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Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Democratic Services



THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

8th December 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee will be held as a Hybrid Meeting via MS Teams and at the Abraham Derby Room in the General Offices, Ebbw Vale (if you would like to attend please contact committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk) on **Monday, 13th December, 2021 at 10.00 am.**

Please note that a pre and post meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start and following the conclusion of the meeting for members of the committee.

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris
Managing Director

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

Municipal Offices
Civic Centre
Ebbw Vale
NP23 6XB

Swyddfeydd Bwrdeisiol
Canolfan Dinesig
Glyn Ebwy
NP23 6XB

a better place to live and work
lle gwell i fyw a gweithio

1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

2. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

To receive any declarations of interest and dispensations made.

4. PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 5 - 10

To consider Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th July, 2021.

5. BLAENAU GWENT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2020/21 11 - 16

To consider the report of the Service Manager Policy and Partnerships.

6. WELSH GOVERNMENT EARLY YEARS INTEGRATION TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME PILOT CHILDCARE OFFER – JOINT WORKING PILOT – BLAENAU GWENT PATHFINDER 17 - 22

To consider the report of Interim Director of Finance and Procurement (ABUHB) and Service Manager Children's Services (BGCBC).

7. BLAENAU GWENT PARTICIPATORY BUDGET PROGRAMME: “COMMUNITY VOICE, COMMUNITY CHOICE” 23 - 28

To consider the report of the Service Manager Policy and Partnerships.

8. **SUSTAINABLE FOOD PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME**
PROGRESS UPDATE

29 - 34

To consider the report of the Chief Executive and Director of Communities and Housing (Tai Calon Community Housing).

To: Councillor M. Cook (Vice-Chair)
Councillor S. Healy (Chair)
Councillor P. Baldwin
Councillor M. Cross
Councillor G. A. Davies
Councillor C. Meredith
Councillor J. Millard
Councillor M. Moore
Councillor J. P. Morgan
Councillor G. Paulsen
Councillor S. Thomas
Councillor H. Trollope
Councillor J. Holt
Councillor J. Hill
Councillor J. C. Morgan

All other Members (for information)
Manager Director
Chief Officers

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28TH JULY, 2021

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. HEALY (CHAIR)

Councillors M. Cook
 G.A. Davies
 J. Hill
 J. Holt
 J. Millard
 M. Moore
 G. Paulsen

AND: **Leader of the Council/Chair of the Public Service Board**
 Councillor N. Daniels

WITH: Managing Director
 Service Manager, Policy and Partnerships
 Policy Officer (PSB)
 Scrutiny and Democratic Officer/Adviser

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>	

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>The Labour Group wished it to be recorded that there was no attendance from Labour Group Members as the meeting had been moved to accommodate a last minute change by the Majority Group with no consultation with the Labour Group, even after the Leader of the Labour Group had responded to advise of the clash with the regularly planned Labour Group meeting before Council.</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest and dispensations raised.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th April, 2021.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>MOVE TOWARDS REGIONAL GWENT PSB</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Managing Director.</p> <p>The Managing Director advised that the report provided Members with an update on the development of a Regional Gwent PSB and the next round of the Assessment of Local Well-being and Local Well-being Plans. It was reported that the report would be presented to Council on 29th July, 2021 to seek approval for a move towards a Regional Gwent PSB.</p> <p>The Managing Director spoke to the report and provided an overview of the process to be undertaken with regard to a move to a Regional Gwent PSB. It was noted that the current Well-Being Plans (2018-2023) form the delivery arrangements for the next two years and these would continue to be delivered by the local partnerships supported by the Regional PSB and scrutinised by partnership Scrutiny Committees in each of the local areas.</p>	

The Managing Director referred to the timelines for the process and advised that arrangements for Regional Scrutiny Committees were being discussed among democratic services leads and the aim was to conclude this to meet the approval requirements of the local assessment of well-being needs. The scrutiny of the existing well-being plans would be continued through local Scrutiny Committees until 2023. The Managing Director added that there would still be work for the Blaenau Gwent PSB Scrutiny Committee, however this work would gradually be taken on board regionally.

In terms of approval of reports, the Managing Director advised that Newport and Torfaen had already approved the move to a Regional Gwent PSB with Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Monmouthshire being considered this week.

The Chair and Members welcomed the report as it was felt that partnership working should be encouraged and recognised the benefits of working with other local authorities and partners.

A Member asked if there would be any cost implications in terms of officer time due to the change to the regional partnership. The Managing Director referred to the report and advised that there would be no financial implications for the Council, however, there would be additional work for staff in the Policy Team who supported the PSB. The Policy Team would now work with colleagues across Gwent to put the regional work in place. There was also an expectation of the Policy Team to continue to support the local delivery partnership.

