

Updated response to Cross Party Recovery Panel Recommendations March 2021

Appendix A

Rec Ref	Recommendation	Original response	Update
<p>Recommendation 1</p>	<p>The Panel recommends that the future sustainability of culture, leisure and green spaces should be added to the list of key priorities that were identified in the recovery planning Cabinet report of 30th June 2020, in order to facilitate health, exercise and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Cabinet fully recognise and acknowledge the crucial role culture, leisure and green spaces play in ensuring opportunities for local people to participate in recreational activities, whether as a participant or as a spectator, and the impact that has on health, exercise and both physical and mental wellbeing. This has been demonstrated by the support that has already been given to our partners Halo Leisure and Awen Cultural Trust to ensure the long term sustainability of the services that they run on our behalf and promote a more rapid recovery from the impact of the Covid 19 lockdown. In addition Cabinet have, as part of our Covid response, introduced a range of measures to promote the continued use of green space both for formal and informal activity, including waiving playing fields charges and developing and publicising the use of rights of way across the County Borough. Cabinet are of the view therefore that these priorities are already implicit in the holistic ‘public health ‘theme that has been identified and approved as one of the Council’s four main recovery priorities moving forward. However, Cabinet are happy to make the link with culture, leisure and green spaces more explicit in line with the panel’s recommendation.</p>	<p>Cabinet fully appreciate the value of green spaces and will ensure that this is highlighted where appropriate as part of future priorities.</p> <p>Closed</p>

<p>Recommendation 2</p>	<p>The Panel recommends that the Economic Taskforce training that had already been offered to businesses should be offered to the Third Sector and Charities, to avoid duplication of effort.</p>	<p>Cabinet understands that a significant amount of training has been provided to businesses and also extended to small numbers of third sector and charity organisations. This includes nearly 2,700 business with one of the funding streams made available as a result of the coronavirus pandemic BCBC undertook a series of specific measures to support businesses in different sectors to ‘start-back’ as restrictions were lifted.</p> <p>In response to an identified need within the retail community, the Council’s Enterprise and Employability section led on a ‘Retail start-back pack’ which included the distribution of 2,000 sneeze guards. These provided a barrier between businesses and their customers, which in addition to other measures put in place by businesses following their own risk assessment, aided measures to support consumer confidence. In addition, the team secured the delivery of COSHH accredited Covid training courses to 350 business employees across the County. This course supported awareness and understanding amongst the business community in relation to health and safety measures in their properties when re-opening to customers. Additionally, the team supported efforts within the tourism and hospitality sectors with 260 guest registers delivered to local businesses to support Test, Track and Trace process as part of the tourism and hospitality start-back pack. All of these measures</p>	<p>Further work in relation to such training and support being rolled out has not been undertaken in recent months due to the restrictions that have been in place and the limitations these have presented.</p> <p>As the current restrictions are eased, and if the demand exists and further resources can be made available, then further deployment of such training and resources can be explored by the Economic Development team and become part of business as usual.</p> <p>Closed</p>
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		<p>were specifically created in Bridgend County and directly in response to identified business needs following research with the business community.</p> <p>Cabinet are advised that certain aspects of the above may be suitable for some of those in third sector and charities. If this was to be taken forward, a period of research with the third sector and charities would be needed to identify need and determine demand. Based on this, options could be considered and resources secured prior to options being deployed.</p>	
Recommendation 3	The panel recommends that through the Welsh Government Procurement, all organisations providing care across the County Borough have access to suitable and appropriate PPE following Welsh Government and HSE guidelines, for the activity being undertaken.		<p>This issue has been resolved</p> <p>Closed</p>
Recommendation 4	The panel recommended that Cabinet formally approach and enter into discussions with Welsh Government in respect of funding to be held locally as local volunteer organisations should have a say in how that money is spent in their Communities, rather than it being held by the WCVA.	Cabinet recognise that whilst local volunteer organisations would benefit from being more involved in the allocation of funding rather than it being held by WCVA, such a change would require a national approach. Welsh Government in their publication on the Third Sector Scheme in Wales Report 18/19 (published July 2020) identifies how the WG invests in the Third Sector Support Wales approach (i.e. WCVA and the 19 County Voluntary Councils across Wales). The scheme aims to deliver	<p>As previously reported, any change in policy by Welsh Government from current practice would need to be considered at a national level and recognising the opportunities and challenges for the third sector in its broadest sense.</p> <p>The principle of local distribution of third sector investment is understood and has continued throughout the pandemic. BAVO</p>

