

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

9 MAY 2023

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER, FINANCE PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS IN CWM TAF MORGANNWG

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the findings of the review of Community Safety Partnership arrangements in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region (**Appendix A**) and their implications for Bridgend County Borough Council as we seek to become one Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership and to approve in principle the merger of the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership Board and the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership Board.

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** – ensure 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 to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 There are currently two Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) operating across Cwm Taf Morgannwg; the Cwm Taf CSP covers Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil local authority areas whilst Bridgend CSP is for the Bridgend local authority area.
- 3.2 There has been an increased adoption of regional footprints by strategic groups operating within the CSP framework such as the substance misuse Area Planning Board (APB), the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

(VAWDASV) steering group and the Contest Board for counter terrorism. There is also one single Safeguarding Board for the region (CTMSB), one Regional Partnership Board (CTMRPB), and the Public Services Boards (PSB) are also in the process of merging to become Cwm Taf Morgannwg PSB.

- 3.3 This adoption of the regional footprint has meant the statutory Population Needs Assessment and Well-being Assessment for the RPB and PSB respectively have been undertaken as exercises covering the entirety of Cwm Taf Morgannwg. The priorities identified in these assessments in respect of community safety will be relevant to all local authorities and strategic partners in the region.
- 3.4 The Chief Executives for Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf local authorities, along with the Chief Superintendent for Mid Glamorgan Basic Command Unit (BCU) of South Wales Police, agreed that a review of community safety partnership arrangements for the region was required with a view of consolidating the aforementioned already amalgamated strategic groups.
- 3.5 The review was commissioned by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on behalf of its partners, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Bridgend County Borough Council and South Wales Police. The review was undertaken by an independent, external company on behalf of the Region.
- 3.6 The original aim of the review was to consider the establishment of a single Community Safety Partnership for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region, the associated governance requirements and any specific infrastructure and funding needs to ensure the community safety partnership can operate as a strategic and effective partnership for the region.
- 3.7 The objectives for the review were to:
 - Understand and map the existing meeting and partnership landscape for the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership and Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership respectively. Ensure the current relationship with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board structures are identified.
 - Understand areas of current Community Safety Partnership joint delivery on a Cwm Taf Morgannwg basis and consider further collaborative opportunities to maximise capability and capacity of all partners.
 - Develop a single Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership map considering current and emerging statutory functions, challenges, governance and accountability and business benefits. Ensure the new structure identifies the proposed relationship between the Community Safety Partnership and the Safeguarding Board structures.
 - Identify appropriate representation for meetings / subgroups to deliver accountability across the partnership.
 - As far as practicable, ensure any new Community Safety Partnership proposal considers the emerging recommendations from the Home Office review of Community Safety Partnership requirements.
 - Identify the strategic planning and delivery arrangements for the Community Safety Partnership and how this will align to the priorities of the Public Services Board and each respective organisations corporate / strategic priorities.

- Identify any opportunities for scrutiny and oversight of the work of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership that need to be established.
- Identify the infrastructure required to facilitate an effective, strategic Community Safety Partnership, specifically considering the costs / benefits / opportunities to provide dedicated analytical capacity and business support / co-ordination capacity.
- To ensure a value for money approach in the operation of a Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership.
- Ensure that any review and recommendations incorporate not just the serious violence and counter terrorism duties placed upon local authorities and policing, but also the new Welsh Government Strategic Plan in relation to preventing violence against women and girls and domestic violence and abuse.

3.8 The methodology for the work included a desktop review which considered the national context and local arrangements and engagement from a wide range of individuals.

3.9 During the discussions with stakeholders, issues were identified that were needed to be considered for any new proposed arrangements. National issues that will affect the operations of a successful CSP are:

- Highly significant legislative and policy changes since commencement of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- Further changes and duties are currently being developed that will fall under the responsibility of Community Safety Partnerships.
- UK and Wales policy and legislation is driving the agenda for greater collaboration between agencies and at a regional level.
- The specificity of what exactly a Community Safety Partnership is has become opaque as a result of the changes.
- Community Safety Partnerships complexities and priorities have increased but without additional funding or resources.

