

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON TUESDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 2.30 PM**

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

CE Smith

HJ Townsend

HM Williams

CL Reeves

Apologies for Absence

PJ White

Officers:

Randal Hemingway	Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Darren Mephram	Chief Executive
Mark Shephard	Corporate Director - Communities
Susan Cooper	Corporate Director - Social Services & Wellbeing
Andrew Jolley	Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services
Andrew Rees	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Nicola Echanis	Head of Education & Family Support

1013. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration of interest was made:

Councillor CE Smith declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 11 – Appointment of Local Authority Governors as he is a candidate for a vacancy on Bryntirion Comprehensive School and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the item.

1014. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet of 1 November 2016 be approved as a true and accurate record.

1015. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2017-18 TO 2020-21

The Section 151 Officer presented a report on the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017-18 to 2020-21, which sets out the spending priorities of the Council, key investment objectives and budget areas targeted for necessary savings. He stated that the strategy includes a financial forecast for 2017-21 and a detailed draft revenue budget for 2017-18.

He reported that the draft MTFs has been significantly guided by the priorities in the Corporate Plan and although year-on-year reductions in Aggregate External Finance (AEF) had necessitated significant budget reductions across different service areas, the Council still plays a very significant role in the local economy of Bridgend County Borough and is responsible for annual gross expenditure approaching £400 million and is the largest employer in the county borough. The Corporate Plan would be considered for approval at Council in March 2017 alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-21 and would be fully aligned and include explicit links between resources and corporate priorities.

The Section 151 Officer reported that the MTF5 is set within the context of UK economic and public expenditure plans, Welsh Government and legislative programme and articulated how the Council planned to use its resources to support the achievement of its corporate priorities and statutory duties. He reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced in the Autumn Statement that Wales would receive £400m capital investment, although the Welsh Government had not determined how this would be distributed. He stated that the provisional Local Government Settlement provided an overall increase of 0.1% in Aggregate External Finance (AEF) with Bridgend's funding on a like-for-like basis being a reduction of £0.5 million, or -0.3%. The provisional settlement compared favourably to the -3.2% "most likely" assumption contained within the MTF5 for 2017-18 and is better than the "best" case scenario assumption of -1.5%.

The Section 151 Officer reported that whilst the 2017-18 draft settlement was the most favourable in recent years, the Finance Secretary had advised that Councils should use a period of relative stability to prepare for harder choices and more difficult times ahead. He stated there was no indication of local government settlements for 2018-19 onwards and there was also significant turmoil in financial markets in the aftermath of the UK's decision to leave the European Union. The Pound had devalued against the Dollar and the Euro resulting in the Bank of England cutting interest rates by 0.25% to 0.5%. He stated that the most likely assumption was a -3.2% annual reduction in Aggregate External Finance for 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21, which would mean a total recurrent budget reduction requirement forecast to be £34m for 2017-18 to 2020-21.

The Section 151 Officer reported also reported on the transfers into and out of the Revenue Support Grant, however the full picture on specific grants was not yet clear, which would impact on the Council's resources. He informed Cabinet that the Intermediate Care Fund remained at £60m across Wales for 2017-18, which would again be allocated to the NHS to manage, working in partnership with local authorities. The Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet that the draft 2017-18 Revenue budget assumed a Council Tax increase of 2.9% based on an appropriate balance between the needs of the Council and its citizens.

The Section 151 Officer reported that the Council in March 2016 had approved a capital programme for 2016-17 to 2025-26, based on the assumption that annual capital funding would be flat lined from 2016-17 onwards. Revisions to the capital programme had been during the financial year to incorporate budgets carried forward from 2015-16 and any new schemes and grant approvals. The draft local government capital settlement provided the Council with £6.288m capital funding for 2017-18, which was £8k more than 2016-17, with no indications given for 2018-19 or beyond. The Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet of the comparison of budget against projected outturn at 30 September 2016, which showed a net under spend of £3.677m, comprising £333k net under spend on Directorate budgets and a net under spend of £3.344m on corporate budgets.

