

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3

22 OCTOBER 2018

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

COLLABORATION WITH TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of:

- The outcome of the Review currently being undertaken by Welsh Government in relation to Town and Community Councils (T&CCs) and its impact on Bridgend County Borough Council (“the Council”);
- How the Council are benefiting from collaborative work - value for money and contribution to budget savings;
- The extent to which other local authorities are working in collaboration with T&CCs (where known).

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan and other Corporate Priority

2.1 The report assists in the achievement of the Corporate priority of ‘Smarter Use of Resources’ – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council’s priorities.

3. Background

Welsh Context

- 3.1 Local authorities (County or County Borough Councils) have a legal responsibility to provide services such as education, environmental health, social services and town and country planning for their whole county. T&CCs represent individual communities or towns within a county. They have legal powers to deliver some services, but fewer duties than those of a local authority (see List of Powers & Duties at **Appendix A**). T&CCs should work closely with the county or county borough council in the area, representing the interests of their communities. Local authorities and T&CCs should work in partnership, to ensure the best services and outcomes for citizens. This may mean that local authorities allocate funds to T&CCs to enable them to deliver a service at a local level. Charter agreements can provide a very good means of underpinning the relationship between local authorities and T&CCs.
- 3.2 There are 739 T&CCs across Wales working to improve the quality of life and environment for citizens in their area. T&CCs are accountable to local people and provide local services such as playing fields and open spaces, village halls and community centres, footpaths, war memorials and other community services. Approximately 8,000 people in Wales serve as town and community councilors for a term of five years.
- 3.3 T&CCs cover 70% of the population in Wales (some 2.1 million people) ranging from 179 people (Ganllwyd, Gwynedd) to 45,145 people (Barry, Vale of Glamorgan). More than two-thirds of T&CCs have a population of less than 2,500 people. Only 13

of 21 local authorities (or 62%) are fully covered by T&CCs (see Geographical Distribution of Town & Community Councils in Wales at **Appendix B**).

- 3.4 The major areas of expenditure for T&CCs which are funded via the precept to the Council Tax include salaries and wages for the Clerk and other employees; maintenance of village halls and community centres, playing fields, parks and playgrounds, cemeteries and footpaths; lighting, seating and bus shelters; grants to local organisations; and insurance and other administrative costs. The aggregate precept for T&CCs in 2017/18 was £36.8 million, viz:

Table 1 T&CC Precepts – All Wales

Precept	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Total Aggregate	£30.6M	£35.1M	£36.8M
Mean Average	£41,425	£47,518	£49,834

Source: StatsWales

- 3.5 The mean precept was £49,834 in 2017/18, an increase of 4.9% on the 2016/17 level. A total of 142 T&CCs (or 19%) set a precept of £5,000 or less, with 89 T&CCs (or 12%) setting a precept of more than £100,000. There were 8 T&CCs that set zero precepts for 2017/18. The largest precept in 2017/18 was set by Llanelli Rural Community Council (Carmarthenshire) at £1.0 million and the lowest having a monetary value was St. George's and St. Bride's Super Ely (Vale of Glamorgan) at £750. Precepts increased by an average of 20.3% in the 3 year period. The willingness of T&CCs to increase the precept to pay for additional service provision is limited by a number of issues, including concerns about double taxation.
- 3.6 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on certain T&CCs to take all reasonable steps towards meeting the local objectives included in the local Well-being plan that has effect in its areas. A T&CC is subject to that duty only if its gross income or expenditure was at least £200,000 for each of the three financial years preceding the year in which the local Well-being plan is published. Only 46 T&CCs (or 6.2%) had a precept that met this criteria across Wales in 2017/18. Only 3 of 20 T&CCs (Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl) in the Bridgend area have gross income or expenditure above the £200,000 threshold.

Bridgend Area

- 3.7 Bridgend, Monmouthshire and Torfaen are the only local authorities in South East Wales that presently have 100% coverage by T&CCs followed by the Vale of Glamorgan (96%), viz:

Table 2 T&CC Coverage – South East Wales

Local Authority	Community and Town Councils	Communities without Councils	Percentage Coverage
Blaenau Gwent	4	6	40%
Bridgend	20	0	100%
Caerphilly	18	9	67%
Cardiff	6	24	20%
Merthyr Tydfil	1	11	8%
Monmouthshire	33	0	100%
Neath Port Talbot	19	12	61%
Newport	14	16	47%
Rhondda Cynon Taff	11	16	41%
Swansea	24	15	62%
Torfaen	6	0	100%
Vale of Glamorgan	26	1	96%

Source: Developing a Comprehensive Understanding of Community and Town Councils in Wales
(Welsh Government – 2014)

- 3.8 The County Borough of Bridgend has 4 Town Councils and 16 Community Councils (see Table at **Appendix C**) covering a population of 143,177 people. The largest town is Maesteg (pop: 17,399), followed by Porthcawl (pop: 15,818) and Bridgend (pop: 14,994). The 20 T&CCs have a total of 230 seats – highest 19 (Bridgend and Porthcawl) and lowest 7 (Coychurch Higher, Llangynwyd Lower, Merthyr Mawr, and Coychurch Lower).
- 3.9 T&CCs have raised a total of £2.5 million via the precept in 2018/19 which ranges from £553,849 (Highest – Bridgend Town Council) to £8,000 (Lowest – Llangynwyd Lower Community Council) – see Table at **Appendix C**. A comparison for the last 4 years is summarized below:

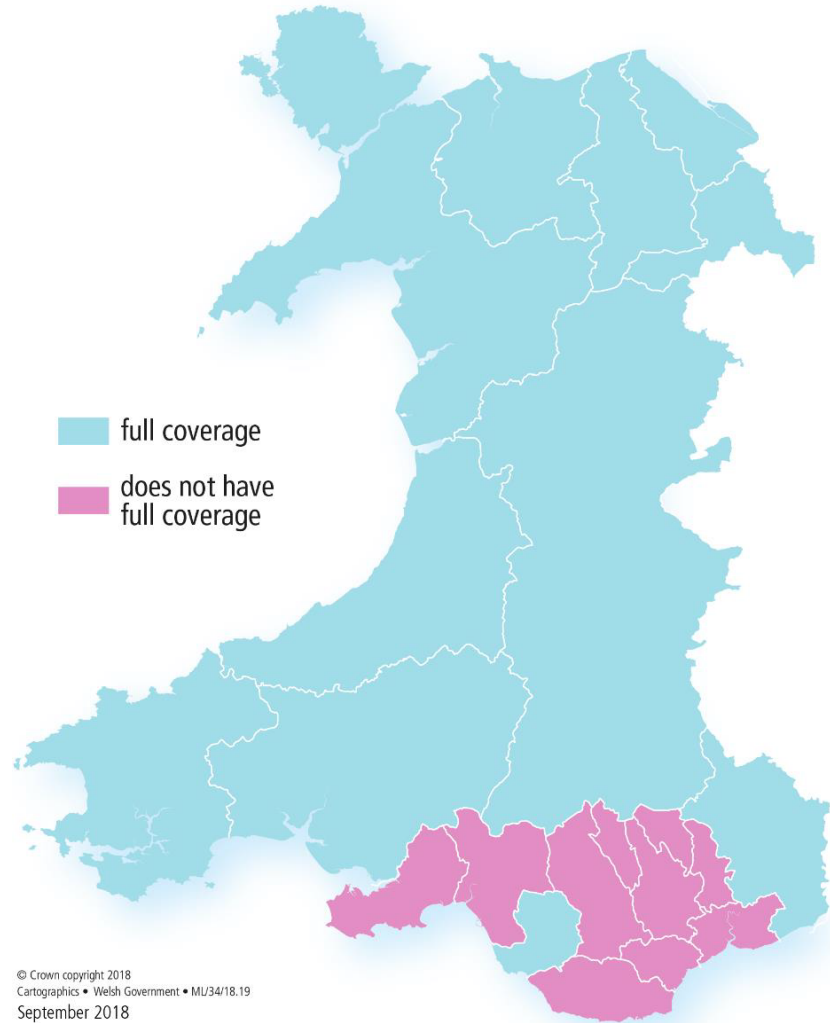
Table 3 T&CC Precepts - Bridgend County Borough

