/the-cost-of-hunger-and-hardship">https://www.trussell.org.uk/news-and-research/publications/report/the-cost-of-hunger-and-hardship</a></p> <p>[3] <a href="https://www.trussell.org.uk/support-us/guarantee-our-essentials">https://www.trussell.org.uk/support-us/guarantee-our-essentials</a></p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> The motion was debated and an amendment was requested by Cllr Steven Bletsoe which was seconded. The amended motion read as follows:</p> <p>The Council resolves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- To support the promotion of the campaign by Bridgend County Foodbank, Trussell and Joseph Roundtree Foundation to introduce an Essentials Guarantee[3] , a law which would ensure that the basic rate of social security support is always enough to afford the essentials that we all need to live.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- To ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor and Secretary to the Department for Work and Pensions in favour of the introduction of an Essentials Guarantee.</li><li>- To ask the Leader of the Council to write to Chris Elmore MP for Bridgend, Stephen Kinnock MP for Aberafan Maesteg and Chris Bryant MP for Rhondda and Ogmore, to request that they write to both the Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs, as well as Chancellor and Secretary to the Department for Work and Pensions, in favour of the introduction of an Essentials Guarantee.</li><li>- To write to the First Minister and the relevant Cabinet secretary in Welsh Government to ask for their backing of the Leader of the Council on the above requests.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

**123. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> There were no urgent items.
Date Decision Made	12 March 2025

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

The meeting closed at 18:00.

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>9 APRIL 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>CORPORATE PLAN REVIEW FOR 2025/26</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL AND REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>ALEX RAWLIN, CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	Council priorities in the Corporate Plan / Delivery Plan inform Service Plans which form part of the Policy Framework. The Performance Framework forms part of the Policy Framework.
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p>This report sets out an updated Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2025/26 to reflect the Council's current budget, operating environment and priorities. It recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An updated, reprioritised and reduced Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.</li><li>• A reduction of wellbeing objectives from 7 to 4 (with some merged or subsumed into others).</li><li>• Integrating the key measures of the Council's 'Ways of Working' into the new Wellbeing Objectives.</li><li>• A reduction of aims from 41 to 21 with a better balance of performance indicators and commitments against them and a better balance of measures for each directorate.</li><li>• A reduction of Performance Indicators from 108 to 65 (with updated targets against them for the year ahead).</li><li>• A reduction of commitments from 80 to 61.</li></ul>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report outlines an updated Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2025/26 for Council approval.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has a high level, five-year Corporate Plan 2023-28. The Council took a new approach for 2023 and did not include commitments or performance indicators in the Corporate Plan. Instead, the Council developed a one-year delivery plan to allow for increased agility and flexibility to a rapidly changing operating environment.

- 2.2 In late 2024, the Council developed financial plans and scenarios on the basis that there are likely to be severe budget pressures in the coming year. In December 2024, it was confirmed that the Council's budget for 2025/26 will be better than the planning scenarios used but national projections show Welsh Government financial settlements to local authorities will be more challenging from 2026/27. For the coming year, the priorities have been to provide additional funding for services facing demand issues and reducing savings required.
- 2.3 Corporate Management Board (CMB) have made it clear to Cabinet, Council, staff, and trade unions that budget pressures continue (albeit at a slower pace than anticipated) and the Council still needs to move towards a new operating model. This will also need to be carefully communicated to local residents in coming months.
- 2.4 The Corporate Plan is now 2 years old and embedded in the organisation. It is becoming clear what works well and what does not. CMB, Cabinet CMB and scrutiny committees all agree that the current Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (CPDP) is too large and insufficiently focused on priorities. Some of the main issues identified through 2024 were:
- There is an imbalance between Wellbeing Objectives (WBOs) / aims with a huge body of evidence against them and others with very little - each has equal status in self-assessment.
  - There are too many Performance Indicators (PIs) / commitments outside the Council's control.
  - Some commitments / PIs are coming to an end - funding is stopping or work completed.
  - It was difficult to evidence WBO3 – the Valleys, and the existing evidence did not reflect Members' views.
  - There is duplication - some commitments are duplicated as similar PIs and some commitments appear in more than one WBO.
  - The Ways of Working (WoW) should be incorporated into the new Wellbeing Objectives, including workforce measures / working with partners.
- 2.5 At the end of quarter three of 2024-25, following discussions on priorities for spending and budgets in 2025/26, work began to start reviewing operational priorities.
- 2.6 In January 2025, CMB considered a number of options for review of the Corporate Plan. They agreed to review the existing Corporate Plan Delivery Plan, with a clear aim of reducing the number of priorities and measures. They agreed the following principles for the review of the CPDP:
- A smaller, more focused delivery plan
  - More focused on genuine corporate priorities



- Each Wellbeing Objective, Aim, Performance Indicator (PI) and Commitment should be tested to ensure it is still a priority and the following do not apply:
    - The work is completed
    - The work is largely outside the Council's control
    - A PI and commitment duplicate each other
    - The work is unfunded / unstaffed
    - The work is proving difficult to evidence
    - Officers / Members have already agreed that it is not a priority
  - PIs do not have to form part of the CPDP just because they are statutory for the Council to measure.
- 2.7 In February 2025, Directorate Management Teams reviewed the Wellbeing Objectives, aims, PIs and commitments against the above principles. On 19 February 2025, Heads of Service / CMB met together to test the balance of the CPDP, reduce duplication and fill any gaps.
- 3. Current situation / proposal**
- 3.1 The product of this review is a significantly reduced CPDP which is included at **Appendix 1**. In this –
- Wellbeing Objectives are reduced from 7 to 4 with some merged or subsumed into others. The four that remain focus on –
    - A prosperous place with thriving communities
    - Creating modern, seamless public services
    - Enabling people to meet their potential
    - Supporting our most vulnerable
  - Aims are reduced from 41 to 20.
  - PIs are reduced from 108 to 65
  - Commitments are reduced from 80 to 61
- 3.2 The draft CPDP was considered by Cabinet / Corporate Management Board (CCMB) and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) in March 2025, and their comments integrated. A COSC recommendation included separating the housing aim into two (one for disabled facilities grants and one for homelessness), and the valley / town centres aim into two. Although a good, thoughtful suggestion, this has not been done as –
- It would increase the number of aims
  - The new, split out aims would be fairly narrow and specific when we aim to make them broader and more similar in size
  - There would only be 2-3 PIs / commitments against each aim – a problem we are trying to move away from with this CPDP
- 3.3 The updated CPDP is substantially reduced in size and improved in the following ways –

- There is a shorter, clearer set of priorities that focuses on genuine corporate / strategic priorities that are -
    - Resourced / funded
    - Not duplicated
    - Largely within the Council's control
    - Able to be evidenced each quarter / year
  - It is more balanced
    - equally sized wellbeing objectives and aims
    - similarly sized contributions from each directorate
  - It will be easier to communicate to staff, partners and the public
  - It will be clearer to manage / report performance
- 3.4 In the past, targets have been taken through political sign off separately from the CPDP. CMB asked in 2024 that this process be streamlined, and the two should go through political sign-off together. This change is incorporated into the process, and the targets are included in **Appendix 2**.
- 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. Wellbeing of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Wellbeing Objectives**
- 5.1 This report proposes a review of the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that form part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28:-
1. A county borough where we protect our most vulnerable
  2. A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns
  3. A County Borough with thriving valleys communities
  4. A County Borough where we help people meet their potential
  5. A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency
  6. A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community
  7. A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

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

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

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

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

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

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Review of the Corporate Priorities is entirely informed by and in line with the Council's agreed budget for 2025/26.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 It is recommended that Council:
- Approves the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for 2025/26 in **Appendix 1**;
  - Approves the performance indicator targets for 2025/26 in **Appendix 2**.

## **Background documents**

None.

