

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	22 JULY 2025
Report Title:	SUBSTANCE USE SERVICE PROVISION IN BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	MARK WILKINSON GROUP MANAGER LEARNING DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	This report seeks a waiver from the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in accordance with paragraph 3.2.10 which makes provision for instances where goods, services and works are procured by another public body on behalf of the Council and in such instances those organisations procurement / contract procedure rules will apply subject to compliance with all legal requirements.
Executive Summary:	This report is seeking approval for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council to recommission Tier 1 and 2 Substance Use services on behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council.

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Seek approval for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, (RCTCBC) to undertake the procurement exercise on behalf of Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) to re commission an integrated service provider for Tier 1 and 2 substance use service provision across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region in accordance with rule 3.2.10 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Approval to award the service contract will be sought via delegated powers (under the Council's Scheme of Delegation) once the procurement and evaluation process has been undertaken;
- Seek approval to enter into a regional collaboration agreement with RCTCBC to set out the responsibilities of each Authority for the initial procurement process and subsequent management of the service contract; and

- Delegate authority for the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy, to enter into a regional collaborative agreement and any further deeds or documents that are ancillary to that agreement.

2. Background

2.1 The responsible Authorities that form Community Safety Partnerships have the statutory responsibility for combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol, and other substances in their local area. In order to meet this responsibility Area Planning Boards (APB) were established in 2010 as part of new arrangements to deliver the Welsh Government Strategy “Working Together to Reduce Harm 2008-2018”. APBs align with the Health Board footprint and provide a Regional Framework to:

- Strengthen partnership working and strategic leadership in the delivery of the substance misuse strategy.
- Enhance and improve the key functions of planning, commissioning and performance management.
- Pool resources to ensure value for money and reduce duplication.

2.2 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg APB is a multi-agency Board which includes representation from:

- Bridgend (BCBC), Merthyr (MTCBC) and Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCTCBC) Local Authorities
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB)
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB Public Health Team
- Police and Crime Commissioners Office
- South Wales Police
- Welsh Government
- Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)

The APB is accountable to the Public Services Board in respect of all its activities.

2.3 Funding

2.3.1 The Substance Use Action Fund (SMAF) was established to enable the Welsh Government to allocate revenue funding to APBs on a regional basis. RCTCBC is the responsible authority acting as banker for the grant in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) region. An APB Commissioning Team is employed by RCTCBC to manage the grant and facilitate the requirements of the APB and Welsh Government.

2.3.2 Within the SMAF revenue grant there are specific “ring-fenced” allocations for Children and Young People and Tier 4 services (Inpatient Detoxification and Residential Rehabilitation).

- 2.3.3 The SMAF also has capital funding which is allocated on an annual basis via a national bidding process.
- 2.3.4 As well as this University Health Boards (UHBs) ring-fenced funding for substance misuse services. Welsh Government requires that APBs work collaboratively with UHBs to ensure that plans are co-ordinated to provide the most effective use of funding and avoid duplication. Each year, the APB will scrutinise and “sign off” the UHBs expenditure plan to enable the UHB to draw down their allocation from Welsh Government.
- 2.3.5 Funding for Substance Use treatment and Support is also provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). This funding provides services through the criminal justice system delivered by G4S / Dyfodol who are a key partner of the current CTM Integrated Substance Misuse Service.
- 2.3.6 RCTCBC is the nominated banker and grant recipient for the SMAF allocation on behalf of the APB area and administers the grant in accordance with the terms and conditions of the funding and the agreement of the responsible authorities within the APB membership. RCTCBC employs a small commissioning team to engage with partners to coordinate the required functions of the APB. The team is managed by a Substance Misuse Lead Officer.
- 2.3.7 It is important to note the work of the role of RCTCBC as the banker of the grant; however, any work undertaken across CTM will be in collaboration with respective partners. It is imperative that all functions in the Bridgend area, including recommissioning, will be carried out with the full cooperation and representation of key partners and stakeholders in Bridgend.
- 2.3.8 All services currently commissioned for substance misuse within CTM fall within a 4-tier conceptual framework, which refers to the level of intervention provided:
- **Tier 1: Prevention & Early Identification/Intervention.** Consists of a range of drug-related interventions that can be provided by generic providers, depending on their competence and partnership arrangements with specialised substance misuse services.
 - **Tier 2: Advice & Support Services.** Interventions are provided by specialist substance misuse providers and include a range of harm reduction interventions, and interventions that engage, retain, and support people in treatment. Support for families and concerned others are also considered to be tier 2 interventions.
 - **Tier 3: Specialist Treatment Services.** Specialist provisions including all clinical functions, substitute prescribing programmes and community detoxification.
 - **Tier 4:** Services provide substance misuse **Inpatient Detoxification and Residential Rehabilitation programmes.**