The Section 151 Officer reported on the MTF5 for the next four financial years, based on the latest information available from the Welsh Government. He stated that the Council aspires to improve understanding of its financial strategy, link more closely to corporate priorities and to explain the goal of delivering sustainable services in line with the overarching ambition of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. It also articulates in a transparent way the continued and significant financial investment in public services the Council will make. It also sets out how the Council aims to change particular areas of service delivery and the financial consequences of this.

The Section 151 Officer also reported on a corporate financial overview in that the Council's net revenue budget is set at £257.198m, its overall expenditure far exceeds this. Allowing for specific grant funded expenditure, services which are funded by the

income they generate and forecast capital expenditure, the Council expects a gross budget of £400m in 2017-18. Of this, £170m of this expenditure is spent in staff salaries. He stated that the Council is faced with both reduced Welsh Government funding as well as financial pressures and it needs to find additional funds to meet inescapable increases in the budget such as the apprenticeships levy or an increase in the national living wage. The Council also faces other pressures which affect resources, namely, legislative and demographic changes. He stated that the Corporate Plan will manage these pressures, whilst ensuring that as far as possible, services can be provided that meet the needs of the community. He outlined the spending proposals on services delivered by Education and Family Support and Social Care and Wellbeing, on Public Realm, Supporting the Economy and on other services. He also outlined the approach to be taken to support the delivery of services which are not visible to the public.

The Section 151 Officer highlighted the MTFs principles which would drive the budget and spending decisions over the four year period. Principle 12 has been expanded to include provision for a MTFs Budget Reduction Contingency Reserve to enable the Council to manage delays or unforeseen obstacles to the delivery of significant MTFs budget reduction proposals.

The Section 151 Officer reported that the MTFs planning assumptions for 2018-21 are based on an annual reduction in AEF of -3.2% and an assumed increase in Council Tax of 4.2% for 2018-19, 4.5% for 2019-20 and 4.5% for 2020-21. The AEF figure of -0.3% was based on the published Provisional Settlement. The Section 151 Officer highlighted the potential net budget reductions requirement based on the best scenario, most likely scenario and worst scenario for the period of the MTFs.

The Section 151 Officer reported that the financial forecast was predicated on £33.610m savings being met from Directorate and Corporate budgets over the period 2017-21. Budget reduction proposals of £14.7m had already been identified over the period of the MTFs, including the full £6.187m required for 2017-18. Further budget reduction proposals to the value of £18.9m were required to be developed with a range of options under consideration. The Section 151 Officer highlighted the risk status of these for each year and also highlighted the savings proposals categorised according to the priorities in the Corporate Plan. All the proposals had implications for the Council's workforce given that around two thirds of the net revenue budget related to pay costs. It was intended to manage reductions in Council budgets through the continuation of a recruitment freeze, redeployment, early retirements, and voluntary redundancies, but some compulsory redundancies would continue to be necessary.

The Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet that consultation on the MTFs was launched in early October until 1 December, which covers an online survey, community engagement workshops, social media debates, community engagement workshops, social media debates, community engagement stands and meetings with third sector organisations. He stated that Members will have the opportunity to take part in a budget workshop on 30 November 2016.

The Section 151 Officer reported on the Draft Revenue Budget for 2017-18 which, based on the proposed budget of £257.198m the Council Tax increase for 2017-18 would be 2.9%. The Section 151 Officer informed Cabinet of the impact of pay, prices and demographics and unavoidable pressures on the revenue budget. The draft settlement from the Welsh Government did not include funding for local authorities to protect school budgets. Budget reduction proposals of £6.187m had been identified from service and corporate budgets to achieve a balanced budget. Corporate budgets include funding for the council tax reduction scheme, the costs of financing capital expenditure, precepts and levies, centrally held pay and prices provisions, insurance

budgets, discretionary rate relief, provision for redundancy related costs and the carbon reduction commitment. Generally income from fees and charges would be increased by CPI of +0.9% plus 1% subject to rounding, or in line with statutory or service requirements. It was proposed that the general fund be maintained at no less than £7m in 2017-18 with the Council's earmarked reserves being kept under review. The forecast may change in the final MTFs report to Council in March 2017.