		<p>a partnership between Welsh Government and the third sector to support the growth of a stronger and more resilient third sector, better policy and better public services. At the risk of generalisation, it is known that CVC's work with grassroots organisations (local and regional activity) many of whom have complex support needs, whereas large, national organisations tend to have staff capacity, higher skills sets and different support needs. The relationship between WG and CVC's is mainly channelled through WCVA.</p> <p>Given the importance of the local and hyperlocal third sector response to Covid to our local authority, there may be value in WG reviewing the proportion of funding distributed between the national and local delivery agents within the Third sector infrastructure so that local and regional partnership working is the focus and third sector activity is strengthened and sustained.</p> <p>Additionally, the proportionality and methods of distribution of investment into the community and third sector should be reviewed.</p> <p>As an example, the small VSEF fund (£25000) distributed via the local CVC quickly injected cash into those organisations delivering crucial support on the ground in our communities, and it did so with good local intelligence and through simple processes. The fund that was centralised and</p>	<p>report having supported distribution of 166k of investment aimed at children and young people, Covid capital response, money management, food poverty and third sector development with potential for a further 20k from welsh government in march.</p> <p>In January 2021 Welsh Government launched a large revenue scheme to develop volunteering across Wales but the investment needed to be applied for, the scheme delivered and the funding spent by the end of march which was not locally practical based on responding to the pandemic. BAVO have expressed interest in any continuation of this approach in 2021 as it would align well to our building resilient communities plan. This plan is due to be refreshed during the current year.</p> <p>Closed</p>
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		<p>distributed via WCVA directly was millions in comparison.</p> <p>The next iteration of that funding (Voluntary Services Recovery fund) was wholly centralised with no local distribution made available to CVC's. The related processes of this centralised approach can create barriers and is proving complex for many small local groups, some of whom are not connected to WCVA or struggle with working online or utilising the MAP system.</p> <p>There may be benefit in WG recognising the value of local CVC's distributing investment directly into the communities, adding value to other local investment (as was the case with VSEF and indeed, the old CFAP community grants). The CVC's are directly connected into the PSB and RPB and are fully aware of the local needs assessments and are therefore able to make informed decisions that tie into the overall ambitions for our County.</p> <p>Recognising that there is some potential benefits in funding allocations being made direct to CVCs, Cabinet will consider how it can engage other local authorities to approach Welsh Government to gain a Wales wide approach.</p>	
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Recommendation 5	The Panel recommends that no further cuts are placed on Third Sector funding and that a whole Council approach to funding the Third Sector be adopted. The Panel also recommends that the appropriate resources be put in place for BAVO to facilitate this.	Cabinet are very much aware of the importance of the role provided by the Third Sector and have taken opportunities to protect and increase with other funding opportunities. Reduced funding has been considered each year as part of the MTFS proposals. Cuts to CAB and BAVO were part of the formal budget consultation last year and the proposals did not gain acceptance. The public and the Cabinet were keen to continue support for the 3rd sector organisations and to maintain the successful partnership that has been built. Consideration will be given to how we best work with our partners and ensure that resources are deployed in the most effective way.	Cabinet have recommended to Council in the 21/22 budget that it continues to ensure that core funding levels to the third sector are protected. Closed
Recommendation 6	The panel recommends that Cabinet approach Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board to understand their Covid-19 plan in relation to both Primary and Secondary health care plans and obtains copies of these.		This issue has been resolved Closed
Recommendation 7	The Panel noted the Covid-19 impact on people with dementia in Wales and the massive deterioration seen in sufferers and noted that BAVO had worked with BCBC on developing Dementia friendly communities, but that funding was coming to an end soon, and would be reverting back to the Alzheimer's Society. The	Developing Dementia Supportive Communities is a strategic priority within the "Ageing Well Plan for Bridgend". The funding identified had been previously provided by Western Bay to BAVO as opposed to via Welsh Government and this funding stream has concluded. There are other sources of investment provided by the Integrated Care Fund that Bridgend is accessing and also some core funding relating to the Older Persons strategy that	BCBC and BAVO are now working in partnership and utilising Integrated Care Funding to support people living with dementia and their carers. As part of this arrangement BAVO will be linking with Alzheimer's society to support the development of a programme that meets the identified needs of local people and communities including reviewing how developing "Dementia Friendly Communities"