Precept	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Total Aggregate	£1.7M	£1.9M	£2.0M	£2.5M
Mean Average	£86,841	£95,438	£102,667	£124,734

Source: StatsWales

- 3.10 Examples of projects known to have been completed or proposed by T&CCs to assist in the regeneration of their area have been included at **Appendix D** for illustrative purposes.
- Independent Review Panel
- 3.11 The Welsh Government has established an Independent Review Panel to consider the future role of T&CCs. The review was tasked with:
- exploring the potential role of local government below Local Authority councils, drawing on best practice;
 - defining the most appropriate model(s)/structure(s) to deliver this role;
 - considering how these models and structures should be applied across Wales including any situations in which they would not be necessary or appropriate.
- 3.12 The review is part of the Welsh Government's broader plans to reform local government and aims to ensure that the most local level of government works well and delivers results. The evidence-based review commenced in July 2017 with all relevant stakeholders being invited to contribute including, T&CCs, principal councils and community and third sector groups.
- 3.13 The Panel submitted their final report to the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services on 3 October 2018 with their outline findings and recommendations being published in August 2018.
- 3.14 The final report highlighted that there are approximately 110 communities or 30% of the country's population without a council. Only 12 Local Authority areas in Wales have total coverage in respect of T&CCs. The Panel experienced difficulties in obtaining detailed evidence from those areas without full coverage:

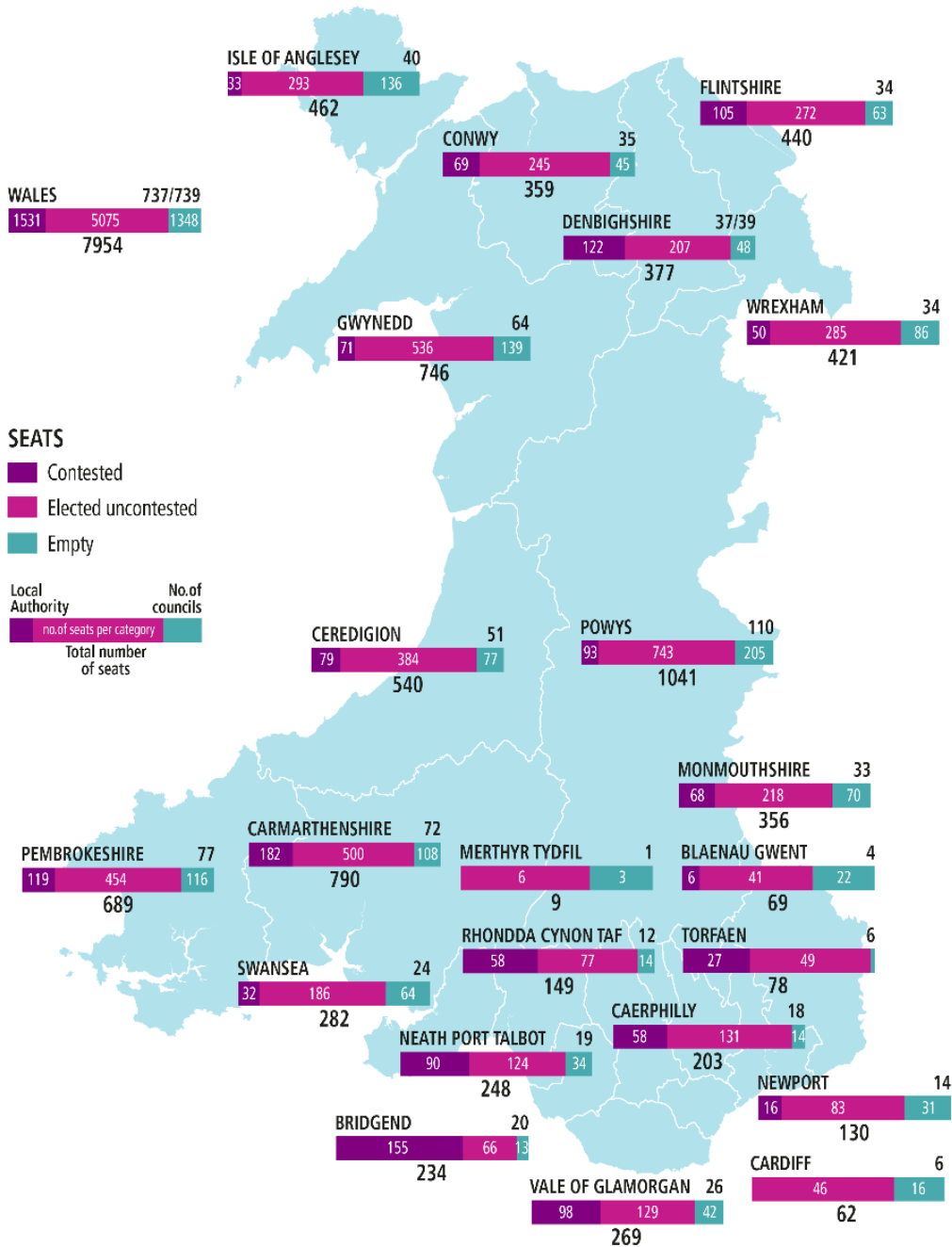
Map 1 T&CC Coverage – All Wales



Source: Independent Review Panel Report

- 3.15 Bridgend were found to have the lowest amount of uncontested seats, with 28%, by comparison, Cardiff had the highest amount of uncontested seats with 74%:

Map 2 Contested & Uncontested Seats 2017 Elections



Source: Independent Review Panel Report

3.16 Findings and recommendations arising from the Independent Review Panel have been summarised below and a copy of the Final Recommendations are included at **Appendix E**:

- The case has been made to retain T&CCs as they are very local and democratically accountable.
- A comprehensive review of boundaries of T&CCs should be undertaken without delay.
- There is need for greater clarity on the purpose and role of T&CCs with a recommendation that “place based” services (see para. 3.17) become the responsibility of T&CCs.

- Existing funding for “place based” services should be transferred from principal councils to T&CCs.
- T&CCs need the capacity and capability to play the role envisaged for them and should be supported and encouraged to work together.
- There is a lack of visibility of the work of T&CCs and a report annually on achievements over the last year and what they are planning on spending the future year’s precept on should be prepared.
- The role of a T&CC councillor is changing with a core package of mandatory training being required.
- It is important that T&CCs are democratically accountable for their actions with the need for elections to be called regardless of whether seats are contested and councillors should not be co-opted for more than one consecutive term.

3.17 The Panel has defined “place-based” services to any (mainly discretionary) services that helps the social, cultural, economic and environmental, and physical wellbeing of the community which can be linked to a place and can vary from place to place, rather than people based or regulatory services (such as education, social care and environmental health) that are more likely to need equitable service across the country and should fall under the responsibility of the local authority.

Services and Asset Management

3.18 T&CCs should work with their principal council and other bodies to determine the responsibilities of each party in the transfer and management of assets, the delivery of services to the public and the financial and legal duties of each party with regard to these responsibilities. T&CCs are increasingly being engaged by their local authority in the transfer of responsibilities for services and assets, the nature and complexity of which are highly variable and specialised.

3.19 In addition to the Independent Panel Review the Welsh Government also commissioned research around service and asset management within the sector to understand:

- which services and assets are being managed;
- the sources of funding and income councils have to deliver their services and the nature of the current workforce, including the clerk and their role;
- the extent and quality of training undertaken related to either delivering services or asset management;
- the nature of partnerships councils have with other organisations; and
- the sources of support they draw upon.