The Section 151 Officer reported on the proposed capital programme for 2016-17 to 2025-26 and Capital Financing Strategy (including prudential borrowing and Capital Receipts forecast). Both had been developed in line with the MTFs principles and reflect the Welsh Government draft provisional capital settlement for 2017-18, which provides general capital funding for the Council for 2017-18 of £6.288m, of which £3.909m was un-hypothecated supported borrowing and the remainder £2.379m as general capital grant. There had been no indicative allocations provided for 2018-19 but it was assumed that this level of funding would remain constant after 2017-18. The development of the proposed capital programme had involved a review of the Council's capital investment requirements for 2016-2026 compared to available capital receipts. The programme contains a number of fixed annual allocations that are met from the total general capital funding for the Council. The current capital programme contains a number of significant strategic investment projects which support a number of the proposed new corporate priorities. The following projects had been included in the Council's approved programme but funding for each project would not be confirmed until the Welsh Government had approved the final business case and sufficient capital receipts had been generated:-

- Coety / Parc Derwen Primary School
- Special Education Needs Provision
- Garw Valley South Primary Provision
- Pencoed Primary School
- Gateway Primary Provision
- Mynydd Cynffig Primary School
- Heronsbridge Special School

The Section 151 Officer informed the Cabinet that the Capital Financing Strategy is underpinned by the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. Capital receipts of around £21m could be generated as part of the enhanced disposals programme, with approximately £13m already delivered and £6.6m of capital receipts to be generated over the next three years of which £1.75m is expected to be realised in 2017-18. Of the £21m, £8.8m relates to school buildings and land vacated through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme to be used as match funding for the programme. It included receipts anticipated from the Waterton or Porthcawl Regeneration sites.

The Section 151 Officer reported that total Prudential Borrowing of £35.08m had been taken out as at 1 April 2016, of which £26.25m was outstanding. It was estimated that this would increase to £36.8m by the end of the financial year. Future prudential borrowing would include an estimated £5.6m of Local Government Borrowing Initiative funding towards the costs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme.

The Section 151 Officer reported that the budget reduction proposals would be the subject of an Equality Impact Assessment prior to the final reduction recommendations being made on next year's revenue budget.

The Deputy Leader in commending the proposals contained in the MTFs thanked the Section 151 Officer for his staff on preparing such a comprehensive report and welcomed the new section on the Budget Narrative which he hoped would inform the public in making comments at the public consultation stage. The Cabinet Member

Regeneration and Economic Development informed Cabinet that whilst the Council would spend less on some activities, tourism remained an important part of the local economy, developments at Cosy Corner and the Harbour Quarter in Portchawl, the redevelopment of Maesteg Town Hall and the Rhiw demonstrated the Council's commitment to tourism. The Cabinet Member Communities commented on the importance of the County Borough deriving benefits of the City Deal and that it would need to ensure that an informed decision was made on investment by the local authorities based on risk.

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities thanked the Consultation Team on producing a youth friendly consultation which has benefitted young people in being able to respond to the proposals. The Leader commented on the importance of the consultation process engaging with all sections of the community. He stated that it was disappointing that the UK Government had not allocated additional funding for social care to enable the Welsh Government to invest in those services in Wales. He also stated that whilst capital investment had increased he was disappointed that it had not increased to the level it was before austerity.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet submitted for consultation the 2017-18 annual budget and development of the MTFS 2017-18 to 2020-21.

1016. **RESIDUAL WASTE COLLECTION DISPENSATIONS OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION PROPOSAL**

The Corporate Director Communities reported on the findings of the recent public consultation on proposed dispensation from the Council's two bag residual waste restriction policy from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and sought approval of the recommended dispensation for households with six or more inhabitants and also for households where a coal fire is the main heating source, for the collection of ash.