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## Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2025-26

## Wellbeing Objective One - A prosperous place with thriving communities

Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
Moving towards net zero carbon, and improving our energy efficiency	DCO23.05 Reduction in emissions (across our buildings, fleet & equipment, streetlighting, business travel, commuting, homeworking, waste, procured goods and services) (COMM) DCO20.01 Annual Gas Consumption across the Authority (kWh) (COMM) DCO20.02 Annual Electricity Consumption across the Authority (kWh) (COMM) CED57 - Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) pollution in the air (micrograms per m <sup>3</sup> ) (CEX SRS)	Invest in energy efficiency improvements to the Council's estate and assets. (COMM)  Implement our Air Quality Action Plan and monitor its effectiveness in improving air quality along Park Street (CEX SRS)
Protect landscapes and open spaces	DCO23.06 Number of blue flag beaches (COMM) DCO23.07 Number of green flag parks and green spaces (COMM)	Deliver projects such as woodland enhancement, develop and protect our natural environment in partnership with our communities and key stakeholders as part of our Bridgend Biodiversity Plan (COMM)
Promote the conditions for economic growth and prosperity	DCO23.03 Number of businesses receiving support through Shared Prosperity Funding (COMM) DCO23.04 Number of business start-ups assisted (COMM)	Develop funding bids enhance the economy and stimulate new job opportunities (COMM)  Invest in business start-ups in the County Borough by providing both professional and grant support, supporting key growth sectors like research and development, finance and the green economy (COMM)  Invest an additional £7.75m of Shared Prosperity Funding in projects in the County Borough by 2026, with third sector partners, including in people and skills, supporting local businesses, and developing communities and place (COMM)  Improve sustainable and active travel choices, to increase connectivity and greener travel choices in line with our strategic transport projects (COMM)

<p>Page 38</p> <p>Regenerate our town centres and Valleys</p>	<p>DCO23.01 Number of commercial properties assisted through the enhancement grant scheme (COMM)</p>	<p>Deliver a Transforming Towns programme of investment across our town centres in partnership with Welsh Government over the next two years to improve the economic sustainability of our town centres (COMM)</p> <p>Continue to deliver a commercial property enhancement grant for all valley high streets, to bring vacant properties back into use and improve local centres. (COMM)</p> <p>Redevelop the Ewenny Road site, including new and affordable homes, an enterprise hub, open space and green infrastructure, in partnership with the adjoining landowner. (COMM)</p>
<p>Reduce, reuse or recycle as much waste as possible</p>	<p>DCO20.05 Percentage of street cleansing waste prepared for recycling (COMM)</p> <p>PAM/030 Percentage of waste reused, recycled, or composted (COMM)</p> <p>PAM/010 Percentage of streets that are clean (COMM)</p>	<p>Bring our Waste Service in-house (COMM)</p>
<p>Provide opportunities for culture, leisure, and play</p>	<p>SSWB67 Participation in the national free swimming initiative for 16 and under (SSWB)</p> <p>DCO23.10 Number of play areas that have been refurbished (COMM)</p> <p>Number of active users across target population groups via health &amp; wellbeing leisure membership provision. (SSWB)</p>	<p>Redevelop Porthcawl Grand Pavilion to increase the use of the new facilities and extend social and leisure facilities, in partnership with Awen Cultural Trust. (COMM)</p> <p>Continue the children's play areas refurbishment programme and make sure inclusive play equipment is provided to allow opportunities for all. (COMM)</p> <p>Enlarge the Food and Fun Programme for summer 2025 (EEYYP)</p> <p>Develop whole Council action plan and networks to support the submission of the Play Sufficiency Assessment to Welsh Government. (SSWB)</p> <p>Develop active wellbeing offer for targeted groups (SSWB)</p> <p>Develop the Healthy Living Partnership Strategy (SSWB)</p> <p>Develop the Libraries, Culture and Community hub Strategy (SSWB)</p> <p>Maintain performance against Welsh public library standards (SSWB)</p>

## Wellbeing Objective Two - Creating modern, seamless public services

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Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
Improving how we engage with people, listening to views & acting on them.	CED59 Level of engagement (Welsh / English) a) across consultations b) with corporate communications to residents (CEX) Percentage of complaints closed within timescales (CEX)	Improve how we communicate and engage with residents, including children and young people to help us become more customer focused and responsive. (CEX) Improve the way we gather and use resident views (CEX) Improve the way we gather and use staff views (CEX) Improve the way we handle and learn from corporate complaints and compliments (CEX) Implement the strategic equality plan action plan (CEX)
Offer more information and services online, and in local areas.	CED5 Percentage first call resolutions (via Customer Contact Centre) (CEX) CED51 Number of online transactions using the digital platform (CEX)	Continue to review the corporate front door to streamline, standardise, and enhance entry points into the council whilst improving the resolution at the first point of contact. (CEX)
Modernise and become a more efficient council	CORPB5 Percentage of staff that have completed a Personal Review/Appraisal (excluding school staff) (CEX/All) PAM/001 Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee (CEX/All) DCO16.8 Number of council owned assets transferred to the community for running (CATs) (COMM)	Approve and implement the new digital strategy (CEX) Continue to rationalise the corporate estate (COMM) Invest in Community Asset Transfers and support clubs and Community Groups with equipment grants to improve and safeguard the facilities. (COMM)
Improve partnership working with partners, the third sector and Town and Community Councils	CED62 Percentage of Assia service users reporting increased feelings of safety at their exit evaluation (CEX) CED63 Percentage of high-risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 48 hours. (CEX) CED64 Percentage of medium risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 72 hours. (CEX) Number of active referrals supported by Local Community Coordinators (SSWB) Number of children and young adults supported during school holidays (SSWB)	Develop a new regional agreement for working with frail older people between health boards and councils (SSWB) Complete the town and community council arrangements review (CEX) Work co-productively with our communities to develop their own solutions and become more resilient. (SSWB)

## Wellbeing Objective three - Enabling people to meet their potential

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Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
Provide an effective Childcare and Early Years Offer	DEFS160 Number of two-year-olds accessing childcare through the Flying Start programme (EEYYP)	<p>Provide effective leadership and management of maintained Early Years settings ensuring that outcomes in Care Inspectorate Wales inspections are at least 'good'. (EEYYP)</p> <p>Offer effective support and challenge to funded non-maintained Early Years settings ensuring that outcomes in joint inspections are at least 'good'. (EEYYP)</p>
Provide safe, supportive schools with high quality teaching	<p>PAM032 Average 'Capped 9' score for pupils in Year 11 (EEYYP)</p> <p>EDU016a/PAM007 Percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools (EEYYP)</p> <p>EDU016b/PAM008 Percentage of Pupil attendance in secondary schools (EEYYP)</p> <p>EDU010a Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in primary schools (EEYYP)</p> <p>EDU010b Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in secondary schools (EEYYP)</p> <p>DEFS155 Percentage of schools that have self-evaluated themselves as 'green' as part of their annual safeguarding audit (EEYYP)</p>	<p>Help schools achieve their improvement plans by analysing needs and offering training to address this, ensuring that all schools will be judged by Estyn as 'not requiring any follow-up' (EEYYP)</p> <p>Make additional digital learning training available to all school staff to improve teaching and learning in our schools (EEYYP)</p> <p>Improve the digital offer to young people, including youth led interactive website (EEYYP)</p>
Provide Welsh medium education opportunities	<p>DEFS138 - Percentage of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh (EEYYP)</p> <p>DEFS157 - Percentage of learners studying for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11) (EEYYP)</p> <p>DEFS158 - Number of learners studying for Welsh as a second language (EEYYP)</p>	Deliver the actions in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) (EEYYP)



<p>Page 4</p> <p>Modernise school buildings</p>		<p>Enlarge Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr to a 2.5 form-entry new-build school. (EEYYP)</p> <p>Provide a new-build for Mynydd Cynffig Primary School. (EEYYP)</p> <p>Enlarge Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr to a two form-entry new-build school. (EEYYP)</p> <p>Provide a new two-form entry English-medium school to replace the existing Afon Y Felin and Corneli Primary Schools. (EEYYP)</p> <p>Relocate Heronsbridge School to a new-build 300-place school. (EEYYP)</p>
<p>Be good parents to our care experienced children</p>	<p>Percentage of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 24 months since leaving care (SSWB)</p> <p>CH/052 Percentage care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year (SSWB)</p>	<p>Work with partners to deliver improved outcomes for care experienced children through the delivery of actions in the corporate parenting action plan and informed by the views of our children and young people (SSWB)</p> <p>Support the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy in schools.(EEYYP)</p>
<p>Help people get the skills they need for work</p>	<p>DEFS82 Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme going into employment (COMM)</p> <p>DEFS80 Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme supported into education or training (COMM)</p> <p>PAM046 Percentage of Year 11 leavers not in education, training, or employment (NEET) (EEYYP)</p>	<p>Increase employment and training opportunities in the County Borough. (COMM)</p> <p>Employability Bridgend will work with funders and partners to deliver a comprehensive employability and skills programme (COMM)</p>