3.20 The key findings arising from the research - “Management and Delivery of Services and Assets in Community and Town Councils” was published in January 2018 and can be summarised as follows:

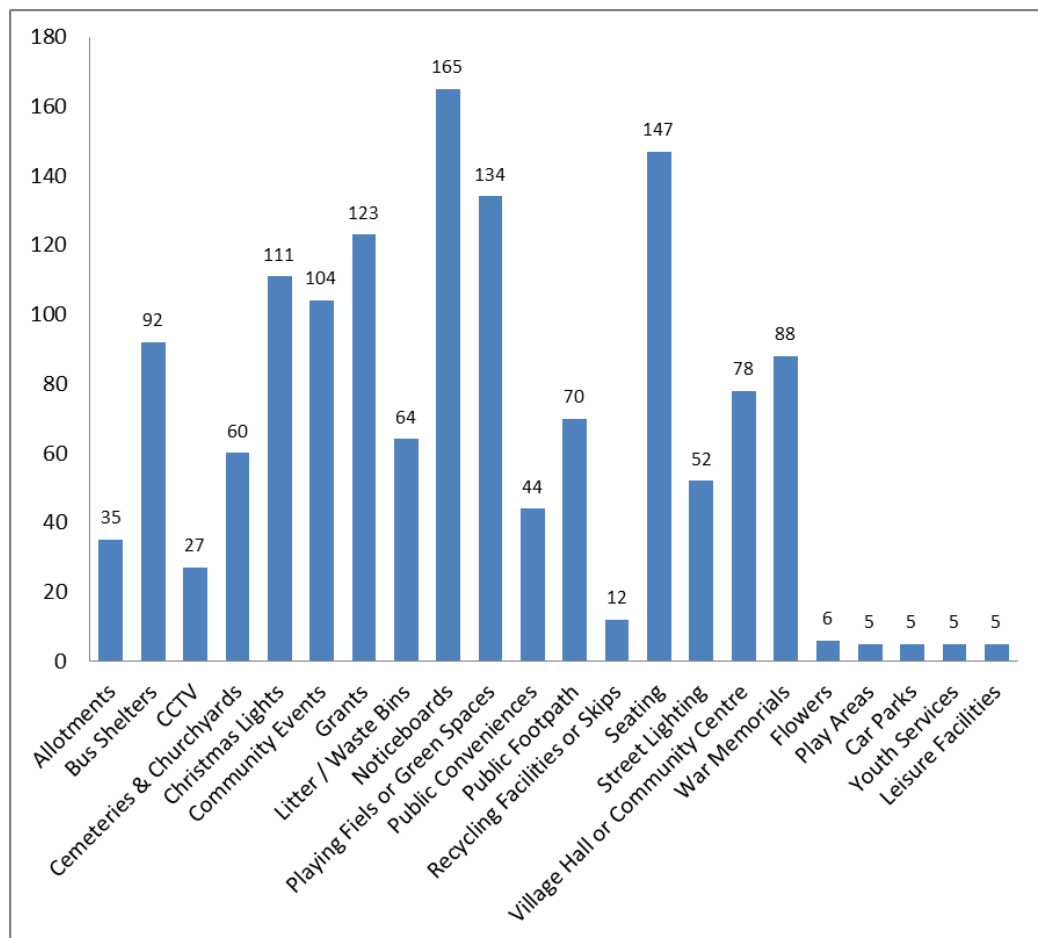
- Services delivered and assets managed over time had increased with T&CCs most commonly found to be taking on more playing fields and other forms of green space.
- The difficulties encountered in anticipating when asset transfer would occur, and resourcing the increased workload that would result in the climate of reduced public spending, was the primary concern for T&CCs.
- T&CCs are increasingly being expected to take on services that require more specialised knowledge. In addition to taking on more responsibilities, T&CCs expressed concern that proposed transfers often included specialist services, such as leisure centres.
- T&CCs desired more two-way dialogue with their principal council with regard to transfers.

- There had been an increase in levels of partnership working. However, it was felt that the quality of communication and collaboration could be improved by principal councils taking the views of T&CCs on service and asset transfer into consideration.
- T&CCs required more guidance on how to take on services and assets.
- A slight increase in the number of charters and service level agreements between T&CCs and principal councils was reported.
- Councillors and Clerks expressed a clear desire to be involved in the implementation of the principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act in their T&CC.
- Informal networks with other T&CCs were evident and viewed positively and clustering arrangements with neighbouring councils were felt to be a positive endeavour in delivering services, as they provided good economies of scale.

There were 7 recommendations arising from the “Management and Delivery of Services and Assets in Community and Town Councils” review and these have been included at **Appendix F**.

3.21 Only 34.4% of T&CCs (254 No.) responded to the survey, with 81 percent reporting that they provided services/amenities to the public. The following bar chart shows the number of councils providing the listed services:

Graph 1 Services and Amenities currently provided by T&CCs



3.22 The three most common services provided are noticeboards, seating, and playing fields / village greens / other green space. A total of 43 T&CCs had taken on services/amenities in the last 12 months. The most common recently acquired

services/amenities were playing fields / village greens / other green space (9%), public conveniences (4%), bus shelters (4%) and Christmas lights (4%).

- 3.23 A total of 71 T&CCs confirmed their intention to take on services in the next 12 months. The most common services being:

Table 4 Services to be transferred to T&CCs in Next 12 Months

Service / Asset	No. of T&CCs	% of Total
Playing fields / village greens / other green space	20	7.9
Public conveniences	17	6.7
Village hall / community centre	6	2.4
Playgrounds / areas and play equipment	5	2.0

- 3.24 A total of 191 T&CCs (or 75%) had responsibility for holding assets. The three most common again being noticeboards, seating and playing fields / village greens or other green space. Of those T&CCs that currently both hold assets and delivered services, 54 have taken on assets and services in the last 12 months. Of these T&CCs, only 6 had a full-time member of staff.

- 3.25 One third of T&CCs did not have any leased or owned assets, with another third having both leased and owned assets. A small majority (41%) had responsibility for only owned assets.

- 3.26 The survey sought to find out more about the key partners of T&CCs and the nature and quality of those relationships. A total of 112 T&CCs (or 44%) worked with other public services and/or third sector bodies to deliver services and manage assets, with 142 T&CCs (or 56%) not having any partnership arrangements. There were 98 T&CCs (or 39%) that had partnerships with their principal council and 37 T&CCs (or 15%) with third sector organisations. The most common purpose of partnership working was:

Table 5 Commonest Partnership Arrangements with T&CCs

Purpose of Partnership Working	No. of T&CCs	% of Total
Deliver services	45	17.7
Maintain services	25	9.8
Deliver events	8	3.1
Provide funding for projects	7	2.8
Information sharing	7	2.8

Relationships with Principal Councils

- 3.27 In evaluating relationships with their principal council, T&CCs were asked to assess their agreement with the following statements:

Table 6 Relationship with Principal Council

Question Asked	T&CCs Replying	Response of T&CC			
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree / Strongly Disagree
Communication between our council and the Unitary Authority in relation to service delivery and asset management works well	193	10	35	37	111
Our council's comments on service delivery and asset management are taken into consideration by the Unitary Authority	167	10	39	36	82

The Unitary Authority helps our council to achieve objectives with regard to service delivery and asset management	184	14	44	25	101
Our council has a good relationship with the local authority	123	22	53	17	31

A total of 45 T&CCs (or 23%) strongly agreed or agreed that communication about service and asset management between the T&CC and the principal council works well, although almost as many held a neutral opinion on this statement (37 T&CCs). However, 111 T&CCs (or 58%) responded negatively by disagreeing / strongly disagreeing with the statement.

There was a slightly higher level of agreement that the comments of T&CCs on service and asset management were considered by the principal council, with a total of 49 T&CCs (or 29%) expressing agreement. However, 82 T&CCs (or 49%) disagreed / strongly disagreed with the statement.

There was again slightly higher general agreement that the principal council helps the T&CC achieve their goals with regard to services and assets. High levels of neutrality in the responses persisted throughout, with the exception of the final statement, where 75 T&CCs (or 61%) strongly agreed or agreed that the T&CC and their principal council had a good relationship.

3.28 A total of 65 T&CCs (or 26%) had Charters and 63 T&CCs (or 25%) had service level agreements in place with the principal council, whereas a much higher number (119 T&CCs or 47%) had no such agreements.

3.29 A total of 142 T&CCs (or 56%) receives some form of additional income, with 109 T&CCs (or 43%) having the precept as their only source of income. The majority of T&CCs received their additional funding through income generation and grant funding.

Staffing & Advice / Guidance

3.30 A Clerk was employed by 228 T&CCs (or 90%), with a very small number reporting employment of more than one Clerk. At the time of the survey, 7 T&CCs reported not having a clerk in post. A large proportion of T&CCs reported that they did not employ contractors (44%) or take on volunteers (46%). Only 64 T&CCs surveyed (or 25%) reported employing additional staff to the Clerk, and only 52 T&CCs (or 20%) employed one or more members of staff on a full-time basis.

