

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 16TH JUNE, 2021

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR N. DANIELS (CHAIR)

Councillors J. Collins
D. Davies
J. Mason
J. Wilkins

WITH: Managing Director
Corporate Director Education
Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services
Service Manager - Accountancy
Head of Legal and Corporate Compliance
Press Officer

DECISIONS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<u>APOLOGIES</u> An apology for absence was received from the Chief Officer Resources.	

<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest and dispensations raised.</p>	
	<p><u>MINUTES</u></p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April, 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>SPECIAL EXECUTIVE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21st April, 2021.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
	<p><u>GENERAL MATTERS</u></p>	
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that the all future meetings be held at 10.00 am.</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>CONFERENCES, COURSES, EVENTS AND INVITATIONS</u></p> <p>The Leader reported that the following invitation had been received:-</p> <p>Army Broadcast Event – 9th June, 2021</p> <p>RESOLVED that Councillor Brian Thomas, Armed Forces Champion be approved to attend.</p>	

DECISION ITEMS - CORPORATE SERVICES MATTERS

No. 8 **PROPOSED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22**

This item had been omitted from the agenda and would therefore be considered at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Executive Forward Work Programme 2021-2022 be presented to the July Executive.

No. 9 **GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Officer Resources.

The following additional grants to organisations were reported:-

ABERTILLERY

Llanhilleth Ward - Councillor L. Parsons

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------|
| 1. | Abertillery Bluebirds FC | £100 |
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Six Bells Ward - Councillor D. Hancock

- | | | |
|----|------------------|------|
| 1. | Old Tyleryan RFC | £100 |
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BRYNMAWR

Brynmawr Ward - Councillor J. Hill

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|-------|
| 1. | Karabo Gwet (Cancellation) | -£150 |
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EBBW VALE

**Ebbw Vale North Ward - Councillor D. Davies,
R. Summers and P. Edwards**

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. | Ebbw Vale Mini & Junior Rugby Club | £200 |
| 2. | Blaenau Gwent Young Stars | £200 |
| 3. | Hill Top Old Age Pensioners Association | £200 |
| 4. | Showstoppers | £200 |
| 5. | Toppers School of Dance & Drama | £100 |
| 6. | Gwent Valleys Integrated Activities Club | £200 |
| 7. | Newtown Tenants & Residents Association | £200 |
| 8. | Ebbw Vale Christmas Lights Appeal | £300 |

	<p>9. Ebbw Vale Business Forum £300</p> <p>10. Blaenau Gwent District Scout Council £200</p> <p>11. One Life Autism Support Group £200</p> <p>12. Blaenau Gwent Food Bank £200</p> <p>13. Hill Top Tenants & Residents Association £200</p> <p>14. Ebbw Vale Children’s Contact Centre £200</p> <p>15. RTB Football Club Ebbw Vale £100</p> <p>16. Ebbw Vale Works Archival Trust £100</p> <p>17. Glyn Ebwy Junior Football Club £100</p> <p>18. Chairs Appeal £100</p> <p>19. RTB Ebbw Vale Bowls £100</p> <p>20. Providence Baptist Church £200</p> <p>21. Hilltop Sports and Social Club £200</p> <p>22. Willowtown Community Primary School £200</p> <p>PTFA</p> <p>23. N2T Youth £200</p> <p>24. Ebbw Vale Cricket Club £100</p> <p>25. Ebbw Vale Operatic Society £100</p> <p><u>TREDEGAR</u></p> <p><u>Sirhowy Ward - Councillor B. Thomas</u></p> <p>1. Tredegar Operatic Society £200</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing that the report be accepted and the information contained be approved.</p>	
	<p><u>DECISION ITEMS - ENVIRONMENT MATTERS</u></p>	
<p>No. 10</p>	<p><u>ADOPTION OF LITTER AND FLY-TIPPING STRATEGY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager – Street Scene.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services outlined the report which sought approval for the adoption of a new Council Litter and Fly-Tipping Strategy for 2021-2026. The Corporate Director welcomed the report as a significant improvement had been made in reducing litter on streets across the Borough and the Strategy would strengthen this work to be taken forward over the next 5 years.</p>	

The Executive Member – Environment welcomed the report all identified with issues noted in the report as an Elected Member numerous complaints in relation to litter and flytipping was received on a daily basis. It was a new initiative and Blaenau Gwent was the first Local Authority in Wales to adopt a Litter and Fly Tipping Strategy in which pulled together a number of strands. It also recognised the work undertaken to date and the excellent work of the many Litter Champions across Blaenau Gwent.