He reported that the Waste Collections and Household Waste Amenity Sites contract is currently in the process of being re-procured and will operate from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. He stated that all residual waste presented by householders is collected by the waste contractor and in order to meet the very stringent Welsh Government recycling targets Cabinet at its meeting on 15 March 2016 approved the introduction of a two-bag restriction on residual waste presented at the kerbside for collection by householders. To address these issues, Cabinet approved a round of public consultation for dispensation from the waste restriction policy for two areas, namely; Proposal 1 - households with a high number of occupants; Proposal 2 - households disposing of ash from coal fires.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that a number of consultees had raised comments which were mirrored in previous consultations of a perceived risk of increased fly tipping to suggestions that consideration be given to penalising non-recyclers. He stated the majority of responses to Proposal 1 were not in favour of the proposed dispensations, of the respondents that would qualify for the dispensations; the majority (80%) supported the proposal. He stated that the primary purpose of the implementation of the residual waste restriction to a two sack system is to increase recycling. He envisaged that if the proposed households were granted the opportunity to apply for a dispensation it would still be necessary to impose rigorous checking and vetting to ensure that only those in genuine need of additional capacity for their residual waste were granted an additional 'bag' and to continue to promote the increase in recycling needed.

He reported that Cabinet needed to consider allowing dispensation from the Council's two bag residual waste restriction policy in the following circumstances:

- One additional bag per fortnight for properties with 6 or 7 residents.
- Two additional bags per fortnight for properties with 8 or more residents.
- One additional bag per fortnight for properties with coal fires as the primary source of heating for the collection of ash.

He informed Cabinet that the public would be able to register with the contractor to receive a dispensation and make use of the scheme, however it was vital to ensure that additional bags are only issued where there is a real need and are not used to dispose of recyclable material in the residual waste stream. Applications for dispensation would need to be vigorously and robustly checked. He stated that the final criteria to be applied to the dispensations policy would be established in conjunction with the new waste contractor in advance of 1 April 2017 contract commencement date. He also stated that ongoing checks may be undertaken to ensure that the dispensations policy is being adhered to the two bag restriction. He informed cabinet that where a household requires and applies for the new Absorbent Hygiene Products service the information the householder will be expected to provide will be developed in conjunction with the Council's new waste services contractor.

The Deputy Leader in commending the proposals for dispensation commented on the importance of meeting recycling targets in order to protect the authority from fines and also to protect the planet for future generations.

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities proposed an amendment to that included in paragraph 8.2 of the report, to delegate authority to the Deputy Leader to finalise the dispensation criteria. This amendment was discussed and agreed.

The Corporate Director Communities in response to a question from the Leader as to whether the limit on the number of bags was too small stated that national evidence showed that 50% of the waste content of black bags currently could be recycled and there needed to be a programme of educating households that it is their responsibility to comply with the general policy that the vast majority of households in the County Borough could comply with, rather than the authority seeking to provide a bespoke service for each individual household need, which would be impractical and very expensive to procure.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

- (1) Approved dispensation from the Council's policy for restricting household residual waste collections to two bags per fortnight from 1st April 2017 in the circumstances detailed below: -
  - (a) One additional bag per fortnight for properties with 6 or 7 residents
  - (b) Two additional bags per fortnight for properties with 8 or more residents
  - (c) One additional bag per fortnight for properties where the main heating source is a coal fire, for the collection of ash
- (2) Delegated to the Deputy Leader authority to finalise the dispensation criteria.

**1017. RESIDUAL WASTE COLLECTION PUBLIC AWARENESS, INFORMATION AND ENFORCEMENT PROPOSALS**

The Corporate Director Communities reported that the Waste Collections and Household Waste Amenity Sites contract will come into operation from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and will run for seven years up to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

