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MAE HWN YN GYFARFOD Y MAE GAN Y CYHOEDD HAWL EI FYNYCHU

Dydd Gwener, 16 Hydref 2020

Annwyl Syr/Madam

PWLLGOR CRAFFU ADFYWIO

Cynhelir cyfarfod o'r Pwllgor Craffu Adfywio yn Siambr y Cyngor, Canolfan Ddinesig on Dydd Mercher, 21ain Hydref, 2020 am 10.00 am.

Yn gywir

Michelle Morris
Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr

AGENDA

1. CYFIEITHU AR Y PRYD

Mae croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod, mae angen o leiaf 3 diwrnod gwaith o rybudd os dymunwch wneud hynny. Darperir gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar y pryd os gwneir cais.

2. YMDDIHEURIADAU

Derbyn ymddiheuriadau.

3. DATGANIADAU BUDDIANT A GODDEFEBAU

We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh or English. / Croesawn ohebiaith trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

Derbyn datganiadau buddiant a goddefebau.

4. **PWLLGOR CRAFFU ADFYWIO** 5 - 10

Derbyn cofnodion cyfarfod arbennig o'r Pwyllgor Craffu Adfywio a gynhaliwyd ar 23 Medi 2020.

D.S. Cyflwynir y cofnodion er pwyntiau cywirdeb yn unig.

5. **DALEN WEITHREDU**

Nid oedd unrhyw gamau gweithredu yn deillio o gyfarfod arbennig y Pwyllgor Craffu Adfywio a gynhaliwyd ar 23 Medi 2020.

6. **BLAENRAGLEN GWAITH: 2 RHAGFYR 2020** 11 - 14

Drbyn yr adroddiad..

7. **GRŴP GORCHWYL A GORFFEN CANOL TREFI AC YMATEB ECONOMAIDD YN DILYN COVID-19** 15 - 20

Ystyried adroddiad y Rheolwr Tîm Cyfleoedd Adfywio.

EITEM(AU) EITHREDIG

Derbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiad(au) dilynol sydd ym marn y Swyddog Priodol yn eitem(au) a gafodd eu heithrio gan roi ystyriaeth i'r prawf diddordeb cyhoeddus ac y dylai'r wasg a'r cyhoedd gael eu heithrio o'r cyfarfod (mae'r rheswm a penderfyniad am yr eithriad ar gael ar restr a gedwir gan y Swyddog Priodol.

8. **PRIF GYNLLUN BRYNMAWR A NANTYGLO** 21 - 32

Ystyried adroddiad y Rheolwr Tîm Cyfleoedd Adfywio.

At: Cynghorwyr J. Hill (Cadeirydd)
P. Edwards (Is-gadeirydd)
G. Collier
M. Cross
G. A. Davies
M. Day
L. Elias
M. Holland
H. McCarthy
J. Millard
J. C. Morgan

J. P. Morgan

L. Parsons

K. Rowson

B. Willis

Pob Aelod arall (er gwybodaeth)

Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr

Prif Swyddogion

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: SPECIAL REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2020

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR J. HILL (CHAIR)

Councillors P. Edwards
 M. Day
 G.A. Davies
 H. McCarthy
 J. Millard
 J.C. Morgan
 J.P. Morgan
 L. Parsons
 K. Rowson
 B. Willis

AND: Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services
 Head of Regeneration & Development
 Business Innovation Manager
 Marketing Projects Officer
 Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>An apology for absence was reported for Councillor B. Willis, who was experiencing technical difficulties joining the meeting, and the Chief Officer Commercial.</p>	