3.31 One Voice Wales is the national representative organisation for T&CCs throughout Wales. It currently provides advice and guidance to over 600 councils representing some 82% of all T&CCs in Wales.

Comparisons with Other Local Authorities

3.32 It is difficult to determine the collaborative working arrangements of other local authorities and while the full report of the Independent Review Panel includes case studies and an engagement report as appendices, it does not provide definitive data to provide a clearer insight into collaborative arrangements across Wales and further analysis at a national level is needed.

3.33 However, the limited information contained upon the websites of local authorities in the South East Wales area has been reviewed and the findings included at **Appendix G**.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

4.1 Town and Community Councils Charter

4.1.1 The Council's Town and Community Councils Charter is based on equality of partnership and sets out guiding principles on working together without compromising the autonomy of the individual T&CCs - designed to build on existing good practice and embrace the shared principles of openness, respect for each other's opinions, honesty and a common priority of putting citizens at the centre. The Charter was last revised on 18 July 2016 and is subject to annual review.

4.1.2 The Town and Community Council Forum has established a Working Group to undertake a review of the Charter and to identify opportunities to:

- develop capacity within the communities of the County Borough;
- minimise the impact of budget reductions to citizens;
- extend relationships with Third Sector and other organisations.

4.1.3 The existing Charter was presented to the Town and Community Council Forum in October 2017, and circulated to all T&CCs who were requested to identify any opportunities to improve the Charter. Fourteen responses were received with seven councils accepting the proposed revisions to the Charter. To progress the development of the Charter, the Working Group recommended that further engagement was required with T&CCs to clarify their responses and develop a comprehensive picture of how the Charter could be improved and that the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 with its seven wellbeing goals and its five ways of working be used to provide the basis of the discussions with the councils to further progress the development of the Charter. The Town and Community Council Forum meeting held on 19 March 2018 agreed that feedback from the T&CC engagements be collated by the Working Group and updates provided to the Forum on a regular basis and used to progress key activities to enhance the effectiveness of the Charter.

4.2 Channels of Communication

4.2.1 A Town and Community Council Forum has been established "To consult with representatives of Town and Community Councils within the County Borough on matters of mutual interest". The Forum invites elected representatives of the County Council (19 No.) and T&CCs (20 No.) or alternates with Clerks in attendance as observers on a quarterly basis to build on and improve working relationships, with a strong commitment to joint working. The Forum meeting is prepared for and serviced by Democratic Services.

4.2.2 During the last three years attendance by T&CCs members at the Forum has been at an average of 7 Members (35%)

Table 7 Attendance at Town & Community Council Forum by T&CC Councilors

Year	Number of Meetings	Average Attendance	
		T&CC Members	BCBC Members
2013	4	10	13.5
2014	4	11	14
2015	4	8.5	12.5
2016	5	7	12
2017	3	7	16
*2018	2	7	13.5

* with a further one meeting planned in November 2018

- 4.2.3 Items discussed at recent meetings include the Local Development Plan review, Review of the Independent Panel, Community Asset Transfer, Review of the Town and Community Councils Charter, and Impact of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) on the delivery of services. The Forum has no direct powers other than to note or make recommendations.
- 4.2.4 In recent years there has been an impetus to promote and enhance the Forum, with interaction through the Council's Budget Research and Evaluation Panel (BREP) and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC).
- 4.2.5 The COSC have previously recommended the Town and Community Council Forum to consider more regular meetings in order to ensure momentum and consistent monitoring of any future collaborative work. This recommendation was hoped to provide an opportunity to maximise the potential of all Councils to work more effectively together. The Working Group established to review the Town and Community Councils Charter also considered the format of the meetings of the Town and Community Council Forum including the recommendation of the COSC. The Working Group also recommended that the frequency of the Town and Community Council Forum meetings should be increased to 6 per year with the agenda items being supplemented by those which would be considered at the Clerks meetings. However, the Forum did not accept this recommendation and decided at the meeting held on 19 March 2018 that the number of meetings should be maintained at 4 per year but reviewed over the next 12 months. The Forward Work Programme will determine if additional meetings are needed during the year.
- 4.2.6 The Town and Community Council Forum held on 19 March 2018 approved the other recommendations made by the Working Group:
- The Forward Work programming for the Forum be enhanced and that its meetings consider a wider range of items including current and planned consultations, the sharing of good practice and information, and identifying opportunities for T&CCs to work together.
 - Representatives of T&CCs should be able to provide a named substitute if they are unable to attend a meeting of the Forum.
 - A survey of meeting timings be undertaken to determine the preferred day and time of future meetings of the Forum to remove any barriers preventing member's attendance at these meetings.

These recommendations have been progressed by Democratic Services.

- 4.2.7 In addition, quarterly meetings are also held with the Clerks that dovetail with the Town and Community Council Forum meetings and periodic meetings are also held between members and officers with each Town Council. Both the Town and Community Council Forum and Clerks Meetings are facilitated by Democratic Services.

4.3 Community Asset Transfer (CAT)

- 4.3.1 The CAT Officer works closely with T&CCs and a number of community asset transfers have been completed or are in the process of being finalised:
- A children's playground at Pandy Crescent, Pyle has been transferred to Pyle Community Council to enable refurbishment and improvements to be undertaken.

- A tenancy at will has been agreed with Laleston Community Council for Bryntirion & Laleston Community Centre following the surrender of the lease by a local community association with a more long-term arrangement being discussed.
- Three assets are being transferred to Pencoed Town Council on a 35 year lease to enable them to be improved for children and young people with leases due to be finalised shortly:

Asset	Improvement / Development
Pencoed Recreation Ground – Tennis Court	Multi-use games area (MUGA)
Pencoed Recreation Ground – Tennis Court	Skateboard Park
Former Coed Bach Playground	Reinstatement of playground

- The freehold transfer of Griffin Park toilets to Porthcawl Town Council has been agreed in principle and discussions in respect of refurbishment works under licence being discussed.
- Heads of Terms for the leasehold transfer of 4 assets to community councils are in the process of being finalised:

Asset	Community Council
North Cornelly Community Centre	Cornelly
North Cornelly Playground & Green	Cornelly
Coytrahen Playing Fields	Llangynwyd Lower Community Council
Playground at Great Western Avenue Playing Fields [Pendre Fields]	Coity Higher Community Council

4.3.2 The Cabinet meeting held in July 2017 agreed the revised approval requirements for community asset transfers that enable transfers to T&CCs to be fast tracked and simplified.

4.3.3 The Corporate Director (Communities) prepared two reports relating to Playing Fields, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Parks Pavilions which have been discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 on 5 September 2018 and Cabinet on 18 September 2018. The purpose of the Cabinet report was to seek approval to undertake a consultation exercise on proposals to make the Council's provision of playing fields, outdoor sports facilities and parks pavilions more financially sustainable moving forward. It also aligns with the priority of moving to a position where there is less reliance on the Council for the cost and provision of services by seeking ways in which the local community, relevant sports clubs and potentially T&CCs might play a greater part moving forward in maintaining and operating these facilities. It is proposed to seek the views of various stakeholders including local sports and recreation clubs, relevant governing bodies and T&CCs, via an appropriate consultation exercise on the Council's proposal to move towards full cost recovery. It is anticipated that this will be completed by the end of December 2018.

4.3.4 A CAT Task and Finish Group, including representation from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Communities, has been established to review the current CAT policy and associated processes with the intention of consulting T&CCs on findings and recommendations and reporting back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 in the New Year.

4.4 Town & Community Council Capital Grant Fund

4.4.1 The Council has established the T&CC Capital Grant Fund as part of its Capital Programme that is intended to support applications from T&CCs for capital projects. Since 2012/13 the Council has allocated £396,771 to 14 T&CCs (see Summary of Activity at **Appendix H**).

4.4.2 For the past three financial years – 2016/2017, 2017/2018 and 2018/19 – effort has been made to support applications to the Fund that directly link to the Community Asset Transfer programme, in recognition of reducing local authority resources and the options available to T&CCs to deliver alternative services and the level of funding has been increased from £50,000 to £100,000 until March 2019 when it reverts back to £50,000.