## Wellbeing Objective four - Supporting our most vulnerable

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Aim	Performance indicators	Commitments / projects
Provide high-quality children's & adults social services / early help services	<p>SSWB78 Timeliness of visits to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Children who are care experienced.</li> <li>b) Children on the child protection register. (SSWB)</li> </ul> <p>SSWB39 Number of care experienced children (SSWB)</p> <p>CH/026 Number of children on the child protection register (SSWB)</p> <p>SSWB57 Percentage of enquiries to the Adult Social Care front door which result in information and advice only</p> <p>Percentage of reablement packages implemented with a positive outcome (SSWB)</p> <p>DEFS29 Percentage of completed Team Around the Family (TAF) plans closed with a successful outcome (SSWB)</p> <p>SSWB75 Number of people delayed in their transfer of care on the 'discharge to recover and assess' pathways (SSWB)</p>	<p>Support the wellbeing of unpaid carers, including young carers, to have a life beyond caring through delivery of the carer's action plan. (SSWB)</p> <p>Improve Children's Services by delivering the actions in our three-year strategic plan. (SSWB)</p> <p>Improve adult social care by delivering the actions in our three-year strategic plan (SSWB)</p> <p>Change the way our social workers work to build on people's strengths and reflect what matters to our most vulnerable citizens, the relationships they have and help them achieve their potential. (SSWB)</p> <p>Address the gaps in Adult Social Care provider services by implementing the priority commissioning areas identified in our commissioning strategies and detailed service reviews (SSWB)</p> <p>Address the gaps in Childrens and Family Services provider services and respond to the Eliminating Profit/Health &amp; Social Care Bill by implementing the priority commissioning areas identified in the Placement Commissioning strategy (SSWB)</p> <p>Ensure that children and families can access support from the right service at the right time with the aim of preventing their needs from escalating. (SSWB)</p> <p>Employ and develop a well-motivated, well supported, qualified social care workforce in the Council and with partners. Fill vacancies in our social care services and reduce dependence on agency workers. (SSWB)</p>
Support people in poverty	<p>CED43 Percentage of people supported through FASS (Financial Assistance and Support Service) where support has resulted in increased income through claims for additional/increased benefits and allowances (CEX)</p> <p>CED44 Percentage of people supported through FASS who have received advice and support in managing or reducing household debt (CEX)</p>	<p>Support eligible residents to receive the financial help available to them. (CEX)</p>

<p>Page 43</p> <p>Support people with housing needs</p>	<p>PAM/012 Percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless (CEX)</p> <p>DOPS39 Percentage of people presenting as homeless or potentially homeless for whom the Local Authority has a final legal duty to secure suitable accommodation (CEX)</p> <p>PAM/015 Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (CEX)</p> <p>DOPS41 Percentage of people who feel they can live more independently as a result of receiving a DFG in their home (CEX)</p> <p>CED60 Number of additional affordable homes provided by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) across the County Borough (CEX)</p>	<p>Continue to improve our housing and homelessness service to reduce homelessness across the borough through implementation of the agreed action plan (CEX)</p> <p>Continue to target those long-term empty properties that have the most detrimental impact on the community, focusing on the Top 20. (CEX)</p>
<p>Support children with additional learning needs</p>	<p>DEFS170 Percentage of new local authority Individual Development Plans (IDPs) delivered via the online IDP system (EEYYP)</p> <p>DEFS171 Number of pupils on the waiting lists for specialist provision (EEYYP)</p> <p>DEFS172 Percentage of year 9 pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) with a transition plan in place, that have had an annual review by 31 March of each current school year. (EEYYP)</p>	<p>Implement the online IDP (Individual Development Plan) system for local authority and school-based IDPs. (EEYYP)</p> <p>Develop a five-year plan to meet increasing demand on support services, specialist provision and schools (EEYYP)</p>
<p>Safeguard and protect people at risk of harm</p>	<p>SSWB77 Percentage of Adult safeguarding inquiries which receive initial response within 7 working days (SSWB)</p> <p>CH/003 Percentage of Childrens referrals where decision is made within 24 hours (SSWB)</p> <p>SSWB62 Percentage of child protection investigations completed within required-timescales (SSWB)</p> <p>SSWB63 Average waiting time on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) waiting list (SSWB)</p>	<p>Work as One Council to effectively safeguard children and adults at risk (SSWB)</p> <p>Identify children who are more likely to offend and provide them with support to reduce offending behaviour. (EEYYP)</p>

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## Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2025-26 – Performance Indicator Targets

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**WBO1 - A prosperous place with thriving communities**

**Moving towards net zero carbon, and improving our energy efficiency**

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DCO23.05 Reduction in emissions (across our buildings, fleet & equipment, streetlighting, business travel, commuting, homeworking, waste, procured goods and services) (COMM) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	4.3%	5%	5%	To see a reduction in emissions and progress our corporate energy efficiency
DCO20.01 Annual Gas Consumption across the Authority (kWh) (COMM) <i>(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)</i>	21,966,783 kWh	20,868,443 kWh	20,000,000 kWh	To see reduction in energy consumption levels and progress our corporate energy efficiency
DCO20.02 Annual Electricity Consumption across the Authority (kWh) (COMM) <i>(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)</i>	15,210,536 kWh	14,450,009 kWh	14,000,000 kWh	
CED57 Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) pollution in the air (micrograms per m3) (CEX SRS) <i>(Annual Indicator, lower preferred)</i>	40.8	40	40	This is the legal air quality objective for NO <sub>2</sub> .

**Protect landscapes and open spaces**

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DCO23.07 Number of green flag parks and green spaces (COMM) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	2	2	2	Target set to maintain current high standards
DCO23.06 Number of blue flag beaches (COMM) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	3	3	3	Target set to maintain current high standards

**Promote the conditions for economic growth and prosperity**

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DCO23.03 Number of businesses receiving support through Shared Prosperity Funding (COMM) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	25	21	15	This is the final year of the funding so will attempt to maximise the benefits locally where possible with reduced funding available.
DCO23.04 Number of business start-ups assisted (COMM) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	219	53	30	Continue to assist and capitalise on the strong new business demand

**Regenerate our town centres and Valleys**

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DCO23.01 Number of commercial properties assisted through the enhancement grant scheme (COMM) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	4	2	4	To allocate the grant appropriately to successful applicants in line with funding terms

**Reduce, reuse or recycle as much waste as possible**

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DCO20.05 Percentage of street cleansing waste prepared for recycling (COMM) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	41.12%	40%	40%	To maintain the existing targets which remain challenging to achieve
PAM/030 Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted (COMM) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	71.94%	70%	70%	To maintain the existing targets which remain challenging to achieve
PAM/010 Percentage of streets that are clean (COMM) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	99.97%	99%	99%	To maintain the existing targets which remain challenging to achieve

**Provide opportunities for culture, leisure, and play**

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
SSWB67 Participation in the national free swimming initiative for 16 and under (SSWB) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	19,659	16,000	20,000	Reduced/more targeted programme due to increasing costs.

DCO23.10 Number of play areas refurbished (COMM) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	0	22	40	Target set in line with programme of works for the year
NEW - Number of active users across target population groups via health & wellbeing leisure membership provision. (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	New	New	700	New indicator. Baseline data to be recorded in order to set future target.

## WBO2 - Creating modern, seamless public services

Improving how we engage with people, listening to views & acting on them.

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
CED59 Level of engagement with residents: a) across consultations b) with corporate communications using the digital communications platform (CEX) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	a)7,946 b)972,384	a)8,300 b)972,500	a) 8,800 b) 1million	To ensure the Council is engaging well at all levels across the area
NEW – Percentage of Complaints closed within timescales (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	New	New	80%	Baseline target. To be reviewed during the lifecycle of the Corporate Plan to reflect the corporate customer function.

Offer more information and services online, and in local areas.

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
CED5 Percentage first call resolutions (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	69.17%	75.92%	75.92%	Target retained, to increase the number of calls resolved at the first point of contact
CED51 Number of online transactions using the digital platform (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	72,500	72,500	24-25 actual	To increase online transactions by customers to promote channel shift

### Modernise and become a more efficient council

Page	Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
28	DO16.8 Number of Council owned assets transferred to the community for running (CATs) or transferred from a short-term agreement to a long-term agreement for running during the year (COMM) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	7	10	10	To continue to deliver the CAT programme across the County
	PAM/001 Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee (CEX/ALL) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)</i>	12.37 days	No target	No target	To reduce sickness levels across the organisation
	CORPB5 Percentage of staff that have completed a Personal Review/Appraisal (excluding school staff) (CEX/ALL) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	60.89%	80%	80%	Target set to ensure all eligible staff have an annual review

### Improve partnership working with partners, the third sector and Town and Community Councils

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
CED62 Percentage of Assia service users reporting increased feelings of safety at their exit evaluation (CEX) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	New 2024-25	100%	100%	Safety planning, targeting hardening and safety measures carried out with all service users throughout support and before exiting the service
CED63 Percentage of high-risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 48 hours (CEX) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	New 2024-25	100%	100%	Contact within 48 hours is identified best practice (in line with Leading Lights accreditation)
CED64 Percentage of medium risk domestic abuse victims / public protection notices received by the service contacted within 72 hours (CEX) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	New 2024-25	100%	100%	Contact within 72 hours is identified best practice (in line with Leading Lights accreditation)
New - Number of active referrals supported by Local Community Coordinators (SSWB) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	New	New	600	New indicator. Baseline data to be recorded in order to set future target.
New - Number of children and young adults supported during school holidays (SSWB) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	New	New	950	New indicator. Baseline data to be recorded in order to set future target.



### WBO3 - Enabling people to meet their potential

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#### Provide an effective Childcare and Early Years Offer

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DEFS160 Number of two-year-olds accessing childcare through the Flying Start programme (EEYYP) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	530	570	620	The target reflects the positive investment made in the expansion of the Flying Start programme.