He stated that as with the introduction of any large scale change in service provision, the introduction of the Council's new waste collections policy and the changes to the provision of the service introduced as a consequence of the new contract would need to be conveyed to the public both in advance of the changes being introduced and during the period of contract mobilisation, to ensure that the public is kept informed of collection details and importantly the reasons for the changes being made. He informed Cabinet that detailed information and advice provided to the public would be central to securing the efficient roll out of the new service and the success of the Council's policy to restrict residual waste presented at the kerbside to two bags per household per fortnight. He stated that the Contractor would also have a significant role to play in supplying details of the service to be provided. He outlined the main areas where the Council will seek to engage with the public and the means by which every householder receives information on the waste services contract.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that it was expected that the Council's contact centre will receive high levels of calls and requests for information from the public during the first six months of the new contract. He stated that to manage the public's expectation and to secure as far as is possible the smooth transition from existing, to the new collection arrangements, up to seven additional contact centre staff will be employed by the contact centre on a temporary basis to deal with this pressure. He also stated that regrettably, some households will seek to continue with the outdated practice of disposing of all of their waste materials through the residual black bag waste stream. In such circumstances, the Council will look to engage with the householder to seek compliance with the Council's waste collection policy. He stated that reverting to the Council's enforcement powers would be viewed as a last resort but it would be an important cornerstone of the Council's drive to improve its recycling performance, in order to meet stringent Welsh Government targets and avoid potentially significant fines, and to reduce the amounts of waste sent to landfill.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that as a consequence of budget cuts, the Council did not have sufficient resources to police the new waste restriction policy and it was proposed to enter into a procurement exercise to identify a suitable education and enforcement services partner, who will assist and work alongside the Council's existing teams and its new waste services contractor to help educate and where necessary enforce the Council's policy on limiting the number of bags presented at the kerb to two bags per household, per fortnight. In addition to providing support in the waste services area, the proposed education and enforcement partner would also bring to bear additional resource to enforce incidents of fly tipping, littering and dog fouling. He stated that initially the procurement exercise would seek to identify a partner on a one-year trial basis followed by a 2 year contract with an option to extend this for up to a further two years on a year by year basis.

The Deputy Leader in commending the public awareness, information and education proposals, informed Cabinet that a workshop would be held for elected Members following the appointment of a Contractor. He also commented on the importance of engaging with school pupils to ensure they engage with recycling. The Cabinet Member Communities commented on the need for the public to be aware that they can have additional recycling containers and for community groups to be engaged on the public awareness, information and education proposals. The Cabinet Member Regeneration

and Economic Development commented on the importance of promoting that a weekly collection service will continue for recycling and on the importance of leafleting each household on the types of products which can be recycled.

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities questioned how the limit of two black bags per week would be enforced in communal areas. The Corporate Director Communities stated that there exists a problem of bags being left in communal areas, but the Council, if necessary, has a means of analysing the content of those bags and could take enforcement action if other attempts to provide advice and warnings were ignored. He stated that if households persist in placing more than two bags for collection, they would also run out of the relevant residual waste collection bags as only 52 would be provided per household per year.

The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities questioned the type of contract the additional staff be placed on. The Corporate Director Communities stated that the Council was looking at engaging additional contact centre staff for a relatively short duration.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

(a) Noted the contents of the report specifically, proposals to employ, education and engagement staff and additional call centre staff as presented in the body of the report.

(b) Approved the procurement and subsequent appointment of an education and enforcement partner on the basis set out in the report and delegate to the Corporate Director – Communities the tendering of the contract for an education and enforcement partner and the award of the contract to the successful tenderer, the contractual terms of the contract to be approved by the Corporate Director Communities in consultation with the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services.

(c) Delegated responsibility for developing information, education and enforcement procedures to the Corporate Director - Communities. The area of delegation is limited to operational matters and decisions.

**1018. ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT 2016 - NEW DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Corporate Director Communities reported on the duties and responsibilities of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

He stated that Act puts in place the legislation needed to plan and manage Wales' natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined-up way and is intended to deliver significant economic, social and environmental benefits for Wales. The Act has been put in place to make the most of the opportunities that Wales' natural resources present while safeguarding and building the resilience of natural systems to continue to provide these benefits over the long term.

The Corporate Director Communities highlighted the implications of the Act on the Council to co-operate and provide evidence to produce area statements. The Act also placed a new biodiversity duty on the Council which enhanced the previous duty placed and to comply with this, the Council will require a greater organisation-wide understanding and capacity than had previously been the case. This will require training and professional advice to services in the exercise of their functions and the regulatory



requirements. The Act introduced new arrangements in relation to waste segregation and collection.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that it would not be possible to meet the additional requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 within the reduced resource levels the Council currently has and a growth bid has been submitted as part of the budget setting process for 2017/18 to secure additional resource which would be aligned to the delivery of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate Revenue Grant so that as well as supporting BCBC to deliver in line with the Act it would also support the delivery of that grant in line with Welsh Government requirements.

