

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

26 OCTOBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

#### FIT FOR THE FUTURE - BUDGET CONSULTATION 2020 ENGAGEMENT WITH TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Town and Community Council Forum of the Fit for the Future Budget Consultation process for 2020, with the aim to ensure effective engagement with Town and Community Councils and local residents, and to introduce a presentation from the Interim Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:
- **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
  - **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** – taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
  - **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In conjunction with this report a presentation on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021-22 to 2024-25 will be given to set the scene for future years' savings requirements and budget pressures.
- 3.2 Each year the council carry out a consultation with the public around the MTFS proposals for the following year(s).
- 3.3 In 2018 the consultation team engaged with 5288 residents through a variety of

mechanisms such as face to face engagement, online and paper surveys, social media and the councils Citizens' Panel. In 2019 this engagement increased to 7,437 interactions.

- 3.4 We aim to ensure that the consultation is as wide reaching as possible, and are continuously looking for ways to engage with the public and improve participation. However due to the impact of Covid-19 we realise that this year our capacity to engage with residents face to face is greatly restricted, so it is more important than ever to ensure that we work together to ensure participation so that all residents and communities across the county borough have a voice in the consultation process.
- 3.5 Prior to the consultation in 2018 we wrote to all Town and Community Councils (TCCs) to inform them of the consultation. However last year we attended Town and Community Council meetings, giving an overview of the consultation and arranging for copies of posters and surveys to be delivered to TCCs where requested. We hope that given the success of these engagement sessions we are able to replicate this for 2020, albeit via remote meetings where necessary.

#### **4. Current situation / proposal**

- 4.1 The proposed timeframe for the Fit for the Future Budget consultation 2020 is 19 October 2020 to 13 December 2020.
- 4.2 This year the consultation focusses on seven key areas:
- ❖ Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic;
  - ❖ Business and the economy;
  - ❖ Health and wellbeing;
  - ❖ Customer access to Civic offices;
  - ❖ Digitalisation;
  - ❖ Council Tax levels;
  - ❖ The future.
- 4.3 The survey aims to gain views from residents about which services have been most important to them during lockdown, how the council have performed during the Covid-19 pandemic, and what is important as we start to plan for the future, asking residents what our future priorities should be and how we should implement these.
- 4.4 Town and Community Councils will be provided with the electronic link to the consultation, e-poster and the explainer video. Paper copies are available where requested.
- 4.5 The consultation will be available in a variety of formats, including online and paper, standard, easy read, youth version and large print. All formats are available in Welsh and English.
- 4.6 During the live period BCBC officers will be available to remotely attend Town and Community Council meetings. The Consultation and Engagement team will liaise with Town and Community Council Clerks directly to arrange attendance at meetings.

4.7 The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities team will develop a calendar of events for the live period, so all requests to attend meetings or events should be made as soon as possible. Meetings and events will not take place after the closing date of 13 December 2020.

4.8 The MTFS 2020 Budget Consultation Report will be presented to Cabinet in January 2021.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework & procedure rules**

5.1 There are no proposed changes to the policy framework and procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 This is an information report. As such, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 That the Town and Community Council Forum receives and considers this report and gives consideration to engagement during the live period.

9.2 That the Town and Community Council Forum notes the presentation by the Interim Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change.

**Gill Lewis**

**Interim Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change**

**Date: 26 October 2020**

### **Contact officer:**

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### **Background papers:**

None