#### Provide safe, supportive schools with high quality teaching

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
PAM032 Average 'Capped 9' score for pupils in Year 11 (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	361.5	363.0	360.0	Targets have been reviewed since the realignment of the interim measures to pre-covid levels.
EDU016 Percentage pupil attendance in a) primary schools b) secondary schools (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	a) 91.5% b) 87.9%	a) 93% b) 90%	a) 94% b) 92%	Target set to improve pupil attendance. Young people are unlikely to attain their full potential and are more likely to be diverted into anti-social behaviour if they are not attending school regularly.
EDU010 Percentage of school days lost due to fixed-term exclusions during the school year in a) primary schools b) secondary schools (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, lower preferred)	a) 0.024% b) 0.165%	a) 0.03% b) 0.15%	a) 0.03% b) 0.15%	Exclusions remain a priority for the local authority and schools as pupil behaviour becomes increasingly challenging.
DEFS155 Percentage of schools that have self-evaluated themselves as 'green' as part of their annual safeguarding audit (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	95%	100%	100%	Target set line with guidance, to ensure schools are exercising their legal safeguarding obligations.

## Provide Welsh medium education opportunities

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DEFS138 Percentage of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	8.56%	8.7%	8.85%	Target to increase learners studying through the medium of Welsh as per Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019.
DEFS157 Percentage of learners studying for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh at the end of Key Stage 4 (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	6.62%	7.16%	7.20%	
DEFS158 Number of learners studying for Welsh as a second language (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	11	20	17	School budget cuts may impact schools' ability to run courses in person. A hybrid model has been offered to schools but not all students are comfortable with virtual learning environments.

## Be good parents to our care experienced children

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
New - Percentage of care leavers who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 24 months since leaving care (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	63.64%	New	65%	To continue to improve performance
CH/052 Percentage care leavers who have experienced homelessness during the year (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	7.17%	10%	10%	To maintain performance

## Help people get the skills they need for work

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DEFS80 Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme supported into education or training (COMM) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	76	409	219	Target set to maximise use of funding secured for that year. Funding arrangements can vary from year to year therefore targets are not comparable and there has been a significant change in funding for 25/26

DEFS82 Number of participants in the Employability Bridgend programme going into employment (COMM) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	366	233	290	Target set to maximise use of funding secured for that year. Funding arrangements can vary from year to year therefore targets are not comparable and there has been a significant change in funding for 25/26
PAM046 Percentage of Year 11 leavers not in education, training, or employment (NEET) (EEYYP) (Annual Indicator, lower preferred)	1.4	1.5%	2%	The target has increased in recognition of the increasing needs that young people are currently presenting with. The increase is in line with a national rise in numbers of pupils presenting as NEET.

## WBO4 - Supporting our most vulnerable

### Providing high-quality children's and adults social services and early help services

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
SSWB78 Timeliness of visits to a) children who are care experienced b) children on the child protection register (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	a) 85.31 b) 86.77	a) 87% b) 87%	a) 87% b) 87%	To continue to maintain performance
SSWB39 Number of care experienced children (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	370	350	325	Continue to safely reduce the number of Care Experienced Children
CH/026 Number of children on the child protection register (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	189	175	120	Sustain safe reduction in the Child Protection Register
SSWB57 Percentage of enquiries to the Adult Social Care front door which result in information and advice only (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	74.88%	75%	83%	The model is being embedded and we will seek to continue to improve performance.

SSWB69 New - Percentage of reablement packages implemented with a positive outcome (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	80.90%	New	69%	This reflects the current population needs, taking in to account seasonal fluctuations in people's health.
SSWB72 DFS29 Percentage of completed Team Around the Family (TAF) plans closed with a successful outcome (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	83%	87%	87%	To continue to improve performance.
SSWB75 Number of people recorded as delayed on the national pathway of care (SSWB) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	104	71	90	This reflects the current population needs, taking in to account seasonal fluctuations in people's health.

### Supporting people in poverty

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
CED43 Percentage of people supported through FASS (Financial Assistance and Support Service) where support has resulted in increased income through claims for additional/increased benefits and allowances (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	92%	85%	85%	Target retained. The 2024/25 target was increased in line with the re-commissioning of the service to improve outcomes for recipients of the service. The service will maintain these outcomes throughout the next year.
CED44 Percentage of people supported through FASS who have received advice and support in managing or reducing household debt (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	93%	85%	85%	

### Supporting people facing homelessness to find a place to live

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
PAM/012 Percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	11%	20%	20%	Target set at realistic level considering the legislative changes in terms of priority need which has a significant impact on number of households included in this measure

DOPS39 Percentage of people presenting as homeless or potentially homeless for whom the Local Authority has a final legal duty to secure suitable accommodation (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	29%	10%	20%	Target set to see reduction in the number who fall into the final legal duty category. This is where initial measures to relieve their homelessness within 56 days have failed.
PAM/015 Average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	552.73 days	210 days	542 days	Target includes six months to approve grant award and a further twelve months to complete the DFG, this is based on the exponential demand on the service which has significantly increased the waiting time against the available capital to deliver the adaptations on an annual basis.
DOPS41 Percentage of people who feel they can live more independently as a result of receiving a DFG in their home (CEX) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	98%	98%	98%	Target retained. To continue to achieve a positive outcome for grant recipients in living more independently.
CED60 Number of additional affordable homes provided by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) across the County Borough (CEX) (Annual Indicator, higher preferred)	64	110	110	Working with RSL's to utilise capital income streams, such as the Social Housing Grant (SHG) – to develop 500 units over a 5-year programme.

### Supporting children with additional learning needs

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
DEFS170 Percentage of new local authority individual development plans (IDPs) delivered using the online IDP system (EEYYP) (Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)	New 2024-25	100%	100%	While there have been some issues getting the online IDP system operating we are committed to transferring all IDPs to the new online system as soon as possible to comply with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act.
DEFS171 Number of pupils on the waiting lists for specialist provision (EEYYP) (Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)	23	10	10	Placing pupils in specialist provision at the earliest opportunity ensures that all of their educational needs are met. Throughout the year waiting lists may fluctuate as pupils can be added at any time. We aim to see a trend

Percentage of year 9 pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) with a transition plan in place, that have had an annual review by 31 March of each current school year. (EEYYP) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	New 2024-25	100%	100%	of decreasing numbers on the waiting list over time. This target is the end-of-year target. To comply with the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales, all IDPs must be reviewed annually.
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### Safeguard and protect people who are at risk of harm

Performance Indicator Description	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Target	2025-26 Target	Rationale for Target
SSWB77 Percentage of Adult safeguarding inquiries which receive initial response within 7 working days (SSWB) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	81.85%	85%	85%	The 7 days response relates to the Local Authority and other key partners. We will continue to improve our own performance and those of our partners.
CH/003 Percentage of Childrens referrals where decision is made within 24 hours (SSWB) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	99.69%	100%	99.5%	To sustain high performance and ensure children are protected from harm and target takes account of occasional system glitches.
SSWB62 Percentage of child protection investigations completed within required timescales (SSWB) <i>(Annual Indicator, higher preferred)</i>	77.78%	75%	80%	To continue to improve performance
SSWB63 Average waiting time on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) waiting list (SSWB) <i>(Quarterly Indicator, lower preferred)</i>	16 days	16 days	24 days	2023/24 was not a typical year due to additional commissioned resources to reduce the backlog. Current performance stands at 24 days- so we would recommend that for this year.

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>9 APRIL 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL &amp; REGULATORY SERVICES, HR &amp; CORPORATE POLICY</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>RACHEL KEEPINS – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>Any change to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees will require amendments to the Constitution.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>This report provides Council with options for new Scrutiny arrangements, in response to Audit Wales’ recommendations arising from their ‘Bridgend County Borough Council - Review of Decision Making Arrangements’ report, published in October 2024.</b></p> <p><b>The report also presents Members with the Scrutiny Protocol following a Scrutiny Review undertaken in 2024, for approval.</b></p>

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Provide Council with an update on work being undertaken in response to Audit Wales’ recommendations arising from their ‘Bridgend County Borough Council - Review of Decision Making Arrangements’ report, published in October 2024, including options for new Scrutiny arrangements for Members’ consideration;
- b) Seek Council’s approval of the Scrutiny Protocol following a Scrutiny Review undertaken in 2024.

## 2. Background

2.1 In June 2024, the Welsh Local Government Association supported a review of scrutiny in Bridgend. This was carried out by an external consultant who spoke to various Members and Officers. Attached at **Appendix 1** is the result of that review. The main recommendations are set out below:

- Draft and agree a protocol for effective scrutiny
- Document and schedule a revised Forward Work Programme (FWP) process
- Ensure more timely use of pre-decision scrutiny
- Establish purpose, scope and focus for each scrutiny item



- Develop evaluation mechanisms
- Ensure training and development programmes cover key areas

2.2 In addition, Audit Wales undertook a [Review of Decision Making Arrangements](#) across the Council. The audit concluded that the Council generally has proper decision-making arrangements in place but weaknesses in forward planning and pre-decision scrutiny are undermining their effectiveness.