The Cabinet Member Communities stated that the Act will place greater importance on data sharing, increased requirements on biodiversity and carbon reduction and there was a need to embrace the proposals.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

(a) Noted the new duties and responsibilities imposed by the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the policy, delivery and resource implications for the Council arising from this new legislation;

(b) Noted that implementing the legislation will require additional resources, for which additional resources will be sought, as part of the budget setting process for 2017/18.

#### 1019. LIBRARY SERVICE PERFORMANCE

The Corporate Director Communities reported on the Council's performance against the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS) Fifth Framework for 2015-16 and sought approval for the Library Service's strategic principles.

He stated that the Council is required each year as the Public Library Authority to submit a Welsh Public Library Standards annual return for consideration by assessors. A report is issued in turn by the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division (MALD) of the Welsh Government who have responsibility for administering the Framework which gives an assessment of the Council's performance.

The Corporate Director Communities stated that BCBC transferred the management of a range of cultural services, which included the Library Service, to Awen Cultural Trust from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015. The statutory duty to provide the library service and report on its performance remained with the Council but Awen, under the terms of the management agreement, provided the Council with the information it needed to satisfy itself that the service is meeting the desired outcomes.

The Corporate Director Communities highlighted the 2015/16 report from MALD in response to the Library Service self-assessment return against the fifth Framework of Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-17. He added that the MALD Report was positive and highlighted a number of improvements in a number of key areas and demonstrated how the how the transfer of the libraries function to Awen Cultural Trust has provided further opportunities for developing the service. He indicated that 17 of the 18 core citizen entitlements were met during 2015-16 (with the other met in part) whilst, of the seven quality indicators with targets, six were fully met and one in part. This compared with four being met in full in 2014-15. He stated that the range of quality indicators that were fully met underlined how the library service plays an important role in promoting citizens' digital skills and inclusion, how libraries are located close to where their users

live and have, in spite of financial pressures, maintained opening hours. The quality indicator not fully met related to staffing levels, which could be interpreted as efficient use of staffing resources and any attempt to meet this standard would need a significant increase in financial resources as well as jeopardising performance against other targets. Such staffing efficiencies had contributed to the service significantly reducing revenue expenditure and the cost per visit falling to below the Welsh median. Overall, MALD recognised the improvements in stock provision and welcomes the maintenance of performance, despite budget reductions. The performance of Bridgend's library service showed "careful management and a generally positive overall direction". The service achieved a 97% overall satisfaction rating from its customers.

The Corporate Director Communities also reported that in view of the innovative decision to transfer services to Awen and the agreed focus on outcomes it was suggested that Cabinet agree strategic principles as a basis for developing the 2017/18 outcomes framework for the Cultural Partnership Agreement in relation to Developing new library spaces; Children's literacy and reading and Digital skills agenda.

The Cabinet Member Communities in commending the library service performance stated that improvements had been made to the library service and she looked forward to exciting proposals being developed in Maesteg and Porthcawl.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet:

(a) Considered and noted the the content of the report and appendix, recognising a successful year of progress against the Welsh Public Library Standards;

(b) Approved the strategic principles for development of the ongoing partnership with Awen Cultural Trust.

#### 1020. FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Corporate Director Communities reported on an update on the Council's drafting of its Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP), its implications, and sought authorisation to consult on the draft FRMP.

He stated that the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 is intended to implement Sir Michael Pitt's recommendations following the widespread flooding of 2007. The Act was also intended to clarify roles and responsibilities between Risk Management Authorities and the Council is required to produce a Flood Risk Management Plan.

He reported that there are currently no "Blue Squares" that identify flood risk areas as set out in the criteria, but the importance of each Lead Local Flood Authority producing a FRMP was identified by Welsh Government. Funding was provided to all local authorities to produce a FRMP. He stated that the draft FRMP identifies a number of locations within Bridgend that are likely to be highlighted in a future review of Flood Risk Areas and as such the Plan proposed was not only of importance for the future, but identified best practice for departments currently responsible for flood risk at this time.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet noted the update on the draft Flood Risk Management Plan and approves the undertaking of public consultation on the Draft Flood Risk Management Plan.