<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>To receive the minutes of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 8th September, 2020, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Llanhilleth Pit Head Baths</u></p> <p>A brief discussion ensued when the Chair sought clarity as to why the minutes had been submitted to a ‘special’ meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern that the minutes did not give an accurate reflection of the discussion that took place, and failed to capture comments he made expressing concerns regarding the viability of the project. He also understood that a third option was put forward, i.e. to have further discussions with the owner. He also referred to the fact that the report was submitted to the Executive Committee, and then a press release was issued on the matter, and he felt that the Scrutiny process had been devalued.</p> <p>Another Member agreed, and said the minutes did not mention the queries he raised at the meeting, and in his opinion the minutes were not a true reflection of the discussion and he could not support them.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Officer pointed out that the report that was considered was an exempt report, which limited the nature of the discussion that could be recorded in the minutes.</p> <p>A Member said it was his understanding that the Committee agreed Option 2, to progress to the next stage to produce a business plan, and that the next stage would cover all the issues raised by Members. He felt that the minutes were a true reflection of what was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee.</p>	

	<p>The Scrutiny Officer agreed, and confirmed that Officers would take all Members' concerns on board when developing the business case.</p> <p>In response a Member said clarity was needed in terms of recording discussions of exempt information.</p> <p>Another Member said the Scrutiny Officer had explained why the detail of the discussion was restricted, and in his opinion the minutes reflected what was discussed in the meeting. In terms of the recommendation, he had e proposed Option 2 as outlined in the report, and it was seconded.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services said the minutes stated that Members' concerns would be addressed as part of the next stage, and it was also his opinion that the minutes were accurate in terms of what could be documented.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken,</p> <p>5 Members accepted the minutes as a true record. 3 Members voted against acceptance of the minutes.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 8TH SEPTEMBER, 2020</u></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 8th September, 2020 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Action Sheet be noted.</p>	
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>ECONOMY – POST COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Regeneration & Development.</p> <p>The Head of Regeneration & Development presented the report which set out the proposed strategy for Blaenau Gwent in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to</p>	

support the sectors and businesses in the County Borough, and provided an update on the ongoing work taking place locally, and feeding into the regional initiatives.

The Officer referred to the recent Welsh Government announcement and confirmed that the Authority was still in response mode, and said it was important to ensure that the Department continued progressing the proactive work being undertaken, alongside recovery activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown had disrupted businesses and employment across Wales and the UK, causing both short and long term issues across many sectors. The report looked at the background of data collated from various organisations and think tanks and applied modelling to look at the possible unemployment figures for BG. It also considered all the businesses that needed assistance, and those that could add most to the local economy for the future.

The Officer went through the report in detail and highlighted points contained therein. In terms of the strategic approach, this contained a mix of short term and longer term actions across a range of sectors and partners to assist with effective delivery. The main areas, listed below, would require a regional or all Wales approach, where Blaenau Gwent would need to influence the economic recovery work:

- Manufacturing tech advice, investment and skills
- Digital skills program across all sectors
- Supply chain support, sites and premises (on-shoring facilitation)
- Specific support for growth companies and R&D in BG
- Identify initiatives for 18-24 post-ed work related training (e.g. FJF)
- Build the Foundational Economy
- Widen accessibility through innovative/sustainable transport solutions
- Enable more start-ups especially town centre and on-line
- Progress with Test Facility as future facing anchor investment to BG

The Officer confirmed that work has already started on a number of initiatives, and also a number of projects had been re-worked to take into consideration what was required post-COVID-19.

The Business Innovation Manager provided a detailed overview of the engagement activity and financial support provided to businesses since 17th March, 2020.

In response to a question raised regarding capacity within the Department, the Head of Regeneration & Development said the Department was currently working at capacity to deliver projects, and the Council's partners had also been assisting.

Another Member asked whether any interest had been received in relation to Tech Valley.

The Officer confirmed that enquiries had been received and discussions were ongoing with Welsh Government to ensure that that interest is not lost.

In response to a question raised by a Member regarding the units at Roseheyworth, the Business Innovation Manager confirmed that all 4 units had been completed with leases signed on 3 of the units, and active interested had been received on the remaining unit.

The Head of Regeneration & Development said these units had been prioritised as part of the review of the Council's industrial units due to their high market value and income potential.

The Business Innovation Manager said this was Part 1 of the scheme, and confirmed that discussions had already commenced on Part 2, working with local traders to provide opportunities to support foundational economic growth. He said the Borough's industrial estates now provided units covering all the key areas of work.

Councillor L. Elias joined the meeting at this juncture.