3. Current situation/ proposal

- 3.1 There are currently two Integrated Substance Misuse Service contracts, one for Bridgend Integrated Substance Misuse Services and the other for Cwm Taf (not including Bridgend), both due to end on 31st March 2026.
- 3.2 The development of the procurement process commenced in April 2025. It is anticipated that the tender will be ready to be published at the end of July 2025 with the new service CTM Substance Use Service scheduled to commence on 1st April 2026. It is proposed that a contract be awarded for five years with an option to extend for a further one year plus a further one year.
- 3.3 It is proposed that RCTCBC, as nominated banker and grant recipient for the SMAF and Complex Needs Grant and employer of the regional commissioning team for the APB, will undertake the procurement process through the regional commissioning team. BCBC Procurement colleagues will be included in discussions to ensure compliance with BCBC requirements. The CTM Development and Implementation Group has overseen all development work and quarterly updates will be provided to the APB who are also cited on key decisions. The new service will be fully compliant with the Welsh Government Service Delivery Plan 2019-22 and the requirements of the SMAF and Complex Needs Grant.
- 3.4 It is proposed that a collaboration agreement be negotiated and agreed between BCBC and RCTCBC to govern their respective roles and responsibilities during the procurement process and setting out how the parties will collaborate to oversee the delivery of the service.
- 3.5 BCBC, RCTCBC, MTCBC, CTMUHB and the new provider(s) will work in partnership with the APB to contribute towards the following overarching outcomes:
- Reduce problematic substance misuse and dependency in our population.
 - Enable early detection and support of individuals who are misusing substances.
 - Provide high quality, evidence-based treatment and support according to service user need.
 - Support service users to sustain long term recovery.
- 3.6 The new service will comprise of the following interconnecting components:
- A prevention and early identification/intervention service.
 - A single Point of Entry.
 - A children and young people's service including transition services for vulnerable individuals between the ages of 18-25.
 - Treatment and support Service.
 - Specialist service pathway.
 - Shared care services.
 - Sustained recovery; will be a separate lot.

3.7 Providers will work to the following principles:

- Evidence based practice including psychologically informed treatments and interventions.
- Collection and collation of data to understand demand and manage trends.
- A process of continuous improvement based on research and best practice to improve outcomes for service users and staff.
- A prudent healthcare approach including prioritising treatment for those with greatest need helping to make the most effective use of skills and resources.
- Person centred care recovery, building on people's strengths combined with a holistic approach based on an effective working relationship between service user and therapist, focused on harm reduction approaches, non-judgemental and non-discriminatory practice.
- Accessible points of entry, equity of access and a standardised approach across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Region.
- Commitment to service user involvement, working alongside service users as equal partners sharing power and responsibility.
- Partnership working, integration and collaboration between all parts of the service, effective communication and clear pathways into Mental Health, Housing, Community, Children Services and the Criminal Justice system.
- Greater emphasis on prevention and early identification including universal and targeted education and advice.
- Assertive outreach to include proactively engaging with "hard to reach" groups and communities.
- Outcome focused practice with a clear evaluation framework.

3.8 The implementation of the components highlighted above, which will be underpinned by working to these principles, is designed, not only to address the areas where the need for improvements has been identified, but to continue the integrated model of service which is person centered and focused on improved outcomes for the people who use the service. Providing a consistent approach to the provision of substance use services across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region.

3.9 The APB recognises that service users and concerned others have unique experience and knowledge, which enables them to provide valuable advice and guidance in all aspects of substance use services. Our ambition is to deliver services which put service users' views, needs, aspirations, experiences, and expert knowledge at the heart of what we do. One of the vehicles to ensure this are the three active Service Involvement Groups across the region: Bridgend, Merthyr and RCT. The work will be strengthened alongside recovery support under the new integrated contract requirements.

- 3.10 The APB Commissioning team will work closely with the commissioned provider(s), BCBC, RCTCBC, MTCBC and CTMUHB throughout the implementation phase.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with five ways of working to guide how the Authority should work to deliver wellbeing outcomes for people. The following is a summary to show how the five ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been considered in this report.

Long Term. The plans for and operation of substance misuse services are designed to be robust and sustainable with long term goals and objectives and service developments which enable the services to adapt and change according to changes in demand for services.

Prevention. As described above many of the community services have a strong emphasis on prevention and providing people with information, advice, and support at an early point to help people avoid the need for services at tiers 3 and 4.

Integration. Substance misuse services are founded on an ethos of partnership and integrated working between health, social care, voluntary sector and service user and carer organisations. All developments are made in partnership and on a multi-agency basis.

Collaboration. All the services described in this report are provided on a collaborative basis through partnerships between the council, the health board and the independent sector.

Involvement. One of the basic principles of the operation of substance misuse services is the involvement of people who are using services in the design and delivery of the services they receive at individual, service and strategic levels.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 There is climate change and nature implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 Substance misuse services are targeted at children and young people with ring fenced funding for this age group.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Substance Use services in the region are financed through three Welsh Government funding streams:

- The Substance Misuse Action Fund (SMAF): **£5,394,080 (Annual)**
- Complex needs: **£720,000 (Annual)**

The Local Health Board ring-fenced substance misuse allocation: **£4.092M (Annual)**

- BCBC currently provides an annual partner contribution from the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate core budget of £155,000. This has been confirmed as a commitment for 2025-26.
- The annual allocation for Tier 1 and 2 services that are subject to the procurement exercise is set at approximately £2m. Tenderers will be notified of this budget and asked to submit proposals that maximise their service delivery based on this funding.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- approve RCTCBC to undertake the procurement exercise to commission the integrated service provider for Tier 1 and 2 substance use service provision in Bridgend County Borough in accordance rule 3.2.10 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, with approval to award the service contract via delegated powers (under BCBC's Scheme of Delegation) once the procurement and evaluation process has been undertaken;
- approve BCBC entering into a regional collaboration agreement with RCTCBC to set out the responsibilities of each Local Authority for the initial procurement process and contract management of the service contract; and
- delegate authority to the Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer and Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy, to agree the terms of and enter into the regional collaboration agreement and any documents or deeds ancillary to that agreement.

Background documents

None.