2.3 There were three recommendations from the Review of Decision Making Arrangements that related to scrutiny:

- The Council should ensure that its published Forward Work Programme for committees is accessible, comprehensive, and covers a longer time frame than the current 4-month period to give more opportunity for robust pre-decision scrutiny and provide greater transparency around the decision-making process for both Members and the public.
- The Council should ensure that there is clarity on the role of scrutiny in the decision-making process. The lack of clarity on the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OVSCs), particularly in relation to pre-decision scrutiny is limiting OVSCs' ability to contribute fully and effectively to the decision-making process.
- The Council should ensure that it provides greater transparency regarding the remit of the different OVSCs. Naming the committees 1, 2 and 3 does not help with transparency of the remit of the committees, particularly from a public perspective. It is also a potential barrier to encouraging public involvement in the scrutiny process.

### **Current Scrutiny Structure**

2.4 According to the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's (CfGS) "The Good Scrutiny Guide" (the Guide) there is no one 'best' model for a scrutiny committee structure and it is very difficult to compare with other local authorities and try and replicate. According to the Guide, 'Scrutiny's structures are often a reflection of the culture in which scrutiny operates and the role which has been agreed for it.'

2.5 The Guide, however, highlights the following few common models:

- a) A single committee which does all the work. This is more common in smaller authorities, this approach sees all scrutiny work happening in a single, formal space.
- b) A single committee commissioning task and finish groups (such as Research and Evaluation Panels). Here, a committee provides coordination of a number of task and finish groups – the committee will usually also undertake its own substantive work.
- c) A two-committee system dividing substantive topics between them (e.g. "people" and "places")
- d) A two-committee system dividing issues between them differently (e.g. "policy development" and "performance")
- e) Multiple committees (sometimes involving a corporate committee which "leads" the function, sometimes not).



- 2.6 In Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) we have had multiple committees since 2017. At that time, there was a full review and restructure of the scrutiny arrangements which was subsequently approved by Council on 28 June 2017. This resulted in a centralised structure whereby the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) would oversee the overall Forward Work Programme for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee and consider and delegate priorities to the relevant committee for that topic where necessary in the interest of avoiding duplication of effort.
- 2.7 The current structure has the following Committees:
- Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee
  - Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1
  - Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2
  - Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3
- 2.8 The scrutiny function sits within Democratic Services and is supported by 1 Senior Scrutiny Officer and 1.8 full time equivalent (fte) Scrutiny Officers. Due to other changes made to the wider Democratic Services team, the Scrutiny Officers are also responsible for the minutes produced, recording of all meetings and the uploading of these recordings to the Council's website. They also produce decision records and offer all meetings on a hybrid basis in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This requires 2 Scrutiny Officers to be present at each meeting, with 1 in the chamber and 1 providing electronic support.

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

- 3.1 In light of these reviews and recommendations highlighted above, Officers have reviewed the scrutiny structure currently operating in BCBC noting that there is no definitive guide to how a scrutiny function should be set up. Across Wales, there are a variety of structures in place and it is a matter for each Council to determine what suits their organisation. Set out below are some potential options that have been considered for BCBC moving forward:

#### **Option 1 – No Change to Structure**

Maintain the current set up with COSC and 3 SOSC's which cover the 3 themes of Education, Social Services and Communities but have the flexibility to consider other items not in line with these themes. This includes 3 remunerated Chairs with COSC Chair appointed by the Members of the Committee from one of the Chairpersons of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees,

#### Pros

- Allows items to be considered in their entirety without worrying about straying into another's remit.
- Four committees allows for easy allocation when required, for example, when it comes to consideration of the annual draft budget proposals – i.e. four committees and four Directorates. It also allows for the efficient allocation of call-ins to any upcoming scrutiny committee meeting due to the cross-cutting nature of existing meetings and avoids requiring extra meetings to be called and extra demands placed on the service.

- Members build up in-depth specialist knowledge regarding the statutory framework and delivery arrangements of a service area which is helpful when scrutinising reports responding to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), Estyn, Audit Wales and reports regarding service statutory responsibilities. Experience has shown that Members are more engaged in a committee related to their area(s) of knowledge and interest, which makes for more effective scrutiny, focussed recommendations and better outcomes.

#### Cons

- Audit Wales have said that the 'Subject' Committees do not provide clear transparency of their remits.

### **Option 2**

Maintain 4 Committees with COSC and three formally themed Committees: 'Education, Social Services and Communities' or similar, to address Audit Wales' recommendation. There would need to be consideration of the allocation to each committee to ensure there was an even workload balance. COSC would consider corporate items such as budget and performance and would allocate items on the FWP. This would also address the Audit Wales recommendation to make the roles of the committees more transparent.

#### Pros

- Addresses the Audit Wales concern regarding transparency of remits of scrutiny committees.
- Four committees replicates the Council's structure providing simple and clear roles and remits where needed, such as for draft budget proposals.
- Members build up in-depth specialist knowledge regarding the statutory framework and delivery arrangements of a service area which is helpful when scrutinising reports responding to CIW, Estyn, Audit Wales and reports regarding service statutory responsibilities. Experience has shown that Members are more engaged in a committee related to their area(s) of knowledge and interest, which makes for more effective scrutiny, focussed recommendations and better outcomes.

#### Cons

- Currently we often have topics that are not wholly within the remit of a Directorate, so naming the committees may remove this flexibility for allocating such topics to a single committee in the future. There could be a caveat agreed however that allows a committee to stray slightly into another's remit in order to consider the item in its entirety.
- If entirely replicating the Directorates, there are some aspects that sit under the Chief Executive's Directorate that would not really fall within the remit of a COSC, the main example being Housing and Homelessness, which has usually been allocated to SOSC 3. This could be overcome however by having a list of service areas under each committee's remit rather than to simply replicate the four Directorates. This would also overcome any future issues of service areas potentially moving into a different directorate.

- Could potentially limit where call-ins can be allocated and require additional meetings and resources, unless a caveat is agreed for this.

### **Option 3**

Maintain COSC and reduce to 2 SOSCs where all committees would consider a range of items as prioritised by COSC. There would be a general agreement that Committee 1 incorporates the majority of education items within it in order to assist the Educational Representatives but it would not be exclusively dealing with Education.

#### Pros

- Members would gain a better overall understanding of service areas across the Council by considering a range of items.

#### Cons

- Reducing the number of committees means the membership of each committee would potentially increase. Larger committees can lead to less effective scrutiny.
- Members would not build up expertise in a specific area as they would be considering reports on a range of service areas.

### **Option 4**

Maintain COSC and have 2 themed committees. There could be the option of using the CfGS suggestion of 'People' and 'Places'. 'People' would incorporate areas such as Children and Adult's Social Care, Education, and Community Safety with 'Place' covering areas such as Transport, Environment, Economic Development, Regeneration and Community Services. There would need to be consideration of the allocation to each committee to ensure there was an even workload balance. COSC would consider corporate items such as budget and performance and would allocate items on the FWP. This would also address the Audit Wales recommendation to make the roles of the committees more transparent.

#### Pros

- Addresses the Audit Wales concern regarding transparency of remits of scrutiny committees.

#### Cons

- Reducing the number of committees means the membership would potentially increase. This could lead to less effective scrutiny.
- Prioritisation of items for Forward work programming could prove difficult with competing priorities from more than one Directorate and Cabinet Member.
- May limit the capacity to deal with pre-decision items if a number come forward that need to be considered by the same committee.

### **Option 5**

One main scrutiny committee with Working Groups and Research and Evaluation Panels falling out of it.

### Pros

- Members could potentially gain a better understanding of a range of service areas across the Council.

### Cons

- Would increase the administrative processes with increased time spent setting up and co-ordinating the Panels.
- Members do not get the opportunity to build up an in-depth knowledge basis of a full-service area.
- Would require Members to commit to the Panel(s) and Group Leaders would need to ensure their Members were prepared to Chair.

### **Additional Considerations**

- 3.2 There are various factors to consider with each option. There will not necessarily be a reduction in workloads if the committees are reduced and there would need to be an amended schedule of meetings to support all items that need to be considered. A change in the number of committees will also require a review of the membership both to ensure the committee provides effective scrutiny, and to allow a number of Members the opportunity to be involved.
- 3.3 Further work will then be needed on the names and remits of the committees. Audit Wales suggested that greater transparency regarding their remit was needed as the naming of the committees as 1, 2, 3 did not help from a public perspective. Officers have considered some possible examples including 'Corporate Performance and Resources', 'Education and Young People', 'Social Care and Wellbeing', 'People and Wellbeing, Place and Prosperity'. There may also be opportunity to align the scrutiny structure with the Council's Wellbeing Objectives. The final naming and remit will depend on the structure adopted. The setting of remits will also have to have provision for items which overlap committees and a process for dealing with call-in items.
- 3.4 The number of Members sitting on an OVSC has changed throughout the various structures with membership ranging from 16 to 10 Members. Presently, the membership of each OVSC is 12 Members. It has previously been considered that 16 Members is too large and Members didn't find meetings as effective. It also led to meetings being much longer, with less focused outcomes. In contrast to this, additional Members would like to be involved in scrutiny but are restricted due to the political balance allocation.