4.4.3 The CAT Officer has liaised with T&CCs to assist them submit funding applications and Cabinet has approved match funding for 6 CAT related projects during the last three financial years:

T&CC	Project	2016-18	2017-18	2018-19
Pyle	Pandy Crescent Green	£20,000		
Cornelly	Cornelly Community Centre Roof		£50,000	
Porthcawl	Griffin Park Public Toilets		£35,000	
Garw Valley	Bus shelter refurbishment in Betws			£3,795
Pencoed	Provision of skateboard park			£20,000
Cornelly	Landscaping around Cornelly Community Centre including pocket park			£40,000
	Total	£20,000	£85,000	£63,795

4.4.4 The T&CC Capital Grant Fund is administered by the Economy and Natural Resources Team with assistance from the CAT Officer.

4.5 Regeneration Projects

4.5.1 The Strategic Regeneration Projects Team within the Communities Directorate works closely with T&CCs and projects presently being progressed / considered include:

- Portway roundabout scheme – working in partnership with Porthcawl Town Council to explore options;
- Pedestrian link from Hillsboro Car Park to Porthcawl town centre via Hillsboro Place and James Street – to be discussed with the Porthcawl Town Council with the possibility of exploring a partnership approach;
- John Street Public Toilets – assisting Porthcawl Town Council take on an operational and maintenance lease under a community asset transfer;
- Bridgend Town Centre Access Scheme – the project will be dependent on securing external grant with the aim of working in Partnership with Bridgend Town Council;
- Heritage Interpretation Panels - engagement on content;
- Townscape Heritage Initiative – end of scheme reviews.

4.5.2 The Economy and Natural Resources Team also within the Communities Directorate regularly engages with T&CCs and initiatives presently ongoing include:

- Biodiversity Enhancement Funding;

- Kenfig Nature Reserve;
- Coastal Partnership;
- Harbour Operational Group;
- Garw Habitat Management Strategy implementation;
- Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) service level agreement.

4.5.3 A good example of partnership working by the Economy and Natural Resources Team is the Craig y Parcau project where the Council's Countryside Management Officer worked closely with Bridgend Town Council and this has resulted in:

Year	Funding	Total Cost
2016/17	The Council contributed £10,000 to improve access features at Craig y Parcau	£18,000
2017/18	Funding was secured under the Welsh Government GI grant with the Council contributing a further £12,000 and Bridgend Town Council also supporting the project with £14,000 secured through the Aggregates Levy Fund	£43,000

4.5.4 Reach which is a part of the Economy and Natural Resources Team has responsibility for progressing initiatives under the Rural Development Plan across the County Borough by supporting people living and working in rural areas. Reach work closely with T&CCs when developing plans and projects and have had an involvement in projects valued at £468,053 that T&CCs have been associated with (see Project List at **Appendix I**).

4.5.5 Examples of recent engagement by Reach includes: Garw Valley Community Sports Hubs – Feasibility Study (Garw Valley Community Council), New Heritage Trail for the Ogmore Valley (Ogmore Valley Community Council), Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre – storage provision (Ogmore Valley Community Council) and Bryntirion and Laleston Community Centre – support project (Laleston Community Council).

4.6 Town Centre Management

4.6.1 The Town Centre Manager takes a proactive role in the revival of the town centres – Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl - through project delivery, partnership working and developing new ideas and initiatives in consultation with the respective town councils.

4.6.2 The Town Centre Manager has established communication networks and relationships between key officers and partners engaged in town centre activity across our three principal towns, and supports the work of the newly established Bridgend Business Improvement District.

4.7 Neighborhood Services

4.7.1 The Cleaner Streets Operating Officer has met with the main T&CCs in an effort to develop lines of communication and initiate joint working projects for local improvements in street cleansing. A "Tidy Town Project" has been presented and approval obtained for partnership working from the town councils in Bridgend, Pencoed and Porthcawl and these projects will be funded in 2018/19.

4.7.2 The service previously participated in the 'Big Scoop' which was a national study of dog owner behaviour by the British Dogs Trust. This was located in Porthcawl Common last year and will now include dog walking routes in Pencoed. Discussions are presently on-going with Pencoed Town Council to confirm suitable areas.

4.7.3 The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Team also work in partnership with some T&CCs to enable the scheduled work programme to be supplemented, e.g. additional grass cutting of green spaces and the maintenance of cemeteries.

4.8 Standards Committee

4.8.1 The Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by County Borough Councillors, Town and Community Councillors, and co-opted Members. The primary responsibilities of the Standards Committee are to:

- assist the Councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- advise, train or arranging to train Councillors, co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- grant dispensations to Councillors and co-opted members;
- assist the Councillors and co-opted members to observe the Council's protocol for Members and Officers Relations and local dispute resolution;
- deal with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter referred to that officer by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

4.8.2 The Council's Standards Committee has a current membership of five and comprised as follows: two County Borough Councillors, one T&CC Member and two Independent Members.

4.9 Conclusions

4.9.1 There is only limited data currently available to determine the collaborative working arrangements between T&CCs and other local authorities and more research in this area is required at a national level. There are no guarantees that the recommendations contained within the final report of the Independent Review Panel will be accepted in full or in part by the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services. However, there is a likelihood that T&CCs will be expected to take on more responsibilities in the future and this will require full coverage of T&CCs across Wales and an enhanced relationship with the principal council. The Council needs to wait for the formal response of the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public Services and will work diligently with T&CCs to introduce any agreed recommendations requiring implementation.

4.9.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 also introduces different duties for principal councils and T&CCs which will require policy and strategy to be even more informed by local knowledge and evidence-based policy making. A fundamental rebalancing of power in favour of local councils and communities in some form is likely but will take time to embed, and attitudes and capabilities will need time to catch-up.

4.9.3 There is a clear direction of travel that the County Borough Council should be working closer together with T&CCs for the benefit of local communities, whilst recognising respective responsibilities as autonomous, democratically elected statutory bodies. There is already clear evidence that the Council works closely with T&CCs as can be demonstrated by the Community Asset Transfer programme, Town and Community Council Capital Grant scheme, the regeneration projects managed by the Communities Directorate and the joint working arrangements in place with Neighbourhood Services. However, there is further potential for this very local level of local government to become more proactive in supporting the Council's work on

community connectors, addressing acute need through the tackling of isolation and loneliness, supporting debt and poverty, youth provision, etc. T&CCs can play a far greater role and support the Council with emergency planning / civil contingency, e.g. they could have better information on persons living alone, and persons who are vulnerable, during times such as extreme weather conditions.

- 4.9.4 It should be recognised that the primary driver for wishing to either work in partnership or to devolve assets and / or services to T&CCs is the reducing level of finance available to the Council and the wish to protect the services for residents and visitors that are considered to be of most value to them. There are other influencing factors in working in collaboration with other bodies, however, it is incumbent upon the Council to ensure that overall the tax-payer receives value for money for the public assets and services operated on their behalf.
- 4.9.5 T&CCs have expressed varying levels of interest in collaborative working and taking on assets and services under the Community Asset Transfer programme. It is accepted that there needs to be further discussions to determine which services and assets the Council operates at a 'local' level (i.e. specific groups, e.g. sports clubs) that can be transferred to T&CCs and those which are strategically operated (i.e. the benefit of the area/region/country as a whole) and will continue to be operated by the Council. The Council needs to provide potential partners with clarity in which services/assets the Council would be willing to progress discussions in order to fulfil its Well-being Objectives and to deliver the savings required under the MTFS. The CAT Officer has been requested to expand his role to include liaison with T&CCs and engagement will be commenced shortly when councils will be consulted on the recommendations arising from the CAT Task and Finish Group.
- 4.9.6 Engagement with T&CCs is currently patchy. The Town and Community Council Forum in its present form is not always effective as can best be highlighted by the delay in agreeing an update of the Town and Community Council Charter and low levels of attendance by T&CCs – average of 35% in last three years (see Table at paragraph 4.2.2). Improvements are required in the future if a culture of collaborative working is to be adopted across the County Borough.
- 4.9.7 The capacity and capability of T&CCs is hugely variable as highlighted by the Table at **Appendix C** – with only 3 of 20 (or 15%) being above the £200,000 gross income or expenditure threshold covered under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. T&CCs have raised a total of £2.5 million via the precept in 2018/19 with larger town councils having undertaken major redevelopment projects and employing staff to deliver services and run facilities. Some ambitious community councils such as Coity Higher, Cornelly, Laleston and Pyle have also developed regeneration projects that benefit their communities (see Examples of Projects at **Appendix D**). However, the precept levied by 7 community councils was below £40,000 which ensured their impact for regeneration and service delivery is minimal.
- 4.9.8 Members of T&CCs are covered by a Members Code of Conduct. They fall within the remit of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer provides advice on code of conduct issues, including training. One Voice Wales can provide advice and support and it is a matter for individual council's to decide whether they wish to subscribe to the service offered.
- 4.9.9 The Council should be encouraged to expand its collaboration with T&CCs both formally and informally, to foster a culture of joint working and to minimize the risks posed by small councils competing for finite resources.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules

5.1 There are no effects on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There is no impact on specific equality groups as a consequence of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a legal duty on public bodies to work together to improve the Well-being of Wales. It also places specific Well-being duties on certain T&CCs depending on their annual turnover. As an articulation of this Council's commitment to the Five Ways of Working introduced by the Act, regular updates provided to the Town and Community Council Forum and Clerks meetings and funding provided under the T&CC Capital Fund demonstrate a commitment to involving and collaborating with colleagues in this part of the public sector. This is in addition to the joint working and projects that have and are currently being progressed.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The financial implications of collaborating with T&CCs are reflected in the report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the report.

Mark Shephard
CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES
October 2018

Contact Officer: Guy Smith, Community Asset Transfer Officer
Telephone: (01656) 815323

E-mail: Guy.Smith@bridgend.gov.uk

Background Docs – None

LEGAL DUTIES AND POWERS OF TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCILS

This is an indicative list of duties and powers of T&CCs to help appreciate in summary the wide range of functions covered by Acts of Parliament and Measures or Acts of the National Assembly for Wales. This information was extracted from the Welsh Government’s “The Good Councillor’s Guide” which was last updated in October 2016 and may require further revision to take account of legislative changes, e.g. the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Activity	Powers & Duty	Statutory Provisions
Annual meeting	Duty to hold	Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 23
Allotments Powers to provide allotments	Duty to provide allotment gardens if demand unsatisfied	Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, s23
Borrowing	Subject to Welsh Ministers’ consent power to borrow money for capital purposes	Local Government Act 2003 Schedule 1 para 2
Burial grounds, cemeteries and crematoria	Power, as a burial authority, to acquire and provide with a duty to maintain Power to agree to maintain monuments and memorials Power to contribute towards expenses of cemeteries	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss. 9 and 10 Parish Councils and Burial Authorities (Miscellaneous) Act 1970, s.1 Local Government Act 1972, s. 214
Bus Shelters	Power to provide and maintain shelters	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953, s.4
Bye Laws Power to make byelaws for:	Mortuaries and post mortem rooms Pleasure grounds Parking places Open spaces and burial grounds	Public Health Act 1936, s.198 Public Health Act 1875, s.164 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57(7) Open Spaces Act 1906, s.15
Charities	Powers regarding local charities	Charities Act 2011, Part 15
Christmas	Lights Power to encourage visitors	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Citizens Advice Bureau	Power to support Citizens Advice Bureaus	Local Government Act 1972, s.142 (2A)
Climate change	Power to promote local energy saving measures	Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006, s.20
Clocks	Power to provide public clocks	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2
Closed Churchyards	Powers to maintain	Local Government Act 1972, s.215
Code of conduct Duty to adopt a code of conduct	Duty on councillors to comply with the code of conduct	Local Government Act 2000, s. 51 Local Government Act 2000, s. 52
Common land and village greens	Power to protect common land and village greens where the owner is not registered	Commons Act 2006, s.45

Activity	Powers & Duty	Statutory Provisions
Community centres	<p>Power to provide and equip community buildings</p> <p>Power to provide buildings for use of clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, s.133</p> <p>Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19</p>
Community meetings	Power to convene and duty to give notice	Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraphs 30, 30D and 30E
Community polls	Duty to consider taking action and giving notice	Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraphs 26A and 29A
Conference facilities and exhibitions	Power to provide facilities	Local Government Act 1972, s.144
Co-option of members	<p>Powers to co-opt persons to fill vacancies</p> <p>Duty to advertise</p>	<p>Representation of the People Act 1985, s21</p> <p>Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006, Reg 5</p> <p>Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, s116</p>
Crime prevention	Powers to spend money on various crime prevention measures	<p>Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.31</p> <p>Duty to exercise functions with regard to the effect on crime and disorder</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Act 1998, s17</p>
Drainage	Power to deal with ponds and ditches	Public Health Act 1936, s.260
Entertainment and the arts	Power to provide entertainment and support to the arts including festivals and celebrations	Local Government Act 1972, s.145
Finance	<p>Duty to make arrangements for the proper administration of the council's financial affairs and to secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs</p> <p>Duty to make a budget calculation</p> <p>Power to issue a precept to a billing authority</p> <p>Duty to keep accounts for audit</p> <p>Power to make financial contributions etc for the purpose of BID projects</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, s151</p> <p>Local Government Finance Act 1992, s.50</p> <p>Local Government Finance Act 1992, s.41</p> <p>Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014</p> <p>Local Government Act 2003, ss. 43,58</p>

Activity	Powers & Duty	Statutory Provisions
General power	Power to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised [also see Wellbeing below]	Local Government Act 1972, s. 137
Gifts	Power to accept gifts	Local Government Act 1972, s.139
Highways	<p>Power to enter into agreement as to dedication</p> <p>Power to repair and maintain footpaths and bridleways</p> <p>Power to plant trees etc. and to maintain roadside verges</p> <p>Power to complain to highway authority regarding protection of rights of way and roadside wastes</p> <p>Power to erect flagpoles etc on highways</p> <p>Power to contribute to traffic calming schemes</p> <p>Power to provide roadside seats and shelters</p> <p>Power to light roads and public places</p> <p>Power to provide parking places Road</p> <p>Power to provide traffic signs and other notices</p>	<p>Highways Act 1980, s.30</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, ss. 43, 50</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.96</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.130(6)</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s.144</p> <p>Highways Act 1980, s. 274A</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s.1</p> <p>Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3</p> <p>Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.57</p> <p>Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72</p>
Investments	Power to participate in schemes of collective investment	Trustee Investments Act 1961
Land	<p>Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of land</p> <p>Power to accept gifts of land</p>	<p>Local Government Act 1972, ss.124, 126, 127</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972, s.139</p>
Litter	Power to provide receptacles in public places	Litter Act 1983, ss.5.6
Lotteries	Power to hold a lottery operating license	Gambling Act 2005, s.98
Marine management	<p>Power to obtain advice from the Maritime Management Organisation</p> <p>Power, by agreement, to accept delegation of functions</p>	<p>Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, s.25</p> <p>Marine and Coastal Access Act, ss. 55-57</p>

Activity	Powers & Duty	Statutory Provisions
Meetings	Duty to hold annual meeting Duty to hold meeting within 14 days of a community council election Power to call extraordinary meeting Quorum for meetings Duty to notify time and place of meeting	Paragraph 23(1), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Paragraph 23(2), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Paragraph 25, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Paragraph 28, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Paragraph 26(1)(a), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
Mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Powers to provide mortuaries and post mortem rooms	Public Health Act 1936, s.198
Minutes	Duty to draw up minutes of community meetings Duty to draw up minutes of community council meetings	Paragraph 35, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Paragraph 41, Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972
National Parks	Duty to have regard to purposes for which National Parks are designated	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, s.11A
Newsletters	Power to provide information relating to matters affecting local government	Local Government Act 1972, s.142
Open Spaces	Power to acquire land and duty to maintain them	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Property and documents	Powers to direct as to their custody	Local Government Act 1972, s.226
Public buildings and village halls	Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies	Local Government Act 1972, s.133
Public conveniences	Power to provide public conveniences	Public Health Act 1936, s.87
Public spaces protection orders	Right to be notified of proposal for an order	Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, s.72
Publication	Duty to publish documents relating to the business of the meeting Duty to have a publication scheme	Paragraph 26(1)(aa), (b), Schedule 12, Local Government Act 1972 Freedom of Information Act 2000