**1021. BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE ACCESS CONSULTATION**

The Corporate Director Communities reported on the findings of the recent Bridgend Town Centre Access Study consultation, the Equalities Impact Assessment, and, subject to Cabinet agreement on the way forward, sought approval to commission detailed design work for the scheme.

He reported that public consultation on the proposal to reintroduce traffic to Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street. In addition, it was proposed to introduce 20 miles per hour speed zone and two pedestrian crossings alongside approximately 18 parking/loading bays and street bollards designed to improve safety by separating pedestrians and vehicles. He stated that 2,480 responses were received to the consultation and data validation measures undertaken to ensure that the same respondent could not submit more than one response.

He highlighted the key findings of the consultation, in that eight in ten respondents agreed with the proposal against one in five who disagreed. Of those who supported the proposal, three in four would like the roads to be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. One hour parking was the most popular response overall with over two in five (42.1%) selecting the option followed closely by 40% selecting 30 minute parking bays. He stated that a response was also received from Guide Dogs Cymru supporting the introduction of dropped kerbs to facilitate access by wheelchair users and other pedestrians, but these must be marked with the appropriate tactile paving. He informed cabinet that the response falls in line with the outcome of the Capita report referenced in the consultation. Over seven in ten (75.8%) thought the introduction of the proposal would have a positive impact on the town centre.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that based on the overall conclusions it was reasonable to conclude that the majority of respondents supported the proposal to reintroduce vehicles into Queen Street, Market Street and Dunraven Place, with a preference is to allow full-time vehicular access (60.8%). There was no significant preference in terms of the duration of parking in parking bays between one hour and 30 minutes. Suspending the pedestrianisation of Queen Street, Dunraven Place and Market Street with the introduction of parking spaces will enable the town centre to become more accessible to shoppers in the day time and customers during the evening, therefore creating an opportunity that currently does not exist to address the economic performance of the town.

He reported on the next steps in the process which would involve proposed design and consultation steps before an Experimental Traffic Order can be implemented. He also outlined the legislative background of making a traffic order and informed Cabinet that some of the obligations can be competing in deciding whether to proceed with the proposed order.

He also reported that a full Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken which had recommended mitigation measures to be addressed through the design and if agreed, the implementation stages of the project.

He reported that the cost of the Access Study had been met by the Welsh Government under the Vibrant and Viable Places programme and a bid for funding has been submitted to Welsh Government to cover the cost of preliminary scheme design, subject to a decision by Cabinet to proceed to this next stage, the anticipated cost of the detailed design stage is circa £60,000. He stated that the Council would need to provide £10,000 as match funding, which could be met from the Strategic Studies Fund.

The Corporate Director Communities reported that there is no budget provision for the scheme, which is estimated at £552,000, within the Council's capital programme. He stated that the scheme would not be able to proceed until suitable external funding could be sourced. He informed Cabinet that a funding bid had been submitted to the Welsh Government to cover the cost, but it was unlikely that it could be considered until 2017/18. He also informed Cabinet that the £552,000 cost was only a high level estimate cost of the works and a more accurate cost estimate would emerge as a full scheme design is developed. The actual cost would only be determined through a procurement exercise, once any scheme is approved and could vary significantly from the original estimate.

The Cabinet Member Regeneration and Economic Development in commending the proposals commented that the consultation had produced very positive feedback and it was hoped that the proposals would bring vibrancy to the town centre as people's shopping habits had changed. He stated that the proposals were also consistent with developments for town centre living.

In response to a question from the Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities in relation to the consultees to be the subject of further consultation, the Corporate Director Communities stated that consultees could be added to the consultation process if deemed appropriate. The Cabinet Member Children's Social Services and Equalities commented on the need for people under 18 to be included as part of the consultation to ensure their views are considered.

