

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 MARCH 2016

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

NOMINATION TO STANDING BUDGET RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PANEL

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek nominations for the Budget Research and Evaluation Panel.

2. Connection to the Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Corporate Improvement Objectives were adopted by Council on 19 February 2014 and formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background

- 3.1 The BREP was originally set up on an annual basis and focussed on examining the annual draft budget proposals to aid the scrutiny process. In contrast, the standing BREP whilst examining annual draft budget proposals, also undertakes informal consideration of proposals related to medium and longer term reviews linked with the Council's Strategic Change Management Programme. It seeks to assist management in the delivery of the plans to support change and the Medium Term Financial Strategy by fully utilising its community representational role to inform policy changes and provide challenge and the BREP will develop its terms of reference and methodology within that function.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The BREP 2015/16 agreed that the Panel should continue to consider which services will be delivered differently, which will no longer be provided directly by the local authority and which services will no longer be provided at all. This consideration should be extended to all service areas, regardless of the extent of the budget savings required of them.
- 4.2 The BREP noted the recent review of the Corporate Priorities and considered that there should be an ongoing role for the Panel to take part in a wider discussion with Cabinet and CMB about the future delivery of services.
- 4.3 The BREP requested that as part of their future work they be involved at the planning stage of any public consultation or engagement surrounding the draft

budget and at key stages throughout the process such as where questions and methodology are formulated.

- 4.4 The BREP considered that the work of the Panel is a vital and important mechanism for budget setting and monitoring to ensure an objective, democratic approach from the start of the budget setting process.
- 4.6 In addition to this the Panel requested that the 2015/16 BREP undertake a review of the process following the setting of this year's budget. The purpose of this would be to evaluate the effectiveness of BREP, to identify any potential improvement, establish how recommendations are taken forward and to provide evidence of the impact and outcomes from the work of the Panel. This is due to take place in April/June 2016.

Membership and Relationship to Overview and Scrutiny Committees

- 4.7 To ensure the focus and analytical depth necessary for the Panel, total membership should be no more than ten Members, therefore the Standing BREP will consist of the Chair and one other Member nominated from each of the five Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Chair of the BREP will be nominated by the members of the BREP itself at its first meeting. A further nomination is also being proposed as a reserve, to try to alleviate any potential impact resulting from any changes to the Committee membership at the Annual General Meeting of Council.
- 4.8 The standing Panel's Forward Work Programme (FWP) should be informed by the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Strategic Change Management Programme.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The report has no direct effect but seeks to broadly support the Authority in the development of future services.

6. Equalities Impact

- 6.1 There are no implications in this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 None

8. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- Nominate the Chair and one other Member of the Committee onto the standing Budget Research & Evaluation Panel.
- Nominate a further Member as a reserve, to try to alleviate any potential impact resulting from any changes to the Committee membership at the Annual General Meeting of Council.

**Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Democratic Services**

Contact Officer: Kym Barker
Scrutiny Officer

Tel: (01656) 643161

Email: Scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Background Documents:

Bridgend County Borough Council Constitution
Part II of the Local Government Act 2000: Executive Arrangements