The Executive Member added that the Strategy strengthened the existing commitment given by this administration on the cleanliness of our area and the Borough. The Strategy would look at different ways to identify the underlying causes and ascertain what more could be done. The Executive Member stated the importance of monitoring progress going forward and noted the action plan which detailed the long and short term goals. The Strategy would continue to evolve and the Executive Member looked forward to having sight of the progress reports which would have input for the important key stakeholders involved in the process.

In conclusion, the Executive Member wished to thank Keep Wales Tidy for their support which had been very welcomed and advised that the report had also been supported by Scrutiny.

The Executive Member – Economic Development and Regeneration also welcomed the report and concurred that it was an important report which Elected Members, the Council and our constituents had an opportunity to play their part.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the adoption of the draft Blaenau Gwent Litter and Fly-tipping Strategy 2021-2026 be approved (Option 1).

No. 11

HIGHWAY CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2021 – 2022

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Community Services.

The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services advised that the report detailed three areas in terms of the highways works. It gave an update on progress of the current Highway Capital Works programme 2017–2021, improvements made over the years and set out options around a future 2021-2022 investment in the Authority’s highways network.

The Corporate Director advised that a capital sum of £2.115m was generated from a 20 year prudential borrow based on revenue contributions of £130k per year. The current gross replacement value of the Highway Network was estimated at £1.093 billion and was the Authority's most valuable material asset. The Corporate Director outlined the key points of the report which included the following:-

- Network
- Highway Capital Works Programme 2021-22 – Priorities & Options
- Additional Programme of Welsh Government Highway Related Funded Works 2021/2022
- Road Safety Revenue and Safe Routes in Communities
- Active Travel Fund

In conclusion, the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services referred to the options for recommendation and noted the preferred option.

The Executive Member for Environment welcomed the report and advised that this was another key priority for this administration and formed the ongoing commitment for upgrading the residential roads. The report identified the improvements already made in the Authority's Highways Network which was welcomed.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and residential roads, A & B Priority Roads and highway safety works be agreed (Option 2) as follows:-

A & B Priority Roads

A4048 Heathfield Full Reconstruction Works

A4046 Cwm Bypass Resurfacing

Highway Safety Traffic Management Works

Crash Barrier Replacement at A4281 Garnlydan

Crash Barrier Replacement at A467 Abertillery

	<p><u>Residential Roads: (16 schemes – 1 per Ward)</u> Southend and Walter Street, Georgetown Mount Pleasant Road, Ebbw Vale North Institution Terrace, Ebbw Vale South Maes-y-Cynw Terrace, Llanhilleth Jubilee Road and Graig Road, Six Bells Powell Street and High Street (section), Abertillery Coronation Street, Blaina South and Hereford Street, Beaufort Aneurin Crescent, Brynmawr King Street, Cwm Railway Terrace, Sirhowy Stable Lane & Parkville, Tredegar C&W School Road, Rassau Waunheulog, Nantyglo Victoria Street, Cwmtillery Rhyd Y Blew Roundabout, Badminton Blaenant Ind Est Resurfacing</p>	
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	<p><u>DECISION ITEMS - EDUCATION MATTERS</u></p>	
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<p>No. 12</p>	<p><u>SCHOOL ORGANISATION POLICY (2021/24)</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Education advised that the report detailed the review of the School Organisation Policy (2021-24) and sought Executive approval. The Corporate Director noted that it was proposed that the revised policy be adopted and implemented from the start of new academic year 2021/22. The Corporate Director further spoke to the report and outlined key priorities around school organisation and planning process as outlined in the report.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Education also noted the successful significant school organisation proposals and gave a detailed overview of the outcomes achieved as part of the 21st Century Schools Programme to date. It was stated that sound progress had been made and priorities are on track for 2021/2022.</p>	
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The Executive Member for Education welcomed the report which was timely given the impact of Covid-19. The Executive Member noted the revisions to the Policy and strategic priorities as outlined by the Corporate Director which accurately reflected the future direction of Education.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the proposed changes to the Blaenau Gwent School Organisation Policy 2021 be agreed (Option 1).