The Deputy Leader expressed concern at the proposal to re-introduce traffic to the previously pedestrianised streets which could impact on road safety particularly at the junction of Dunraven Place and Queen Street where he requested that railings be placed to avoid the risk of collisions. He also requested that road safety measures be installed outside the bus station. The Corporate Director Communities stated that the safety measures will be considered so that the safety of pedestrians is not placed at risk.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

- (1) Noted the key findings of the Access Study public consultation, which demonstrate strong public support for reintroducing vehicular access to Queen Street, Market Street and Dunraven Place;
- (2) Noted that the majority of town centre users who are more likely to be affected as a result of the changes being consulted upon, for example the elderly, disabled, and people with young children, were also in favour of the proposal;
- (3) Noted the mitigation measures proposed in paragraph 6.1 to address the findings of the Equalities Impact Assessment;
- (4) Noted there are no confirmed resources to undertake preliminary design or the capital works, although funding bids have been made, and that costs could vary from those estimated at this time;
- (5) Authorised officers to commence the procurement exercise for preliminary design work, as detailed in paragraph 7.1 of the report;

(6) Authorised officers issue consultation correspondence based on the scheme summarised in paragraph 4.26 of the report to Local Ward members; Chief Constable of Police; Freight Transport Association; Road Haulage Association; appropriate ambulance / NHS bodies; Fire Service; appropriate Bus Operators if affected by the scheme and any other organisations considered likely to be affected by the proposals; and

(7) Authorised officers to accept the grant approval (subject to Welsh Government decision) to meet the cost of preliminary design work.

**1022. APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNORS**

The Head of Education and Early Help sought approval for the appointment of Local Authority Governors to the school governing bodies listed.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet approved the appointments listed.

**1023. COUNCIL SUITE INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE**

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services sought a waiver under Rule 3.2.3 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules from the requirement to obtain quotes or tenders by open competition for the supply of equipment which will enable the enhancement of the existing Council Chamber infrastructure. He also sought approval to enter into a contract with Auditel Rental and Services Limited.

He reported that the webcasting system using the Council Chamber's systems has enabled greater openness and transparency of the Council's decision making processes, with 16 formal meetings webcast between 1 January 2016 and 1 September 2016. The ongoing use of the webcasting system has identified the shortcomings of the existing infrastructure within the Council Chamber and do not effectively support the complex demands expected in this digital age. He stated that the current systems are provided by Auditel Rental and Services Limited who were successful in the previous competitive tender and now have an ongoing service level agreement for the maintenance of the bespoke Council Chamber systems. Any upgrades to the infrastructure will be required to integrate effectively with the existing Auditel hardware and control systems. In addition, the use of any equipment which has not been supplied or authorised by Auditel would invalidate the service warranty provided as part of the continuing software, webcasting and maintenance agreement with Auditel. He stated that the use of an alternative supplier for the provision of this infrastructure may compromise the operation of the single integrated systems used in the Council Chamber and Council Suite.

**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:

(1) Approved a waiver under Rule 3.2.3 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules from the requirement to obtain quotes or tenders by open competition for the supply of equipment to upgrade the existing Council Suite systems from analogue to digital connectivity;

(2) Authorised the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services to enter into a contract with Auditel Rental and Services Limited on behalf of the Council for the supply of digital connectivity as detailed in the report.

1024. INFORMATION REPORTS FOR NOTING

The Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services presented a report, the purpose of which was to inform Cabinet of the Information Report which has been published since the last meeting.

The Leader congratulated the staff, pupils and governing body of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd on the good progress made by the school against the post inspection action plan.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet acknowledged the publication of the document listed in the report:-

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Published</u>
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd Estyn Progress Report	23 November 2016

1025. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

1026. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as they contain exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 and 16 of Part 4 and Paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the items were in part not subject to the public interest test for reasons of legal professional privilege and should therefore be considered in private. However the public interest applied in respect of parts of the items of business.

Following the application of the public interest test in consideration of these other items, it was resolved that pursuant to the Act referred to above, to consider them in private, with the public being excluded from the meeting as they would involve the disclosure of exempt information of the nature as stated above.

1027. APPROVAL OF EXEMPT MINUTES

1028. CONTRACT FOR THE ADVERTISING OF VACANCIES IN RESPECT OF TEACHING, SUPPORT STAFF AND EDUCATION

The meeting closed at 4.46 pm