A Member sought an update position on TVR, and the Head of Regeneration & Development said they were dealing

directly with Welsh Government, however, she understood funding was in place and Welsh Government were progressing with refurbishment of a building on the Rassau Industrial Estate.

In response to a further question regarding the units at Rhyd-y-Blew, Ebbw Vale, the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services confirmed that the scheme was being progressed by Welsh Government

The Corporate Director referred to a Member's earlier question regarding capacity within the Department and confirmed that staff had been diligently working throughout the lockdown period, and beyond, to provide a whole range of support to businesses. He thanked the Team for their excellent work in obtaining grants to support local businesses, and their commitment to driving through this Strategy in order to create jobs and build for the future.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted, and continue working with partners to focus on the initiatives that will bring the most benefit post-COVID to BG. Those that will improve employment opportunities and support businesses to progress with digital improvements and a mix of home, virtual and shared space working (Option 1).

Agenda Item 6

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **21st October 2020**

Report Subject: **Forward Work Programme: 2nd December 2020**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Davies, Deputy Leader and Executive Member Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Cllr Mandy Moore, Chair of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	x	12.10.20			21.10.20			

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present to Members the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the Meeting on 2nd December 2020 for discussion and agreement.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Scrutiny Work Programmes are key aspects of the Council's planning and governance arrangements and support the requirements of the Constitution.
 - 2.2 The topics set out in the Forward Work Programme link to the strategic work of the Council as identified by the Council's revised Corporate Plan, corporate documents and supporting business plans.
 - 2.3 Effective work programmes are essential to ensure that the work of scrutiny makes a positive impact upon the Council's delivery of services.
 - 2.4 The Committee's Forward Work Programme was agreed in September 2020, recognising the fluidity of the document to enable the Committee to respond to urgent and emerging issues, and included timescales when reports will be considered by the Committee. The work programme is managed and implemented by the Scrutiny and Democratic Officer under the direction of the Chair and Committee.
 - 2.5 The forward work programme for the forthcoming meeting will be presented to Committee on a 6 weekly cycle in order that Members can consider the programme of work; request information is included within the reports, as appropriate and / or make amendments to the work programme.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option 1:** The Scrutiny Committee consider the Forward Work Programme for the meeting 2nd December 2020, and

- Make any amendments to the topics scheduled for the meetings;
- Suggest any additional invitees that the committee requires to fully consider the reports; and
- Request any additional information to be included with regards to the topics to be discussed.

3.2 **Option 2:** The Scrutiny Committee agree the Forward Programme for the meeting 2nd December 2020, as presented.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme – Meeting on 2nd December 2020

Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme

Dates / Deadlines	Topic	Purpose	Lead	Executive / Council
Wednesday 2nd December 2020 Deadline: 13 th November 2020	1. Industrial Portfolio Findings and Action Plan	Pre-Decision To bring the prioritised action plan to scrutiny for endorsement in line with the strategy brief.	Manager for Ind Units / Ellie Fry	Executive
	2. Transport Review and Strategy	Task and Finish Group To request up to 5 Members to form a T&F consultation panel for the next stage of the transport review.	Owen Ashton	
	3. Aneurin Bevan report	Pre-Decision To consider the Nye Bevan report findings and action plan moving forward and recommend approval to the Executive.	Alyson Tippings/Moe Forouzan	Executive
	4. Performance Information on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Quarterly	Performance Monitoring Members to consider the activity of Blaenau Gwent Council as part of the overall CCRC and influence areas of focus.	Ellie Fry	Executive
	5. Lime Avenue Employment Park	Performance Monitoring To provide an update on progress of current development site.	Nick Landers / Amy Taylor	Executive
	6. Energy Prospectus Annual Review	Performance Monitoring To provide members with information on the progress made since approval of the Energy Prospectus	Amy Taylor	Executive
	7. Visit to Turkish Glass Bottle Factory	Progress Update	Ellie Fry	
	8. New Destination Management Plan for 2020-2025	Pre-Decision To consider and recommend for approval the new Destination Management Plan for 2020-2025.	Alyson Tippings/Moe Forouzan	Executive
	Progress Report on Repayable Town Centre Loan Funds	Information Only To provide members with information to update them on the progress of the Repayable Town Centre Loan Funds	Nick Landers / Amy Taylor	
GovTech Catalyst Project	Information Only To provide members with an update on the GovTech Catalyst Project	Amy Taylor		

