

Subject Overview and Scrutiny comments and recommendations on Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2023-24

1 Social Services and Wellbeing

- 1.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the draft budget proposals for the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate, Members determined to make the following comments and recommendations:
- 1.2 In relation to SSW26, in particular the Bridgend Resource Centre, the committee would welcome further investigation into the quality of provision and the efficacy of the current approach, which should be one council.

2 Communities

- 2.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the draft budget proposals for the Communities Directorate, Members determined to make the following comments and recommendations:
- 2.2 Members welcomed the investment in Communities as part of the improved settlement. In relation to the budget pressures COM10, Members asked that the £2m realm fund, prioritise gully and culvert maintenance in particular.
- 2.3 In relation to COM42a Members recommend that condition surveys should be completed on all assets to ensure the condition of the asset is known before being handed over. Members also asked for confirmation on how these assets will be monitored and what strategy is in place if an asset is seen to be deteriorating.

3 Education & Family Support

- 3.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the draft budget proposals for the Education & Family Support Directorate, Members determined to make the following comments and recommendations:
- 3.2 The Committee welcomed the better budget settlement but considered that school budgets were at standstill and it would be harder to make savings going forward as many schools had experienced an increase in the behavioural demands of pupils, which schools had to fund themselves and which would get more difficult to fund. The Committee expressed concern that the increase in behavioural demands of pupils could have an impact on the wellbeing of staff, which in turn could lead to an increase in sickness and place pressure on school budgets.

- 3.3 That in relation to EFS1 and EFS41 Home to School Transport, Post 16 Education and the School Modernisation Programme with the development of new schools and its impact on existing catchment areas and Section 106 Agreements there needs to be a one Council approach with officers from Education, Planning and Finance working in a holistic manner to provide footways and crossing points thereby negating the reliance on and the cost of school transport. That safe routes to school be part of the review of Post 16 education.
- 3.4 A request be made to the Police to establish the differing levels of support the Police, PCSOs and School Liaison Officers provide to support schools across the County Borough.
- 3.5 That in relation to EFS5, the increase in number of pupils eligible for free school meals, that it be established whether the Pupil Development Grant can be used for the provision of food for breakfast clubs.

4 Chief Executive

- 4.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the draft budget proposals for the Chief Executive Directorate, Members determined to make the following comments and recommendations:
- 4.2 The committee welcomes the improved budget settlement, which has been directed to where it is favourable.
- 4.3 In relation to the consultation 'Shaping Bridgend's Future', Members suggested that future Budget Consultation's should include a caveat at the bottom stating that 'should the settlement be more generous, this could be subject to change' or similar.

5 Corporate Overview

- 5.1 Following the Committee's consideration of the draft budget proposals for the authority, Members determined to make the following comments and recommendations:
- 5.2 In relation to EFS41 the Committee expressed concern at the proposal to seek the full cost recovery of Post 16 transport as it believed its removal would impact on the economy and disadvantage pupils living in rural areas and in valley communities from accessing post 16 education due to the distances they would have to travel to attend lessons. The Combined Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested that Cabinet consider the removal of this budget reduction proposal from the Medium Term Financial Strategy until such time as the consultation on post 16 education had been completed.

- 5.3 In relation to budget reduction proposal EFS33 that Cabinet consider not removing escorts on primary school service with fewer than 8 pupils on the grounds of safety to the pupils, to protect the drivers of home to school transport and in the interest of road safety.
- 5.4 In relation to budget reduction proposal CEX19 a request be made to the Police and Crime Commissioner that the police consider making a contribution towards the funding of the CCTV service due to the use of CCTV footage by the police in detecting crime and in securing convictions. That the Authority explore working collaboratively with other local authorities on the provision of the CCTV service.
- 5.5 That the Authority continue to lobby the Welsh Government through the Welsh Local Government Association to fully fund the cost of legislative changes in order to alleviate those pressures and new responsibilities placed on local government to deliver the Welsh Government's agenda.
- 5.6 The Committee expressed that other agencies, particularly the NHS were not co-operating with the Authority in publicising the EU Settlement Scheme and requested that the Chief Executive raise this matter through the Public Service Board and Regional Partnership Board. Additionally, the Committee requested that the Chief Executive write to the Welsh Government requesting that it undertakes a media campaign to publicise the EU Settlement Scheme to encourage citizens to register to become UK citizens.