Activity	Powers & Duty	Statutory Provisions
Parks, pleasure grounds	Power to acquire land or to provide recreation grounds, public walks, pleasure grounds and open spaces and to manage and control them	Public Health Act 1875, s.,164 (Local Government Act 1972, Sched.14 para 27) Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1890, s.44 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10
Recreation	Power to provide a wide range of recreational facilities	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Staff	Power to appoint staff	Local Government Act 1972, s.112
Standing orders	Duty have standing orders with respect to contracts for the supply of goods and materials or the execution of works	Section 135, Local Government Act 1972
Status	Power for a community council to resolve that the community shall have the status of a town	Local Government Act 1972, s.245B
Town and Country Planning	Right to request the local planning authority for notification of planning applications	Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 1A, paragraph 2
Tourism	Power to contribute to certain organisations encouraging tourism	Local Government Act 1972, s.144 (2)
Transport	Power to establish car-sharing schemes Power to make arrangements for taxi fare concessions Power to investigate provision of public transport services and to publicise information on such services Power to make grants to for bus services	Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.26 Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.28 Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s.29 Transport Act 1985, s.106A
War memorials	Power to maintain, repair, protect and alter war memorials	War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923 s.1; as extended by Local Government Act 1948, s.133
Website	Duty to make specified information available electronically	Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, s.55
Wellbeing	Power to do anything which the council considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area, subject to s137 limit on expenditure	Local Government Act 2000, s.2

Activity	Powers & Duty	Statutory Provisions
Well-being of future generations	Duty to take all reasonable steps towards meeting local objectives in the local Well-being plan (and to report annually) if the council's gross income or expenditure was at least £200k in each of the 3 years prior to publication of the local Well-being plan	Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, s. 40
Welsh language	Duty to comply with Welsh language standards	Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, s. 25
Youth representatives	Power to appoint youth representatives	Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 ss.118-119

APPENDIX B

Geographical Distribution of Town & Community Councils in Wales

Local Authority Area	Community and Town Councils	Communities without Council	Percentage Coverage
Blaenau Gwent	4	6	40%
Bridgend	20	0	100%
Caerphilly	18	9	67%
Cardiff	6	24	20%
Carmarthenshire	72	0	100%
Ceredigion	51	0	100%
Conwy	33	0	100%
Denbighshire	37	0	100%
Flintshire	34	0	100%
Gwynedd	64	0	100%
Isle of Anglesey	40	0	100%
Merthyr Tydfil	1	11	8%
Monmouthshire	33	0	100%
Neath Port Talbot	19	12	61%
Newport	14	16	47%
Pembrokeshire	77	0	100%
Powys	111	0	100%
Rhondda Cynon Taff	11	16	41%
Swansea	24	15	62%
Vale of Glamorgan	26	1	96%
Torfaen	6	0	100%
Wrexham	34	0	100%
Total	735	110	85%

Source: Developing a Comprehensive Understanding of Community and Town Councils in Wales
(Welsh Government – 2014)

APPENDIX C

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL - TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCILS					
T&CC	Borough Ward(s)	Seats	Population	Precept 2018/19	Per Capita
Brackla	Brackla	7	10,737	£152,000	£14.16
Bridgend	Newcastle; Morfa and Oldcastle	19	14,994	£553,849	£36.94
Cefn Cribbwr	Cefn Cribbwr	10	1,435	£30,000	£20.91
Coity Higher	Litchard; Pendre and Coity	11	6,695	£88,000	£13.14
Cornelly	Cornelly	9	7,468	£125,000	£16.74
Coychurch Higher	Coychurch Lower	7	2,359	£10,000	£4.24
Coychurch Lower	Penprysg	7	1,368	£17,540	£12.82
Garw	Blaengarw; Pontycymmer; Llangeinor and Bettws	13	7,849	£104,000	£13.25
Laleston	Bryntirion, Laleston & Methyr Mawr; Cefn Glas and Llangewydd & Brynhyfryd	13	13,270	£159,000	£11.98
Llangynwyd Lower	Aberkenfig	7	460	£8,000	£17.39
Llangynwyd Middle	Llangynwyd	12	3,013	£60,000	£19.91
Maesteg	Caerau; Maesteg West and Maesteg East	17	17,399	£330,919	£19.02
Merthyr Mawr	Bryntirion, Laleston & Methyr Mawr	7	294	£2,500	£8.50
Newcastle Higher	Aberkenfig and Pen-y-Fai	12	4,288	£41,000	£9.56
Ogmore Vale	Nantymoel; Ogmore Vale and Blackmill	15	8,023	£73,150	£9.12
Pencoed	Penprysg; Felindre and Hendre	13	10,148	£150,000	£14.78
Porthcawl	Nottage; Rest Bay; Porthcawl Central East; Porthcawl West Central and Newton	19	15,818	£400,850	£25.34
Pyle	Pyle	9	7,590	£100,000	£13.18
St Brides Minor	Bryncethin; Bryncoch and Sarn	13	6,387	£51,365	£8.04
Ynysawdre	Ynysawdre	10	3,582	£37,500	£10.47
Total		230	143,177	£2,494,673	£17.42

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL – EXAMPLES OF REGENERATION RELATED PROJECTS

Council	Completed Projects	Planned Projects	Additional Comments
Brackla Community Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT of Brackla Community Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of Community Centre 	
Bridgend Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carnegie House Arts and Culture Hub • Administering the Evergreen Hall in Angel Street • Craig Yr Parcau Woodland Walk Renovation • Administering five allotment sites (125 plots) • Maintaining all registered footpaths within the Town Council area • Supplying street furniture to support BCBC • Organising Community Skip Schemes to assist in the removal of bulky refuse • Supporting children's Play Schemes and equipment upgrades in play areas 	n/k	Bridgend Town Council have previously expressed an interest in taking over the management of playgrounds in the area
Coity Higher Community Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run own Playground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT of Playground at Great Western Avenue 	Coity Higher Community Council have previously expressed an interest in taking over the management of playgrounds in the area
Laleston Community Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Agreement to run Bryntirion & Laleston Community Centre • Developed an all inclusive play area at Bryntirion Playing Fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT of Community Hall • Develop a Skateboard Park at Bryntirion Playing Fields 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) for Llangewydd Juniors • Funded an outdoor play area for the nursery children at Trelales Primary School 		
North Cornelly Community Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Community Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAT of Community Centre • CAT of Green / Playground 	
Pencoed Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed a MUGA at Pencoed Recreation Ground • Developed a Town Centre Car Park • Refurbished Town Centre Toilets • Safe Routes / Pelican Crossing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skateboard Park • Mini MUGA at Hendre Road 	Pencoed TC has formed a partnership arrangement with the Council to develop and deliver the Pencoed Regeneration Strategy which contains a number of projects which the Town Council wishes to progress.
Porthcawl Town Council		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions ongoing regarding the CAT of Griffin Park Public Toilets 	

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANEL
ON COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS IN WALES**

Summary of Recommendations

Community and Town Councils – What they are

- **The case has been made to retain Community and Town Councils on the basis that they are very local, are democratically accountable and are able to raise resources. All areas should be supported by a Community and Town Council and should be established in all areas that haven't currently got one.**
- We would expect Welsh Government to make every effort to encourage, promote and support local communities which do not currently have Community or Town Councils to establish them.
- We believe there should be a comprehensive review of boundaries of Community and Town Councils without delay. These boundaries should then be reviewed on a regular basis to make sure they continue to make sense as areas (and needs) change and develop.
- We believe that every council should play the same place based delivery role that we outline elsewhere but have the scope to play that role differently.

Community and Town Councils – What they do

- **We expect place based services to become the responsibility of Community and Town Councils.** We recognise there will be need for a transition period however we believe this process should start as soon as possible.
- Community and Town Councils have a clear role to improve the Well-being of people in their areas and should not be constrained from doing anything they deem required by their community.
- We call upon all Community and Town Councils to be working towards meeting the criteria to be able to exercise the General Power of Competence and think it is reasonable to expect them to achieve this within the next three years.
- We recommend that an explicit duty to represent is explored to give formal weight to the voice of Community and Town Councils, subject to any relevant protocols.
- All Community and Town Councils should be required to act in line with the Sustainable Development Principle (the five ways of working).
- We recommend that Community and Town Councils – or a representative of them – should become a statutorily invited participant on all Public Service Boards.
- We recommend that Community and Town Councils have a duty to engage and are supported in doing this appropriately.