	Test Facility, Rassau	<u>Information Only</u> To update Members on the work that has been undertaken on the project to date and next steps	Richard Crook / Ellie Fry	
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Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **21st October 2020**
Report Subject: **Town Centre Task and Finish and Economic Response following COVID-19**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor D Davies, Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development**
Report Submitted by: **Amy Taylor, Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
X	x	12.10.20			21.10.20			

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. For members of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to receive a status update on the work of the Task and Finish Group and agree to re-establish the task and finish group to continue their work on a Town Centre Strategy.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1. In December 2019, the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee approved a report to establish a Town Centre Strategy Task and Finish Group.
- 2.2. Members agreed that the group membership would consist of the following Scrutiny Committee Members:
 - Councillor Joanna Wilkins
 - Councillor Keri Rowson
 - Councillor Wayne Hodgins
 - Councillor Phil Edwards
 - Councillor John Morgan
 - Councillor Lee Parsons
 - Councillor John Hill
- 2.3. The members above were selected to ensure that all town centres would have representation from a local Ward Member.
- 2.4. Two meetings of the Task and Finish Group were held prior to a UK wide lockdown being announced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.5. The first meeting held on 30th January 2020 and explored the key areas requiring consideration as part of the strategy and work of the task and finish group. These discussions included:
 - Infrastructure (accessibility, user friendliness, enforcement)
 - Common services underpinning town centres

- Mixed uses in town centres (residential above shops vs edge of town)
 - Event facilitation
 - Public conveniences
- 2.6. A further meeting was held on 9th March 2020 and included a site meeting to Aneurin Bevan House in Tredegar.
- 2.7. On 23rd March 2020, the UK entered full lockdown as a result of a global COVID-19 pandemic and activity in relation to the task and finish group did not progress any further.
- 2.8. In the 2020 Council AGM, Councillor Joanna Wilkins was successful in being appointed the Executive Member for Environment, therefore, she would no longer sit upon the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. Despite this, there still remains representation for the towns across remaining members.

Present Position

- 2.9. Although progress of the task and finish group stopped as a result of COVID-19 in March, progress was still made to support the future work of the task and finish group and development of a Town Centre Strategy.
- 2.10. Following a ministerial announcement in January 2020, during March the Council was invited by the Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government to submit an application to receive revenue funding support. Each Local Authority across Wales was able to access up to £25,000 at 100% funding through the Welsh Government Transforming Towns programme.
- 2.11. The money was earmarked for spend on a menu of possible options which included developing masterplans; digital projects and provisions; community/stakeholder engagement; empty property/enforcement work; green infrastructure audit; place branding.
- 2.12. In order to secure their share of the funding each Local Authority had to submit an application outlining how they would propose to utilise the allocated funding. Within Blaenau Gwent work is already underway to develop masterplans for the Towns and we are working with Welsh Government on their programme to tackle empty and derelict buildings across town centres.
- 2.13. Our proposal therefore proposed to take forward an overall place branding approach for Blaenau Gwent which will then supported by each of the towns and the areas they most want to 'shout' about. This would also be supported through the investigation of how a digital approach can support the traditional 'bricks and mortar' trading.
- 2.14. Alongside the place branding work, an agreed programme of marketing and communications to support the town centres will be developed and put into action with support from the Town Centre Forums. This piece of work will help establish the town identities and messages the towns wish to promote.

2.15. This work will also form a key strand within the future Town Centre Strategy from a marketing and communications perspective. The Council has also recently completed the recruitment process for a Town Centre Business Development Officer role. This role will play a key part in the delivery of the Town Centre Strategy and supporting the Town Centre businesses.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1. Option 1

To re-establish the task and finish group (with the existing membership) and recommence their consideration of the Town Centre strategy. The group would revisit previous areas considered to ensure that they align with any COVID-19 adaptations that may be required but the focus would be upon the remaining areas not yet discussed with a view towards concluding the work of the task and finish group as soon as possible.

