

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

15 MAY 2018

REPORT OF SUBJECT AND OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3

EMPTY PROPERTIES OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present Cabinet with the recommendations of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 in relation to the recruitment of the Empty Properties Officer.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2016–2020 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Corporate Improvement Objectives were adopted by Council on 1 March 2017 and formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2016 and 2020. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 At its meeting on the 21 March 2018, the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 received a report from the Operational and Partnership Services Directorate regarding Empty Properties.
- 3.2 The report set out the role of the Empty Properties Working Group and specifically the benefits of creating a role of Empty Homes Officer and what remit the role would hold.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Following discussion with Officers on the potential options on recruiting an Empty Properties Officer and consideration of this item, the Committee determined to make the following recommendations to Cabinet:
 - (i) Members recommended that BCBC recruit a dedicated Empty Properties Officer to address the problems with Empty Homes in Bridgend County Borough. The Committee believed it was essential that BCBC have their own dedicated officer to address these issues, and this service should not be delivered as part of a shared service.
- 4.3 Members further recommended that once the Empty Properties Officer is appointed they become the co-ordinator of the Empty Properties Working Group.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the development of the Empty Homes Strategy.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 The Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 Empty Properties report states that services within the Authority should utilise their existing budgets for any work undertaken on empty properties. Whilst there is currently a budget available to appoint an Empty Properties Officer, as approved by Council in the MTFS 2018-19 to 2021-22, which would resource the “front end” of the service, there would also be additional demands on other departments within the Authority to progress any works on empty properties, which may not be currently resourced.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 Cabinet is asked to consider and agree the recommendations of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

Andrew Jolley

Corporate Director, Operational and Partnership Services

Contact Officer: Sarah Daniel
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643387

E-mail: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background documents:

Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 Empty Properties report 21 March 2018