MONITORING ITEMS - CORPORATE SERVICES

No. 13

COMMERCIAL STRATEGY
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Chief Officer Commercial.

The Leader noted the report which outlined Quarter 4 performance monitoring report of the Commercial Strategy. The report had been presented as a monitoring item, although it evidenced a great deal of good work in terms of strategic commissioning of the contact centre and there are aspects of the contact centre which would be important to Members, particularly around the 'Out of House' Service, the Locality Response Teams who had undertaken a phenomenal amount of invaluable work which over the last period of time and indeed the digital programme which would be crucial as the Authority continued to move forward.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the quarter 4 progress update against the Commercial Strategy be noted (Option 1).

No. 14	<p><u>CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY – QUARTERLY UPDATE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Interim Chief Officer Commercial.</p> <p>The Leader referred to the report which detailed the Quarter 4 update of the Communications Strategy. The Leader noted that the Communications area continued to be caught up in the Covid-19 pandemic and felt that the work of the Communications Team had been valuable during the pandemic to ensure Blaenau Gwent was kept fully informed.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the quarter 4 (January to March 2021) update against the Communication Strategy be noted (Option 1).</p>	
	<p><u>MONITORING ITEMS - EDUCATION</u></p>	
No. 15	<p><u>EDUCATION DIRECTORATE-RESPONSE TO COVID-19</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Education noted the report and provided an overview of the current response, both from an Education and the Corporate response, which had been provided to support schools during the pandemic. The report reflected the activity for autumn and spring terms and advised that the impact of more than 12 months’ disruption for learners would need to be planned in the short, medium and long terms to ensure development and progression</p> <p>The Corporate Director added that the Council had established a corporate recovery framework which was detailed at Appendix 2 of the report and a key strand of this work would be a learning sub-group that would be led by the recently appointed Head of School Improvement and Inclusion. The Corporate Director noted the Education Directorate’s top priority in the EAS business plan.</p>	

The Estyn Thematic Review had previously been considered by the Executive and provided a positive overview of the Council's secure response in supporting the Authority's our schools during the pandemic.

The Executive Member for Education was pleased that Estyn had recognised as part of the Thematic Review the strong corporate response made by the Council in supporting our schools during these unprecedented times.

The Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development concurred with Corporate Director and advised that as a Governor of a local school, the Executive Member felt that the work which had been undertaken across the Council had been outstanding and the extra support needed for schools was available. The governors had been 'blown away' by the way all levels of staff had responded. All governors were grateful for the work undertaken across the whole Authority and the Executive Member extended his thanks accordingly.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).

No. 16

**BLAENAU GWENT EDUCATION SERVICES
SELF-EVALUATION AND BUSINESS PLANNING**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Education.

The Corporate Director Education advised that Blaenau Gwent's Education Services, with the emphasis on 'corporate support' remained totally committed to self-review and self-evaluation and these are fundamental in continuing to improve the services we provide to learners across the board. There was a standardised process for self-evaluation which was encompassed into the day to day of work, reports are presented to Scrutiny and the Executive and all these processes were in line with Estyn Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework

The Corporate Director further noted some examples from areas where good progress had been made and where further improvement was required as detailed in the report.

	<p>The Executive Member for Education welcomed the large number of areas where progress had been made and that self-evaluation continued to focus on the appropriate areas for development.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the information contained therein be noted (Option 1).</p>	
<p>No. 17</p>	<p><u>EXEMPT ITEM</u></p>	
	<p><u>DECISION ITEM - ENVIRONMENT</u></p>	
<p>No. 18</p>	<p><u>CHARITABLE LAND, FORMER YSGOL GYMRAEG, KING STREET, BRYNMAWR</u></p> <p>Having regard to the views expressed by the Proper Officer regarding the public interest test, that on balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information and that the report should be exempt.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the public be excluded whilst this item of business is transacted as it is likely there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended).</p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Senior Estates Officer.</p> <p>The Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services provided an overview of the report and outlined the key points. The Corporate Director Education added that there had been engagement with the relevant area of Education.</p> <p>RESOLVED, subject to the foregoing, that the report which contained information relating to the financial/business affairs of persons other than the Authority be accepted and Option 1 as detailed in the report be approved.</p>	