3.2. Option 2

To close the previous task and finish group and establish a new group to take the work forward.

Preferred Option

3.3. The preferred option is to re-establish the existing task and finish group. The existing members of the Task and Finish group are familiar with the previous work undertaken and were working alongside the team to reach an agreed Town Centre strategy for presentation back to Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

3.4. It is likely that nominations for any new group would include the members that sat upon the previous group and to make the progress that will enable this work to support our businesses in their recovery from COVID-19 restrictions and the continuing challenges of town centres as soon as possible.

3.5. In advance of the first task and finish meeting members will be provided with a briefing note of previous discussions along with a short presentation at the start of the first meeting to refresh previous discussions and confirm the next steps. This meeting will also include a discussion and agreement on timescales for the task and finish meetings and reporting of the outcomes of the task and finish group.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1. The report supports the following Corporate Plan priorities:

- To protect and enhance our environment and infrastructure to benefit our communities;
- To support a fairer sustainable economy and community; and
- An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities.

The Town Centre strategy will consider existing infrastructure within our town centres and explore ways that this can change to support regeneration activity.

4.2. It also supports delivery of the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan:

- Safe and friendly communities;
- To look after and protect the environment;
- To forge new pathways to prosperity; and
- To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play

The Town Centre strategy will seek to ensure that our town centres are safe and friendly communities for our residents and visitors to shop within. This will include projects to maintain and enhance the local environment, increase business occupancy and create an environment in our town centres that encourages our residents to spend time there for work, learning and leisure.

4.3. In supporting our statutory responsibilities towards the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Town Centre Strategy will support in creating:

- A more prosperous Wales;
- A resilient Wales; and
- A Wales of cohesive communities

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

Cost

5.1. There are no direct cost implications to the Council for the areas discussed with this report. The Council has secured £25,000 revenue funding to support the work of the Town Centre Business Development Officer. This funding is 100% funded through Welsh Government for the 2020/21 financial year.

Risk including Mitigating Actions

5.2. There is a risk that further spikes within the COVID-19 pandemic could further delay the work of the task and finish group. This will be mitigated by utilising virtual meeting facilities where possible.

5.3. Site visits could increase the risk of attendees becoming infected with COVID-19. Site visits will only be arranged if they are essential to the work of the task and finish group and will be subject to COVID-19 safety measures (this will be considered at the time of the visits).

Legal

5.4. There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

Human Resources

5.5. Regeneration have recently completed the recruitment process to appoint a Town Centre Business Development Officer. The post will be responsible for

taking forward the Town Centre strategy and developing the partnerships and collaborations that will enable the priorities to be taken forward.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)

- 6.1. The task and finish group consists of members of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. Future work will include wider stakeholders including town centre forums and town centre businesses.

Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)

- 6.2. The work of the Task and Finish group alongside the agreement of a Town Centre strategy will establish a long term plan for the future of our town centres.

Preventative focus

- 6.3. Town Centres across the UK have suffered a long period of decline which has been further exacerbated by the onset of COVID-19. There are however areas of alternative approaches and business initiative which should be capitalised upon in order to reduce the potential for even further decline.

Collaboration / partnership working

- 6.4. It will be essential that delivery of the Town Centre strategy is done on a collaborative and partnership working basis. It shall be a key role of the Town Centre Business Development Officer once in post to establish key networks and bring together a collaborative and partnership approach that will be used to deliver on our priorities together in the future.

Integration(across service areas)

- 6.5. As described above, future work will create a wider network of stakeholders and this will include officers from across other service areas which either support or impact upon the future of our town centres.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1. As part of the Welsh Government Transforming Towns revenue funding we are required to report on our activity and the impact it has upon the towns. In addition reporting on this priority will be included within the departments business plan reporting.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Report – 9th December 2019*
- *Town Centre Strategy – Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Template (Appendix 1 to the 2019 Report)*
[Blaenau Gwent CBC: Democracy](#)

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