### **Budget Scrutiny**

- 3.5 Consideration also needs to be given as to how the scrutiny of the Budget process is taken forward under any revised structure. The current system includes a dedicated Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP), plus detailed scrutiny of the draft budget by each individual OVSC who feed back to COSC to provide

overall recommendations to Cabinet. This process results in an intense period of scrutiny in early January; this is resource intensive for officers and Members and there has been cross party feedback that the sessions are repetitive and overlap in subject matters.

- 3.6 If an option was recommended that maintained COSC as a corporate committee with oversight of the budget, it would provide an opportunity to revisit the budget scrutiny process. An option could be allocating budget scrutiny exclusively to COSC; this could involve a working group being established with representatives from all OVSCs and chaired by the Chair of COSC. The group would feedback to COSC and this would reduce duplication and allow for in depth scrutiny to be undertaken throughout the budget setting process with meaningful engagement between Cabinet and Scrutiny. This option would however result in additional responsibilities for the Chair of COSC who would also chair the budget working group. If this proposal was agreed, Members are requested to consider whether the increased workload and additional responsibilities of the Chair would necessitate the post being remunerated, noting that this will have implications on the Council's Schedule of Remuneration and other senior salary entitlements. In accordance with the formula used under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, should Council approve four remunerated Scrutiny Chairs, these would be allocated to the following political groups:

2 x Labour  
1 x Bridgend County Independents  
1 x Democratic Alliance

### **Preferred Option and Reasons for Preferred Option**

- 3.7 The Scrutiny structure options set out in paragraph 3.1 were considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 17 March 2025 whereby they made the following recommendation:

*Of the options presented within the report, the Committee unanimously favoured and recommended option 2; to retain 4 Scrutiny Committees with the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and three formally themed Committees: 'Education, Social Services and Communities' or similar. This was on condition that the caveats contained in the report were included in that the names and remits of the Committees would not preclude a Committee from scrutinising an item in its entirety should any aspect stray slightly into the remit of another.*

*The Committee also discussed matters such as the length of meetings and agendas, engagement of Members, the number of meetings, resources and the workload and numbers of Chairs, but agreed that these matters would need to be discussed further at Council and in relative Political Group meetings.*

*Members requested that the Committee Structure Options and the Scrutiny protocol be shared with all Political Group Members by Chairs and Group Leaders, as well as the 3 Independent Members not affiliated with any Group, as soon as possible before the meeting of Council.*

- 3.8 It is proposed that Council endorse the recommendations of COSC and approve the revised scrutiny structure as outlined at option 2 above providing focused remits that reflect the Council's priorities and reduce areas of duplication.

## **Additional Proposals**

- 3.9 As outlined at paragraph 3.4 above, it is proposed that to balance the views on Committee membership, the OVSC Committee membership also be amended to 14 Members. To mitigate against the potential ineffectiveness of lengthy meetings, it is also proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules be amended within the Constitution to recommend that meetings must not continue beyond 3 hours in duration with the proviso that the Chair may relax the rule if this is felt necessary to facilitate further discussion prior to a decision being made.

## **Scrutiny Forward Work Programme**

- 3.10 There has already been improvement in the way the scrutiny FWP is developed. Scrutiny Chairs are clear that items on FWPs need to be aligned with the Council's Wellbeing Objectives and they meet with relevant Corporate Directors to ensure relevant items are brought to Scrutiny. A process has also been developed for referrals from the Governance and Audit Committee to be considered by SOSCs if appropriate.
- 3.11 The development of the FWP will continue with a view to aligning more closely with the Cabinet FWP and the publication of a six-month FWP in line with the Audit Wales recommendation. This will assist in meaningful pre-decision scrutiny on key topics. Pre- decision scrutiny is considered to be the tool which has maximum impact. This allows scrutiny members to act in its "critical friend" role and contribute to the development of policies before a final decision by Cabinet. Effective pre-decision scrutiny may also reduce the need for call-ins, which should be used as a last resort.
- 3.12 It was also recognised that to get the best outcome from scrutiny the committee should be clear on its purpose, scope and focus. This is being developed as part of the FWP where the rationale for considering a topic should be clearly identified and communicated to the officers preparing the report for scrutiny. The committee should be clear which areas they want to focus on and what their objectives are in considering the item. This focus will be reiterated by officers in pre-meetings.
- 3.13 By setting clear focus and objectives there will also be more opportunity to evaluate the scrutiny function. The mechanisms for doing this evaluation will be developed fully when a structure is agreed. Any evaluation will form part of the Annual Scrutiny Report presented to COSC and Council.

## **Member Training**

- 3.14 The training of all Elected Members is a function of the Democratic Services Committee. However, more tailored options have been identified for scrutiny members including refresher training on 'Scrutiny - Critical Analysis and Questioning Skills' and 'Chairing', the latter of which is being offered to all of the Authority's Committee chairs. 'Local Authority Decision Making Arrangements' training has also been rolled out via an external provider, covering an overview of Local Authority Governance, as well as roles and responsibilities of Cabinet, Scrutiny and Governance and Audit Committees. It is also planned to take up the WLGA offer of a self-assessment of scrutiny arrangements which is a new two-part Improvement

Programme. This, however, might be more effective after some of the changes above have been introduced and will then assist with evaluating and evidencing the impact of Bridgend's scrutiny arrangements and whether there are areas for further improvement. Other areas for training include social media training for members which is being progressed, in addition to regular suggestions and requests from both Members and Senior Officers for briefing sessions and scrutiny related training, such as the new Estyn Framework.

## **Scrutiny Protocol**

- 3.15 In response to one of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review undertaken in 2024 a Protocol for Effective Scrutiny has been developed and is attached at **Appendix 2**. This sets out the expectations of Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Corporate Management Board.

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

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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

- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.
- 5.2 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 scrutiny function contributes to the 5 Ways of Working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and how they contribute to the Council developing its own five ways of working, driving and measuring those ways of working.
- 5.3 The scrutiny arrangements assists in the achievement of the Council's 7 Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, listed below:
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 Climate Change continues to form part of Scrutiny's priorities and links with various aspects of the Scrutiny's Committees' Forward Work Programme.

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

- 7.1 Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting continue to form part of Scrutiny's priorities and aspects of their Forward Work Programme.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Should there be additional remunerated Scrutiny Chairs proposed, this would need to be formally considered and agreed at a further Council meeting to agree an amendment to the Schedule of Remuneration as the allowance would have to come from within the existing Members budget, which would result in the removal of allowances for other roles.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 Council is recommended to:
- i. Note the progress made in relation to the Audit Wales recommendations as part of their 'Review of Decision-Making Arrangements' in Bridgend;
  - ii. Note the structure options presented within this report and the recommendations of COSC and approve option 2 as the agreed scrutiny structure for implementation following the Annual Meeting of Council on 14 May 2025;
  - iii. Determine whether an additional remunerated Chair is required and if so, agree this in principle with a final decision to be made at the AGM, following necessary amendments to the Schedule of Remuneration, noting that this will be met from the existing Member budget, which will result in the removal of other senior salary allowances;
  - iv. Approve a change to the membership of each OVSC to 14 Members to take effect as part of the agreed scrutiny structure;
  - v. Approve the Scrutiny Protocol, attached at **Appendix 2** for subsequent circulation and signing by all Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Corporate Management Board;
  - vi. Note that a report will be presented to the AGM seeking approval to amend the Constitution to incorporate the revised Terms of Reference, Membership and the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as a result of the revised structure, noting that COSC will now lead on Budget Scrutiny.

## **Background documents**

None.



# Improving Scrutiny - feedback and actions

**Huw Rees**

**03 June 2024**

# Recommended Actions (1)

1. Draft and agree a protocol for effective scrutiny
2. Document and schedule a revised FWP process
3. Ensure more timely use of pre-decision scrutiny
4. Establish purpose, scope and focus for each scrutiny item
  - Set out in covering reports
  - Use pre-meets to reinforce

# Recommended Actions (2)

## 5. Develop evaluation mechanisms

- Survey Members once a protocol is established (gap analysis)
- Introduce post-scrutiny reflection on practise
- Renew recommendation monitoring and impact evaluation

## 6. Ensure training and development programmes cover:

- Induction and CPD on effective scrutiny
- Critical analysis, questioning and chairing
- Appropriate use of social media

A word cloud featuring various positive traits and values. The words are arranged in a non-uniform, overlapping manner. The colors of the words include shades of purple, green, blue, and yellow. The words are of varying sizes, with 'Impartial', 'Respectful', and 'Focused' being the largest. Other words include 'Collaborative', 'Supportive', 'Engaging', 'Constructive', 'Positive', 'Objective', 'Owned', 'Challenging', 'Open', 'Purposeful', 'Trusting', 'Cooperative', 'Inclusive', 'Professional', and 'Transparent'.