3.10 The request for a review into Community Safety Partnership arrangements is timely given the wider changes and anticipated new duties that will fall under the remit.

3.11 An overlap was identified between groups within the existing structures which could lead to a duplication of efforts as well as unnecessary complexities and demands on officer time. This identified the need for better integration of relevant strategic plans.

3.12 The commitment and engagement of current staff was valued and appreciated. However, whilst enthusiasm by officers is driving the Community Safety Partnership

agenda there is insufficient capacity and resource for evidence-based planning, needs analysis, monitoring of progress and assessment of data.

- 3.13 There appears to be widespread support for integration and alignment with other regional arrangements. It was felt that greater economies of scale and critical mass, using a combined and streamlined approach to funding bids, provides potential for more resources and more value for money.
- 3.14 There has been some concern that regionalisation will dominate and diminish local arrangements, with the potential dominance of some larger partners.
- 3.15 Issues were raised in relation to the lack of capacity for effective co-ordination. It was felt a merged business unit supporting regional bodies would deliver benefits, and the potential merger of the Regional Safeguarding Board business unit and adoption of equivalent funding formula could help fulfil the functions set out in the report.

4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The Review, attached as **Appendix A**, identified nine specific recommendations:

- i. Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend County Borough Councils should, together with their mutual responsible authorities, seek to establish a regional Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership Board, focusing on the delivery of strategic priorities agreed between responsible agencies and with appropriate delegated responsibility.
- ii. In formulating the arrangements for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership, responsible agencies need to ensure, in collaboration with their legal departments and in collaboration with Welsh Government officials, that under the proposed arrangements the duties placed upon them by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, subsequently amended, continue to be fully met in line with the Act and its regulations.
- iii. An agreed rational structure which effectively dovetails with the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Services Board and the Safeguarding Board should be established for the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership Board.
- iv. Given the broad range of responsibilities placed upon Community Safety Partnerships the thematic subgroups that have emerged at a regional level should be reviewed, and where appropriate, incorporated within the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership.
- v. Mechanisms need to be established by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership Board, working with all responsible authorities, to engage with communities paying heed to citizens' voices.
- vi. A business unit should be developed to serve the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership Board to fulfil, as a minimum, the functions set out in this report.

- vii. Whether or not the business unit is stand alone for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership Board or integrated with that of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board, a funding formula should be developed to resource support arrangements.
- viii. In addition to the establishment of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Community Safety Partnership Board appropriate local arrangements should be in place to scrutinise regional activity and oversee delivery of activity extraneous to, but supportive of, the identified regional priorities.
- ix. If the preceding recommendations are approved, a detailed plan for implementing the new arrangements should be developed, which would provide for:
 - Further engagement with stakeholders.
 - Co-production of governance and support arrangements.
 - Agreeing terms of reference for and membership of groups within the regional arrangements.

4.2 The Review Report and its recommendations have been considered by the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership Board and the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership Board. Each Board has accepted the Report and its recommendations. The Review Recommendations are now subject to consideration by each individual local authority, as part of their statutory duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect upon policy framework and procedure rules arising from this report.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

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

7.1 The recommendations in this report demonstrate the sustainable development principle by ensuring that by meeting the needs of the present they do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and this is evidenced through the five ways of working:

- Long term – the report seeks to effectively address the long term community safety partnership arrangements for the region and manage the evolving requirements placed on the partnership.
- Prevention – working with partners to prevent duplicated work and efforts, and ensure the best outcomes for our communities

- Integration – the review was undertaken with a view for continuing to support communities in Bridgend to be safe and cohesive, and ensuring integration between all relevant strategic boards and plans.
- Collaboration – the initiative is a collaboration between three local authorities, South Wales Police and third sector and community groups working in the community safety partnership space.
- Involvement – the review included consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, service users and staff.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from a decision to implement the recommendations of the review will be subject to separate consideration by all Community Safety Partners.

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 9.1 note the review into Community Safety Partnership arrangements and approve in principle the merger of the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership Board and the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership Board;
- 9.2 note that a further report will be presented to Cabinet to consider support and structure arrangements.

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20/04/2023

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Background documents: None