	Panel therefore recommended that Cabinet write to Welsh Government to ensure that this is adequately funded.	can support the ongoing development of work. This work can be progressed with BAVO and other local partners. BCBC currently commissions the Alzheimer's society to support people living with dementia and carers on an annual basis beyond this funding which was not a large sum. There is the potential for cross sector working and partnership with BAVO to develop a strategic approach that meets the needs of Bridgend.	can be taken forward as part of the forthcoming recovery programme. It should be highlighted that this resource is externally provided but is being used collaboratively to make best use of resources. CLOSED
Recommendation 8	The Panel recommended that Cabinet engage with Welsh Government on the continued financial support to eradicate homelessness and the use of more innovative approaches for organisations to do that.	Cabinet are fully engaged with the WG on this matter and share the ambition to tackle homelessness. Capital and revenue funding has been secured from WG to increase housing stock in Bridgend for this year through the WG Phase 2 Homelessness Scheme. This is for the financial year 20/21 only. This will only provide funding for a small number of premises. Cabinet will continue to request additional funding for on-going revenue and capital schemes that can target provision for homelessness cases. The cost of the increased guidelines for supporting homeless in accommodation is estimated at around £2m per year. This will increase further if our particular emergency provision such as Night shelters and Floor space provision is not supported by WG.	Regular meetings with WG overview the issues associated to the Pandemic and Homelessness responses. WG are continuing to provide financial assistance with regards temporary accommodation enable to book accommodation for a further six months. Ongoing
Recommendation 9	The Panel recommends to Cabinet that a holistic Service Level Agreement is set-up between the Authority and BAVO.	There is an annual SLA in place between BCBC and BAVO that provides financial support towards core resources and activity of the CVC. Additionally, from time to time opportunities may arise for	As per previous response, BCBC already has annual SLA arrangements in place with BAVO CLOSED

		<p>project activities and funding will be put in place via an SLA or similar arrangement. Existing project funding to BAVO is currently linked primarily to joint work with the Wellbeing directorate. BAVO also act as a distributor for small amounts of funding to the sector on behalf of BCBC and other partners (such as Food poverty grant) for which an agreement is also in place. There is an opportunity as part of the “Building Resilient Communities” approach to explore how to make best use of overall resources and what this might mean in terms of further support of BAVO and the third sector</p>	
Recommendation 10	<p>The Panel recommend that Cabinet investigate the establishment of an adapted housing register that works with all partners and covers the whole County Borough area.</p>	<p>BCBC has previously had an Adapted Housing Register which was removed as it was not seen to have real benefits. RSL’s are key partners in the nomination and allocation process of all housing in Bridgend. In order to understand whether this is beneficial change to the new housing Jigsaw system that was established in January this year engagement will take place with RSL’s to determine whether there is a need to introduce an adapted housing register and determine any operational changes, IT requirements and implementation timescale if required. Cabinet will be kept abreast of these developments and oversee appropriate service improvements.</p>	<p>RSLs manage their housing stock to support citizen to live independently where adaptations are required and needs develop. Any vacated property is assessed and adaptations noted and this information is supplied to the Council when ready for nomination. This allows us to best match the property to the needs of the individual.</p> <p>Closed</p>

Recommendation 11	The Panel recommend that Cabinet write to Valleys to Coast expressing its disappointment of their level of cooperation during Covid-19.		Complete
Recommendation 12	The Panel recommend that Cabinet write to Welsh Government regarding the decision of Registered Social Landlords to furlough their staff at a time of need, which has impacted on other public services.	The co-operation and collaborative nature in delivering housing and support schemes in Bridgend is crucial and Cabinet will reinforce the joint responsibilities and collaborative efforts required to meet homelessness challenges of the future and seek reassurances from WG that support will be provided to RSL's to ensure that furloughing is not required in the future.	<p>Since this was raised the furloughing of RSL staff has not since arisen so no further action required. On-going collaboration will continue to take place as part of normal partnership working and response to Covid 19. Since last summer, we have worked more closely with RSLs to ensure that our services work together to better support tenants. Such activity With RSLs includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Weekly Homelessness Cell 2) Bi-weekly Rapid Rehousing Meetings - to transition households from Temp Accommodation 3) Complex Case Reviews – on a per need basis 4) Quarterly Strategic meetings with V2C - Cross Directorate <p>Since last summer we continue to work with RSL to undertake the following tasks (i.e. above</p> <p>This Recommendation has been considered and can now be closed</p>
Recommendation 13	The Panel recommend to Cabinet that the targeting of Social Housing Grant should be considered to develop housing options for the homelessness and people with support, to enable them to access suitable accommodation.	Cabinet already have oversight over the targeting and spend of Social Housing Grant (SHG) in the Borough Council area. SHG is a planned 3 year programme of development which is decided by Welsh Government. Discussions take place with WG regularly on new developments and projects with the aim of increasing stock. Discussions have	<p>Discussions with WG are continuing on the capital side of funding for particular projects for homeless people for the end of the financial year.</p> <p>SHG schemes continue to be developed to meet the 3 year programme and a provide a balanced approach to meeting re-housing needs for family accommodation as well as 1 bed needs to</p>

