

CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 30 JUNE 2025

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 30 JUNE 2025 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor A Ulberini-Williams – Chairperson

JPD Blundell

N Clarke

HJ David

GH Haines

Present Virtually

F D Bletsoe
J Llewellyn-Hopkins
MJ Williams

H Griffiths
RL Penhale-Thomas

S J Griffiths
T Thomas

M L Hughes
AJ Williams

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Eugene Caparros – Cabinet Member for Resources (Job Share)

Invitees:

Councillor John Spanswick
Councillor Jane Gebbie
Councillor Hywel Williams
Councillor Martyn Jones
Councillor Paul Davies
Councillor Neelo Farr
Councillor Melanie Evans

Leader
Deputy Leader / Cabinet Member Social Services, Health and Wellbeing
Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance
Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services
Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment
Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Development and Housing
Cabinet Member for Resources (Job Share)

Carys Lord
Lindsay Harvey
Claire Marchant
Janine Nightingale
Kelly Watson

Chief Officer – Finance, Housing and Change
Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People
Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing
Corporate Director – Communities
Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

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Officers:

Rachel Keepins
Jessica McLellan

Democratic Services Manager
Scrutiny Officer

Declarations of Interest

Councillor AJ Williams – Item 5 – Personal – Chair of Governors at Coety Primary School

155. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of meetings of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 17 March 2025 be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

156. Revenue Budget Outturn 2024-25

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> Following consideration of the report and detailed discussion with Cabinet Members and Senior Officers, the Committee made the following recommendations and requests for additional information: Recommendations: 1. The Committee expressed concern regarding the shortfall for teachers' pay and pensions from the Revenue Support Grant and the impact of late settlements and grant funding and recommended that conversations needed to be boosted on a political level to support additional allocation and multi-year settlements.
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	<p>2. The Committee expressed concern regarding the unexpected storm damage costs arising from Storm Bert and Storm Darragh and recommended that consideration be given to establishing an earmarked reserve/contingency fund for use in the event of an emergency arising from adverse weather events.</p> <p>Additional Information Requested:</p> <p>3. The Committee requested copies of the information regarding the work undertaken around the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) agenda in England and the 2014 Estyn report referred to by the Corporate Director.</p> <p>4. The Committee discussed the impact of redundancies in schools and requested the number of voluntary redundancies for the period reported.</p> <p>5. The Committee requested information regarding the sum of money funding hospital education referred to in Budget Reduction Proposal EDF515.</p> <p>6. The Committee requested an all Member Briefing be provided detailing the specialist hospital provision for learners referred to in point 5 above.</p> <p>7. The Committee requested a Briefing paper outlining the Council's earmarked reserves, their purpose and up to date position as of 31 March 2025.</p> <p>8. The Committee discussed the impact of late grant funding on the overall financial position of the Council and requested clarity on whether the realignment of base budgets had been sufficient to meet the pressures from 2024-25. The Committee also requested information regarding which grants were one-offs and which were ongoing.</p> <p>9. The Committee discussed the shortfall against Bridgend Market due to the identification of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and the subsequent closure of the market and loss of rental income and requested a confidential Briefing be provided to Members regarding the Council's future plans for the Market.</p>
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

157. Scrutiny Budget Working Group

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>Following consideration of the report and detailed discussion with Officers, the Committee made the following recommendation and requests of Officers:</p> <p>10. The Committee recommended that the first Steering Group set out at Step 2 of Appendix B to the report be scheduled in July but that the remainder of the proposed structure be reconsidered by the Committee at the July meeting after Group Leaders have taken the report to their Groups for discussion.</p> <p>11. The Committee recommended that the Deep Dive Group for the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate explore the financial contributions from the Health Board as a possible area to offset some of the costs.</p> <p>12. The Committee highlighted the importance of preserving early intervention and preventative services recognising their impact on better outcomes for people and their importance on long term financial stability and recommended that the Scrutiny Budget Deep Dive Groups remain mindful of such.</p> <p>13. The Committee requested that Directors bring all budget options being explored to the Deep Dive Groups.</p>
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

158. Corporate Parenting Champion Nomination Report

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>That Councillor Tim Thomas be nominated to represent the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee as an Invitee to meetings of the Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting.</p>
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

159. Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Nominations

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>That the Committee nominated the following Members to the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillors Huw David, Simon Griffiths and Gary Haines (nominations from the Labour Group);• Councillor Tim Thomas (nomination from the Bridgend County Independents Group);• Councillor Ross Penhale-Thomas (nomination from the Democratic Alliance Group); and• Councillor Freya Bletsoe (Substitute Member nominated from the Bridgend County Independents Group to attend the PSB JOSC when one of the five Members are not available).
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

160. Forward Work Programme Update

Decision Made	<p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>The Committee approved its draft Forward Work Programme in Appendix A subject to the following amendments, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committees' Recommendations made at previous meetings in Appendix B and noted that the Forward Work Programmes for the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Committee requested that a report be added to their FWP regarding the whole-Council response to climate change and the environment and that the scope of the report include information on how the Council manages contingencies for emergency responses, e.g. the impact on the Highways budget due to recent storm damage.2. Members referred to the independent review commissioned in Social Services which led to the early intervention and preventative function being transferred from the Education Directorate to the Social Services Directorate and requested a report reviewing the change in structure, highlighting that the importance was to move towards more early intervention and prevention.
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. The Committee agreed to the meeting of 11 September being repurposed as a meeting of the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the Director of Social Services Annual Report and Social Services Complaints and Representations report.4. The Committee agreed to the rescheduling of the Digital Strategy to its meeting in July and that the Scrutiny Budget Working Group report also be reconsidered at that meeting. The Committee agreed that the Scrutiny Annual Report be rescheduled to its meeting in October.
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

161. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None.
Date Decision Made	30 June 2025

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

The meeting closed at 13:18.

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