

**SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 - MONDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2024**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3 HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2024 AT 16:00**

Present

Councillor JPD Blundell – Chairperson

S J Bletsoe

C Davies

J E Pratt

Present Virtually

P W Jenkins

G Walter

MJ Williams

Apologies for Absence

N Clarke, RJ Collins, MJ Kearn, W J Kendall and I Williams

Invitees:

Councillor Neelo Farr

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Development & Housing

Carys Lord

Chief Officer - Finance, Housing and Change

Martin Morgans

Head of Performance and Partnerships

Ryan Jones

Strategic Housing Commissioning Manager

Adam Provoost

Strategic Planning Policy Team Leader

Joanne Ginn

Housing Solutions Manager

Georgina Wayman

Environmental Health Officer

Helen Pembridge – Team Manager – Bridgend & Vale (Housing Enforcement & Pollution Control)

Officers:

Lucy Beard

Scrutiny Officer

Stephen Griffiths

Democratic Services Officer - Committees

**This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**

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**Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Steven Bletsoe - Personal – item 5 – Head of Training and Business Development and the Operations Manager for Wales at the National Residential Landlords Association which is a membership organisation representing private sector landlords.

Councillor Jonathan Pratt - Personal – item 6 – An elected Member of Porthcawl Town Council who have been in receipt of UK Shared Prosperity Funding.

Councillor Martin Williams - Personal – An elected Member of Coity Higher Community Council who have been in receipt of UK Shared Prosperity Funding.

Councillor Colin Davies - Personal – item 6 – worked on regional Shared Prosperity Funding bid for another local authority.

**86. Approval of Minutes**

Decision Made	<b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b>  That the minutes of the meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 dated 30 September 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	2 December 2024

**87. Housing and Homelessness Update**

Decision Made	<b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b>  The Committee praised the hard work of the Housing Team highlighting that they deal with some of the most vulnerable in the Community and acknowledged the pressures that they had been under over the last couple of years.  Following detailed consideration and discussion with the Cabinet Member and Officers, the Committee made the following comments and Recommendations:  <b>Recommendations</b>  1. Members discussed how vital the Welsh Government Housing Support Grant funding had been, the freezing of the Grant had applied significant pressure across Wales and 18 months
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ago regular meetings between the 22 Welsh local authorities regarding Homelessness had ceased, which had previously been attended by a network of individuals who could provide operational feedback to Welsh Government.

The Committee requested information regarding the nature and title of the previously held meetings and **recommended** that following receipt of the information requested, that a letter be sent from the Committee to Welsh Government to request the reasons for discontinuing the meetings, whether there were plans to restart them and if not, the reason why.

2. The Committee discussed the issue of vacant and derelict buildings in the borough and enquired whether there were any schemes or strategies that could potentially enable the Local Authority to take control of such empty buildings to turn them into social housing.

The Committee **recommended** that when a Council owned property becomes vacant, all options should be explored including whether it could be utilised by another part of the Authority e.g. for repurposing as housing accommodation, prior to consideration of whether it is declared surplus, marketed for sale, or disposed of otherwise.

The Committee highlighted the importance of the Authority looking at inventive ways of working with partners to bring properties back in to use which could inevitably reduce the costs.

3. The Committee expressed concern that the proposed level of social housing would only address 50% of the current waiting list and asked whether there was an opportunity to review the figures and submit another bid in the Local Development Plan (LDP) process.

Members were advised that following the Local Development Plan (LDP) being adopted this year, a local housing and marketing assessment would be undertaken every two to three years which would provide up to date figures to enable negotiation for the right mix and type of housing, however the actual review for the LDP would be 4 years from its adoption.

The Committee **recommended** that Members be encouraged to examine the updated figures from the Local Housing and Marketing Assessment when considering the review of the LDP in 4 years' time, and that given Members' concern at hearing in the meeting of a development

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	<p>not meeting all of its percentage target to build social housing, that the proposed housing percentage targets be adhered to rigorously throughout the Planning process.</p> <p><b><u>Additional information:</u></b></p> <p>Following detailed consideration and discussion with the Cabinet Member and Officers, the Committee made the following requests for information:</p> <p>4. The Committee requested further information regarding the primary capital funding stream for the development of affordable housing, the Social Housing Grant, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Details of the local SHG partners worked with;</li><li>b. A breakdown of the allocation of costs;</li><li>c. What the costs were used for;</li><li>d. Details of how the Council looks at the developments bid for;</li><li>e. Whether the developments bid for were delivered on time and at the original contract price.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	2 December 2024

**88. Information report - United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Funds**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b></p> <p>Following discussion regarding the report being an Information Report, the Committee requested that the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Information Report be discussed at the next Forward Work Programme planning meeting with the objective that it be scheduled at a future meeting to enable Committee Members to ask and receive a response to their questions.</p>
Date Decision Made	2 December 2024

**89. Forward Work Programme Update**

Decision Made	<p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b></p> <p>That the Committee approved the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A subject to the inclusion of the items below, noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet in Appendix B and noted that the FWP as approved by the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Committee requested:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. That the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Information Report be scheduled at a future meeting to enable Committee Members to ask and receive a response to their questions.</li><li>ii. That consideration be given at the next FWP planning meeting to bringing forward a report on the Regeneration of Bridgend Town Centre for the Committee to consider the master plan, scrutinise what has been delivered and progress of the medium and long term proposals.</li><li>iii. An all Member Briefing on the development of Sunnyside.</li><li>iv. That the following information be included in the scope of the Maesteg Town Hall report, scheduled on the FWP:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Justification of the money spent;</li><li>- Inner detail of what occurred;</li><li>- Details of the challenges encountered;</li><li>- Details of the lessons learnt;</li><li>- A possible presentation from Officers;</li><li>- An honest appraisal of what could have changed or been done differently.</li></ul></li></ol>
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**90. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	None.
Date Decision Made	2 December 2024

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#).

The meeting closed at 18:17.