Impartial

Collaborative

Supportive

Owned

Positive

Engaging

Constructive

Objective

Respectful

Challenging

Open

Purposeful

Trusting

Cooperative

Inclusive

Professional

Focused

Transparent

# Protocol - coverage

1. Definition of scrutiny
2. Behaviours and values  
e.g. Respectful, constructive etc.
3. Principles  
e.g. Aligned, Strategic, Improvement focussed,  
Clear purpose, Timely, Objective, non-political  
etc.

# Protocol - coverage

## 4. Engagement

e.g. with FWP process, with scrutiny team, regular scheduled briefings, attendance expectations etc.

## 5. Information sharing (incl. reports)

e.g. Access, Quality, Timeliness, Confidentiality

## 6. Meeting conduct

e.g. Impartiality, timekeeping, maintaining focus, personal and collective responsibility etc.

# Protocol - coverage

## 7. Recommendations

e.g. Clear purpose and focus, Responses, Timeliness, Monitoring etc

## 8. Dispute resolution

e.g. adjudication, mediation, roles

Others...?

# Effective budget scrutiny = Good governance

- Whole council responsibility - fiduciary duty
- Cabinet – design and deliver a balanced budget (transparently)
- Scrutiny – mechanism for non-executive oversight of budget matters (constructively)



# Budget scrutiny – a process not an event

*CfPS – “much budget scrutiny focuses on review, in committee, of a draft budget a matter of weeks before it is submitted to full council for approval – this is not an effective way to conduct oversight.”*

- An incremental process, and a continuing duty
- Means of building knowledge and understanding with which to scrutinise
- Opportunity to question assumptions, scenarios and options
- Scrutiny cannot fulfil its role if it's not engaged throughout – limits ability to influence changes

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# **BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL SCRUTINY PROTOCOL**

**A Protocol between Scrutiny Members, the Executive  
and Corporate Management Board**



This Scrutiny protocol is an agreement between Members and Officers (including the Executive and Corporate Management Board) which provides a commitment to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function and arrangements to ensure it operates effectively and to the highest possible standard.

This protocol sets out the agreed values and principles of scrutiny for the Council as well as methods for successful engagement and information sharing in order to achieve a collaborative and professional scrutiny process that adds tangible value and assists the Council in achieving its objectives.

The protocol also emphasises appropriate methods of conduct for all parties and how to overcome disputes should they arise.

In adopting the provisions set out in this Scrutiny Protocol, all parties will ensure it is committed to ensuring a positive scrutiny culture that that is impartial, respectful and is focused on driving improvement for the benefit of the public and our communities.

### **Definition of Scrutiny**

Scrutiny is a non-political, constructive method of influencing the decisions and policies of the Council and ensuring they are sound, fit for purpose and in the best interests of the public. It provides a platform for positive collaboration between the Executive and all other Members in order to achieve improvement in services, whilst at the same time delivering the accountability and transparency that is so vital in the Council's decision making-process.

## **1. Principles**

### **1.1 Outcome and Improvement focused**

Effective Scrutiny is the responsibility of the whole Council. It is most effective when it is focused and seeks to achieve clear outcomes, where its forward work programme and activities are outcome driven.

Scrutiny drives improvement and needs to act and be seen as a **‘critical friend,’** identifying where decisions could be improved and how to prevent mistakes being made or repeated. Scrutiny is about challenging the accepted ways of doing things and acting as a champion for developing a culture of improvement in the local area.

Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented. It is recognised that the most influential and positive method of Scrutiny is **pre-decision scrutiny**. Through engagement and work programming activity pre-decision scrutiny can:

- **challenge assumptions and make evidence gathering more robust** - scrutiny can gather evidence and look at projections relating to the impact of the decision – financial, social, economic, environmental – and consider whether those projections and assumptions are objectively justified;
- **develop realistic plans and targets** – scrutiny can help to develop challenging but realistic targets that will be impartial and focused on outcomes rather than output;
- **secure ownership and buy-in to the final decision** – engaging with scrutiny will help the executive to understand the expectations of the wider group of elected councillors and, by extension, the expectations of residents;
- **engage with and satisfy the public** – scrutiny can help the council to understand local needs, through public engagement led by councillors in their community leadership role.

### 1.2 Strategically aligned – ‘One Council’

To achieve maximum impact from its outcomes, scrutiny must recognise that its activities and FWP should be strategically aligned with that of the whole Council. While the executive should not direct scrutiny’s priorities, scrutiny work will need to reflect at least some of the executive’s priorities in order to ensure that it is adding value.

In order to prioritise items in the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme, Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Senior Officers must take into account:

- **Methods** – the various tools and methods that scrutiny can employ to carry out its work. Choices here can influence prioritisation (and vice versa);
- **Timing** – the right moment for scrutiny will differ from subject to subject and will depend on the topic and the stage it is at. It is vital that this is considered to prevent any time wasted by the Scrutiny Committee, Officers and the Executive and to ensure that when items do come before Scrutiny, there is the opportunity for value to added from the time and effort given by all.

An effective scrutiny work programme will look to incorporate a range of methods and timings.

### 1.3 Realistic

Having realistic expectations applies to all those involved in the scrutiny process in:

- **Topic choice** – Any chosen topic needs to be one the committee can realistically influence. The Scrutiny criteria attached to this protocol can assist with this and ensure that topics are not too broad, too narrow (such as a ward related issue) and something that the Committee can have a direct and positive influence over.
- **Methods** – All involved in the Scrutiny process must be realistic about what is achievable within the resources available – whether this be the capacity of the Scrutiny Committee, Scrutiny Officer, or the relevant Service Area Officers;
- **Developing realistic plans and targets** – pre-decision scrutiny can help to impartially develop challenging targets that will focus on outcomes (the results of activities) rather than outputs (the activities themselves that help achieve the outcomes). However, whilst an important part of the scrutiny role is providing challenge, Members need to be aware that any targets need to be realistic and practical. To be effective, both sides require the humility to listen and understand in order to collaboratively develop achievable outcomes;
- **Developing Recommendations** – All recommendations should be evidence based and realistic and have account for the financial requirements;
- **Developing the Council's Budget** – A joint understanding of the expectations relating to the budget are paramount, both in terms of Scrutiny Members being realistic about what budget constraints there are and what is actually achievable, as well as realistic expectations placed on Scrutiny Members in their consideration of the budget. Scrutiny Members should trust the information presented to them and understand that the Executive may sometimes have additional information due to their specific roles and responsibilities. Good budget scrutiny recognises the importance of engagement throughout, giving the Scrutiny Members the opportunity to influence changes. It should not, however be used as a method for producing an alternative budget.

### 1.4 Non-political

Scrutiny membership comes from Elected Members whose insights are a fundamental to review decisions which can be politically contentious. However, **the focus should be on forward thinking and enabling positive outcomes for the residents of Bridgend.** Effective scrutiny should not apportion blame and should not be a forum for political point-scoring.

Formal committee meetings provide a vital opportunity for scrutiny members to question the executive and officers. Scrutiny members from all Groups should **adopt an independent mind-set** to ensure they carry out their scrutiny role effectively.

### 1.5 Clear purpose and Objectives

The purpose of scrutiny is to provide **recommendations for improvement**, so it is important to be clear what the outcome of any item should be. Scrutiny therefore has to

have **clearly defined objectives** from the point they set the items on their FWP. Clear objectives also ensures witnesses can be fully prepared for attending the meeting.

### 1.5.1 FWP

- It is the responsibility of the Committee to be clear about why topics have been chosen for their FWP and demonstrate, as highlighted above, how they are aligned with the Council's priorities.
- There may be instances where the Cabinet might request scrutiny input on an item, as a form of pre-decision, for example. Again, it is the responsibility of Cabinet to provide evidence of the rationale behind such suggestion, with a clear purpose defined in these requests to enable Scrutiny Members to make an informed decision on whether to add the item to their FWP.
- Scrutiny Chairs, Cabinet Members and CMB have the responsibility of attending FWP planning meeting. These meetings provide a vital role in ensuring the effectiveness of scrutiny as they enable conversations over detail of the FWP, clarifying the exact purpose and information required for each item.
- In order to achieve the best from each Committee meeting, and reduce the need for additional information requests, Cabinet and Officers should ensure that draft reports are received by the scrutiny team in accordance with the report approval schedule. This will ensure that the information contained within the report meets the needs of the Committee in order that they can achieve their intended outcome.

### 1.5.2 Pre-meetings

Pre-meetings should be attended by all Scrutiny members so that the Committee can agree and define their focus and overall objectives for the meeting and what they expect to achieve as outcomes. It is also essential to enable the Chair to plan and run the meeting effectively and efficiently.

### 1.5.3 Committee meetings

It is agreed that good planning and objective setting can assist during a Committee meeting in the following ways:

- Targeted Questioning – enabling Scrutiny Members to work towards a common target in their questioning;
- Summing Up - Discussions can then be easily summarised at the end of the meeting and in the minutes, with a focus on actions, post-meeting communication and follow-up work;
- Conclusions and Recommendations - Findings and conclusions can be more easily converted into clear, concrete recommendations at the meeting.