Community and Town Councils – How they do it

- We do not believe we should prescribe how Community and Town Councils choose to take on the place based service delivery role we envisage for them. They should have the flexibility to determine which delivery model works best for them.
- We recommend that Welsh Government should explore how a Welsh network of clerks would operate.
- **We recommend all clerks must hold or be working towards a professional qualification and CILCA should be the expected minimum qualification.**
- We recommend that clerks should be appointed from an approved national list.
- We believe there is a need for expert advice and support to be provided on a national basis to ensure consistency, accuracy and efficiency of advice.
- Community and Town Councils should be made aware of, and have increased access to, alternative sources of funding. In addition, we recommend the Welsh Government should explore how the transfer of funding and income related to place-based services taken on by Community and Town Councils can be achieved.

- **A core package of training should be mandatory for all councillors and that this mandatory training is repeated regularly (every election term).**
- We recommend against having dual members, regardless of the types of councils and that County councillors should regularly attend Community and Town Councils within their wards (in ex-officio capacity) to ensure engagement.
- We recommend that Community and Town Councils should look to share back office functions.
- We recommend Community and Town Councils explore digital mechanisms to aid ways of meeting, engaging and sharing information.
- We recommend all Local Authorities should have regular partnership forums with Community and Town Councils and that all Local Authorities should have a dedicated liaison officer for liaising with Community and Town Councils in the region.

Community and Town Councils – How they are held to account

- We recommend that Welsh Government support vibrant elections with a national campaign encouraging people to step forward to represent their communities. We also recommend Welsh Government explore a free post for Community and Town Councils.
- We believe that elections should be called regardless of whether seats are contested.
- We recommend that councillors cannot be co-opted for more than a one consecutive term.
- We believe more should be done to encourage diversity as part of the national campaign.
- We recommend that if the national voting age is lowered, the age you can become a Community and Town Council Councillor should be lowered to the same age.
- **Community and Town Councils should follow a cycle of engage, plan, undertake and report.**
- We recommend that all Community and Town Councils should provide an information leaflet with their precept notification.
- **All Community and Town Councils should have a duty to report annually.**
- We believe, all Community and Town Councils should be legally required to hold at least one public (community / town) meeting per year.
- We recommend Community and Town Councils utilise social media as a key mechanism by which to involve their community on an ongoing basis.
- We believe that the audit regime developed by the Wales Audit Office is proportionate for Community and Town Councils. We recommend more support is provided to smaller Community and Town Councils in order to help them fulfil audit requirements.
- We believe that the existing process for complaints about code of conduct is sufficient, but sufficient resources need to be in place to ensure these complaints are dealt with promptly.
- We recommend that for the protection of other councillors, and of staff and for conducive running of the council that current behaviour is considered as being a factor in 'Qualification for Office'.
- We believe, if Community and Town Councils take on the role we envisage for them, there should be some degree of safeguarding measures in place.

A copy of the full Report of the Independent Review Panel can be accessed on-line at the following address:

<https://gov.wales/topics/localgovernment/communitytowncouncils/review-of-community-town-council-sector/?lang=en>

**MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND ASSETS IN
COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS
(JANUARY 2018)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consideration is given to whether the guidance currently available on the management of services and assets could be improved, better signposted or more tailored to the needs of the sector.
2. There would be benefit in reviewing the processes for initiating asset and service transfer from principal councils, to better account for the capacities of community and town councils.
3. Further discussion could take place around the types of training that would be most beneficial to councillors and clerks and how that training could be delivered most effectively.
4. The sector as a whole should revisit the role of charters as a means of strengthening partnerships with principal authorities.
5. Conduct further research with the sector around the degree to which councils understand and use specific powers.
6. Facilitate opportunities for councils to properly consider the joint delivery of services or management of assets.
7. Explore the benefits of centrally co-ordinating tailored communications to the sector.

COMPARATIVE DATA FROM OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SOUTH EAST WALES AREA

Local Authority	Charter	Channels of Communication	Evidence of Collaboration with Local Authority	Additional Comments
Bridgend	Charter updated in July 2016 presently subject to review	Town and Community Council Forum + Clerk Meetings held quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Transfer • Annual Town & Community Council Capital Grant Fund • Major Regeneration Projects • Rural Development Projects • Town Centre Management • Neighbourhood Services • Standards Committee 	Potential of mergers and clustering already being discussed by Clerks
Blaenau Gwent	n/k	n/k	Standards Committee	n/k
Caerphilly	n/k	n/k	Standards Committee	'Unique Places' document outlines the support available for the five managed town centres in the county borough – Caerphilly, Blackwood, Bargoed, Risca and Ystrad Mynach.
Cardiff	n/k	n/k	Standards Committee	n/k
Merthyr Tydfil	n/k	n/k	Standards Committee	n/k

Local Authority	Charter	Channels of Communication	Evidence of Collaboration with Local Authority	Additional Comments
Monmouth	n/k	Four Area Committees: Severnside (Bryn-Y-Cwm, Central Monmouthshire and Lower Wye) each responsible for raising awareness of local issues. County, Community and Town Councillors for the wards within the areas attend the meetings which are held locally within the area the committee is responsible for.	Standards Committee	The Rural Forum is open to Community and Town Councils and County Councillors which look to address issues in predominantly rural areas of Monmouthshire.
Neath Port Talbot	n/k	n/k	Standards Committee	n/k
Newport	Shared Community Charter (Presently being Reviewed)	Liaison Meeting with Community Councils – quarterly meetings	Standards Committee	Community Council Review being undertaken
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Shared Community Model – Model Charter (updated in 2018)	Community Council Liaison Committee – annual meeting	Standards Committee	Local Resolution Procedure For Community And Town Councils
Swansea	Charter between the City and County of Swansea and Community / Town Councils (Prepared August 2013)	Community / Town Councils Forum	Standards Committee	n/k
Torfaen	n/k	n/k	Ethics and Standards Committee	Pontypool Regeneration Partnership – Annual Budget of £30K

Local Authority	Charter	Channels of Communication	Evidence of Collaboration with Local Authority	Additional Comments
Vale of Glamorgan	Charter between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Town and Community Councils in 2008 (Updated 2013) & Action Plan 2009	Community Liaison Committee – 3 times per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clustering - collaborative, joint working and partnership arrangements with other TCCs and / or other groups • Reshaping Services - Arrangements for the Operation & Transfer of Assets or Services to Town and Community Councils in the Vale of Glamorgan (Approved by Cabinet July 2018) • Standards Committee 	<p>There are 22 Community Councils and four Town Councils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barry Town Council • Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council • Llantwit Major Town Council • Penarth Town Council

APPENDIX I**PROJECTS WHERE REACH RURAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM HAVE ENGAGED WITH TCCS**

Project	T&CC	Value of project <i>Total £468,053.34</i>
Garw Valley Community Sports Hubs – Feasibility Study	Garw Valley Community Council	£7,850
New Heritage Trail for the Ogmore Valley	Ogmore Valley Community Council	£49,000
Mobile Tourist Information Centre	Miscellaneous T&CCs	£12,210
Merthyr Mawr Paths & Walls	Merthyr Mawr and Laleston Community Councils	£24,000
Coytrahen Village Action Plan	Llangynwyd Lower Community Council	£1,780
Kenfig Natura 2000	Pyle Community Council	£82,648.86
Ynysawdre Action Plan for Elderly Residents	Ynysawdre Community Council	£2,005
Llangynwyd School Room	Llangynwyd Middle Community Council	Nil – Reach Officer support
Ogmore Valley consultation and redevelopment of part of the Washeries site	Ogmore Valley Community Council	£11,698.90
Bedford Park & Cefn Cribwr gateway features, interpretation & bus shelters	Cefn Cribbwr Community Council	£53,989.58
Ogmore Valley all weather sports surface	Ogmore Valley Community Council	£7,500
Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre – storage provision	Ogmore Valley Community Council	£854
Bryntirion Community Centre – support project	Laleston Community Council	Nil – Reach Officer support
Nantymoel and Glyn Ogwr Community Centre support project	Ogmore Community Council	Nil – Reach Officer support
Corridors to the Upper Garw Valley	Garw Valley Community Council	£214,517

N.B. Project funding may not have been directly received by relevant T&CC.