		<p>been held with all RSL's to develop schemes as quickly as possible which will support homelessness – primarily one bed stock. It is also important that all areas and communities have a balanced and sustainable approach and development of all stock to meet rehousing needs.</p> <p>Capital and revenue funding has been secured from WG to increase housing stock in Bridgend for this year through the WG Phase 2 Homelessness Scheme. Cabinet will continue to request additional funding for on-going revenue and capital schemes that can target provision for homelessness cases in particular emergency provision.</p>	<p>meet homelessness. The level of future funding of SHG will be determined by WG. Additional funding attracted this financial year includes - Revenue Project Update (Total £ - £158,563) this funding has supported:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Creation Triage Centre to meet the needs of single person households Brynmenyn 2) Extension of Kerrigan Project Step Down - 2 additional staff members to expand on Pobl's existing staff structure. Additional staff capacity to allow for an on-site support staff presence at additional units, throughout the week 3) Working regionally with regards the setup of a regional Multi-Disciplinary Team. This project will develop a new service, which will meet an identified need across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region, supporting complex individuals who have substance misuse and / or alcohol issues. <p>Capital Project Updates: (Total £ - £2m): RSLs are in the process of acquiring the accommodation in-line with their submitted bids.</p> <p>This Recommendation has been considered and can now be closed</p>
Recommendation 14	That BCBC prepares a corporate contingency strategic Covid-19 plan that will involve all statutory partners and Third Sector support networks in line with their individual responsibilities to the citizens of the County Borough of Bridgend.	During the initial Lockdown period, BCBC was part of a range of strategic arrangements that included statutory and non-statutory partners. These arrangements include ILF Regional arrangements and PSB and played critical roles in ensuring that Bridgend services are aligned to partner organisations to meet the challenges of COVID-19	BCBC has a history of working closely with all statutory partners under a range of both formal and informal network arrangements. These arrangements have been essential to the operational and strategic responses employed by the Council in its response to COVID-19. It is considered that the production of a single plan

		<p>in our communities. We have also developed a local Recovery Plan that has been approved and is based on Lessons Learnt provided by services. In addition a corporate contingency budget has been created that has been used to support necessary responses to COVID-19 and will continue to be used as required. Nevertheless we will continue to work with RPB and PSB to ensure that BCBC plays its part in such arrangements and deliver some of the expectations set out in the developing Community Impact Assessment being overseen by the PSB.</p>	<p>that involves all statutory partners including the Third Sector would require a significant amount of effort and would be difficult to complete due to the changeable nature of the presenting situations. Having considered this recommendation, it is considered that a single plan would deliver limited benefits.</p> <p>This Recommendation has been considered and can now be closed</p>
Recommendation 15	<p>The Panel recommend that Cabinet revisit the Authority's policy on the disposal of surplus land which could be made available for the development of affordable housing, in line with Welsh Government guidelines.</p>	<p>Cabinet are overseeing the development of a new acquisitions and disposals strategy, which builds on current practice around achieving the best disposal outcome for BCBC - balancing the best price against the benefits being offered through alternative uses including partnership working/ community asset transfers,. in line with BCBC policies. In essence the current practice works dynamically to support BCBC corporate plan and policies, including working with RSLs on a number of projects and disposing of land to them off market, where appropriate.</p> <p>If there is a Council policy for planning to identify more land for affordable housing this will potentially negatively impact on capital receipts and hence delivery of other corporate</p>	<p>This Recommendation has been considered and can now be closed</p>

		<p>programmes, unless there is a mechanism to fund the gap from WG.</p> <p>However If WG was to make funding available to bring sites forward for affordable housing that otherwise are not viable, particularly North of the M4, this may also be considered as an opportunity.</p> <p>Local authorities have a clear statutory obligation to achieve “best consideration” in terms of any sale receipt. So if it is to restrict the sale for affordable housing, it will need to consider the legal means (including state aid) for doing this; particularly where there is likely to be challenge from house builders on the more attractive sites.</p>	
Recommendation 16	The Panel recommend that Cabinet consider exploring the potential of Bridgend County Borough Council becoming a Cooperative Council.	In efforts to make Bridgend CBC a better place for residents to live and businesses to thrive, Cabinet acknowledges this recommendation and will explore in more detail how the Council can achieve the status of becoming a cooperative Council and to identify what the benefits and costs to such an approach would be.	Agreed that at this stage it was more sensible to continue to pursue and apply some of the principles that relate to a Cooperative Council rather than seek to be formally acknowledged as a Cooperative Council. However, this matter would continue to be reviewed moving forward.