## **2. Behaviours, values and meeting conduct**

**2.1** In order for Scrutiny to be effective and focused it must be conducted constructively and respectfully and foster positive working relationships with all participants involved.

Constructive, professional relationships require continued communication between Scrutiny Members, the Council's Executive, Officers, and partners.

**2.2** Distinct and defined roles are important to ensure its success and those involved in the Scrutiny process must be mindful of this at all times:

- The Executive should not influence the work of the scrutiny committee;
- The Chair of the scrutiny committee should determine the nature and extent of an Executive member's participation in a scrutiny meeting;
- Scrutiny Members should always act impartial regardless of their political affiliation.
- All Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Officers should approach scrutiny as a 'critical friend' not a de facto 'opposition';
- Any measures to change or strengthen the operation of overview and scrutiny should be considered by all Members. The Executive or senior officers cannot unilaterally change scrutiny's processes.

## **2.3 Personal and Collective Responsibility**

The organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails. Creating a strong organisational culture supports scrutiny work that can add real value. In contrast, low levels of support for and engagement with the scrutiny function often lead to poor quality and ill-focused work that serves to reinforce the perception that it is of little worth or relevance.

There must be a willingness to work with scrutiny as an equal partner – to engage at a meaningful time, to provide it with all relevant information and to properly consider any recommendations.

There needs to be a recognition that there is a collective responsibility to make scrutiny work.

## **2.4 The Role of the Chair**

The Chair of a scrutiny committee should seek to provide, through strong leadership, a good environment for the constructive challenge of decision-makers. They should foster discussion and encourage all concerned stakeholders to be involved in the process, while ensuring that all opinions are expressed in a constructive manner that contributes to the intended outcomes of the process.



Statutory guidance says the chair should possess the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members.

The chair is also responsible for ensuring that the scrutiny process – within and outside the context of formal committee meetings – is managed in a way that creates a fair and balanced environment, keeping the scrutiny process free from political influence and allowing for the effective scrutiny of all evidence that is produced.

The chair also has a role in ensuring that the constitution, including the member code of conduct and committee procedure rules are complied with.

### **2.5 Timekeeping**

Ultimately it is the Scrutiny Chair's responsibility to manage the agenda in a committee meeting, ensuring the debate remains focused, on track and to time. Preparation is key to ensuring that the time available is used in the most effective manner. Pre-meetings are a useful preparation tool to decide how to conduct the questioning.

In order to keep to time in meetings, Members and Officers should also prioritise and plan any information they need to prepare or read before meetings in order that they can participate fully in the discussion.

In addition, Officers should only provide a short briefing with the key information and detail provided within the report, allowing more time to be spent on analysis and discussion. This is supported by the commitment identified above that the Committee identify a clear and accurate purpose for each item and Officers provide early drafts of reports to the Scrutiny team to ensure the information contained therein fits the needs of the Committee.

Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Senior Officers also have a joint role in ensuring; questions and answers are targeted, appropriate and succinct; Scrutiny meetings are not used as a platform for political statements.

### **2.6 Managing Disagreement**

Effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. On occasion the Executive may not agree with the findings or recommendations of a scrutiny committee. Both the Executive and Scrutiny should work together to mitigate this by establishing an open and honest forum for debate.

Scrutiny Chairs take an active role in leading and directing the discussion and managing any disagreement. In practice, this is likely to require scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them.

#### **2.6.1 Roles when managing disputes**

Where disagreements and disputes do occur within a committee meeting, it is the responsibility of the Chair to try and manage this. All Overview and Scrutiny Chairs should therefore ensure they have attended Chair Skills training. Some useful points to consider when handling conflict include:

- Clarifying objectives and responsibilities
- Promoting understanding on all sides

- Focusing on the rational - facts not feelings
- Generate alternatives
- Defer the issue to another meeting/Research and Evaluation Panel
- Use humour (appropriately!)
- Take a break

It is also the responsibility of the Chair to enforce 'the rules', recognising that all Members and Officers must operate within both a legal and ethical framework. This would include abiding by the Overview and Scrutiny Rules and Procedures as laid out in the Council's constitution, as well as the relevant Member and Officer Codes of Conduct.

Where breaches of the Council's Rules, Procedures or Code of Conduct occur in meetings they should firstly be reported to the Monitoring Officer, (or in their absence, the Deputy Monitoring Officer). The Monitoring Officer can consider the alleged breach and advise on the appropriate course of action if necessary.

The Scrutiny Officer will support overview and scrutiny committees and their members, and provide support and advice to officers and councillors in relation to overview and scrutiny committees.

Similarly, it is part of the function of the Head of Democratic Services to provide support and advice in relation to the functions of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee(s), to members of the authority, members of the executive and officers as well as to promote the role of the authority's overview and scrutiny committee(s).

### **3 Budget Scrutiny engagement**

Effective Budget Scrutiny underpins good governance and is the responsibility and duty of the whole Council where:

- Cabinet design and deliver a balanced budget (transparently); and
- Scrutiny forms the mechanism for non-executive oversight of budget matters (constructively)

Budget Scrutiny should be a continuous engagement process between Scrutiny Members and the Executive.

It is important to remember that effective scrutiny can improve the evidence base for decisions as well as ensuring that decisions are transparent and in accordance with the needs of the local community.

### **4. Recommendations**

Recommendations should be high quality and timely to ensure the impact of Scrutiny is effective and has a meaningful impact.

Scrutiny's engagement in an issue should always be focussed on outcomes and recommendations are the key element. Considering items to be "noted" it is not an effective use of time or resources. Ultimately, Scrutiny in its entirety should be underpinned by having a clear idea about the return on investment of the work it is undertaking.

Recommendations should have a clear focus on outcomes “on the ground”, on a measurable change which you can use to measure the return on investment of the scrutiny work. The focus should be on who benefits, and when?

Recommendations should be evidence-based, specific and realistic enough to be implemented.

Recommendations should be addressed to a specific person or group identifying responsibility for delivering on a recommendation to ensure it is implemented.

Recommendations should be financially realistic. Where a recommendation involves additional expenditure, it may increase the force of the recommendation if funding sources can be recognised, however, it should not be required for scrutiny to fully cost all of its recommendations; this is an issue for the Executive.

Scrutiny Members should be prepared to speak to the Executive, senior Officers and to partners about recommendations where there may be queries, concerns, or to check factual accuracy. However, it must be understood and accepted that the decision as to what recommendations are submitted remains at the absolute discretion of Scrutiny Members. Such discussions can help to ensure that recommendations are more robust and realistic, and ultimately accepted by the Executive, and go on to be implemented.

Open-ended recommendations, where acceptance does not actually commit decision-makers to further action, should be avoided. For example, “The executive should consider...” or “The executive should investigate further...”

Recommendations should not be used to ask for responses to additional queries.

### **4.1 Responses to recommendations**

Recommendations should be prepared and circulated to the relevant Cabinet member and officers at the conclusion of the meeting, and in any event no later than 5 working days following the meeting with a request that responses are returned within 10 working days.

The response to a recommendation from should consist of:

- an acceptance or not of the recommendation. If the recommendation is not accepted / partially accepted the rationale should be clearly set out.
- if accepted a timetable of actions should be set out with a view to formal review of progress within a defined period.

The response to the recommendations will be reported back to the scrutiny meetings within at one of the next two meetings.

Scrutiny will monitor and evaluate recommendations once they are implemented following updates from the relevant Cabinet member / Officer.

Formal recommendations reported to a Cabinet meeting will be responded to within two months of them being made. The relevant Scrutiny Chair will attend Cabinet to present the recommendations and answer any questions that arise.

## 5. Evaluating Scrutiny

Being able to articulate scrutiny's "value added" is important to contribute to the development of a culture where scrutiny is welcomed and encouraged. Positive impacts of scrutiny should also be celebrated as contributing to sound decision-making and good governance.

Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Senior Officers will regularly be engaged as to their views on Scrutiny as part of a self-evaluation process. The Scrutiny protocol itself will also be regularly reviewed to ensure it is kept up to date and reflects the current Scrutiny processes and practices.

This information will be used to prepare the Statutory Annual Report on Scrutiny.

## 6. Commitments of Scrutiny Members, the Executive and Corporate Management Board

- A commitment to upholding democratic principles of transparency, accountability, and inclusivity;
- A commitment to the scrutiny process as an integral element of good governance;
- A commitment from all involved in scrutiny to work as equal partners with respect for each role involved to ensure it is effective;
- A commitment to ensure Scrutiny is non-political, impartial and strives to be a positive, helpful and collaborative process of the Council;
- A commitment to collaborative working and planning that focuses on realistic, timely outcomes and improvements;
- A commitment to self-evaluation and positive improvement of the Scrutiny process that centres on enhancing its impact for the benefit of the public and the community.

**Table for Signatures and Date.....etc**