In terms of resourcing the chair and administration of the new Regional PSB it would be rotated between statutory partners. The first meeting in the autumn would agree the Terms of Reference and appoint a Chair. The nominated Chair's respective organisation would be permitted to undertake the administration of the Regional PSB and for an agreed term of 2 years, following the end of the 2-year period another chair would be appointed. It was felt that this was a fair way to take forward chair and administration on the regional basis.

The Member also asked if a move to a Regional Gwent PSB was permitted under the Well-being Future Generations Act and was this change encouraged by Welsh Government.

The Managing Director confirmed that the move was allowed within the Act and noted the report which stated that two or more PSBs was permitted to form such a practice. Although, the Managing Director pointed out that there cannot be a Blaenau Gwent PSB as well as a Regional Gwent PSB, therefore local PSBs needed to be disbanded to move forward on a regional basis.

It was confirmed that Welsh Government was aware of the plans in Gwent to move to a Regional Gwent PSB. The Managing Director advised that Welsh Government are keen to see more regional working and have encouraged the Local Authorities in Gwent to go take this forward. The Gwent Region was the first in Wales to be formed, although other areas are looking at this way of this working.

A Member welcomed that all partners would be treated as equals and have a rotating Chair and administration, however the Member asked would there be a need for a local Scrutiny Committee.

The Managing Director advised that the current Scrutiny Committee would continue to have work for the next 2 years as it was important to scrutinise the local plan until 2023. Following 2023 there may not be the need for local Scrutiny Committees as this would be undertaken on a regional basis. An Officer added that partners carried out their respective scrutiny differently as the report stated, therefore there was a need to ascertain how this would be delivered going forward.

In terms of Elected Representatives on the Regional PSB and Regional Scrutiny Committee it was reported that this had not yet been discussed in terms of Scrutiny, however the representatives of each local authority for the Regional PSB would be the Leader of the Council and the Managing Director.

It was anticipated that in relation to the Regional Scrutiny Committee membership would be taken into consideration in due course and be based on proportionality across the organisations, any recommendations on matters going forward would be brought back to PSB Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and the following recommendations as detailed in Option 1 be noted:-

Recommendation 1: To move to a regional PSB as outlined in the report with the importance of maintaining strong local partnerships.

Recommendation 2: To establish regional scrutiny and the developing arrangements, and to receive further details as appropriate.

Recommendation 3: The local assessment of well-being, to be agreed by 5th May 2022, will be part of the PSB Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2021/22.

Recommendation 4: To support the proposed regional PSB terms of reference (Appendix 5), and requirements to make any relevant changes to committee structures and constitution.

Recommendation 5: The development of Local Delivery Partnerships to be considered in local scrutiny work programmes.

Recommendation 6: To continue to support Scrutiny of the current Well-Being Plans to 2023 through existing local partnership Scrutiny arrangements.

Councillor J. Millard abstained from the vote.

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Agenda Item 5

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **13th December 2021**
Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Public Services Board Annual Progress Report 2020/21**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor David Davies, Chair of PSB**
Report Submitted by: **Andrew Parker, Service Manager Policy & Partnerships**

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	02.12.21			13.12.21			PSB SSG

1. Purpose of the Report

To present the third annual progress report on 'The Blaenau Gwent We Want' Well-being Plan.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Blaenau Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) was set up under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as a way for public bodies to work together to take a long-term joined-up approach to improving economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.
- 2.2 The Act requires that the PSB sets out how they will do this through a Well-being Plan. This plan must follow the sustainable development principles; to act in a manner that seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 2.3 The PSB agreed its first Well-being Plan, 'The Blaenau Gwent We Want' to cover the period 2018 to 2023, in May 2018. Each year subsequently the PSB is required to report on the steps they have taken to meet the objectives set out in the Well-being Plan through a progress report.
- 2.4 The 2020/21 Annual Progress Report was published in September 2021. The report details progress made in the third year from April 2020 to March 2021 (see Appendix), which covers a period where public service delivery and local well-being programmes were significantly affected by the Covid19 pandemic.
- 2.5 During the pandemic the PSB continued to meet and to work together including reflecting as a Board on the impact of the Covid-19 on our communities and the focus of the PSBs work programme.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1 That the PSB Scrutiny Committee notes the progress made in the third year of delivery against the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and provides comments.

Option 2 That the PSB Scrutiny Committee considers the progress made in the second year of delivery against the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and makes specific recommendations to the Local Well-being Partnership for consideration.

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

This report is in-line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the requirement to prepare and publish an annual report following each full year of activity.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no direct financial implications relating to the Annual Report, other than any associated revenue and translation costs for the Partnerships Team in coordinating the report being put together. The intention set out in the Well-being Plan is to be funded from existing budgets of partner organisations.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

This Annual Report has been produced and published under the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 taking in consideration the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the local communities and the programme itself. This published document is part of an on-going approach to improve well-being in Blaenau Gwent.

5.3 ***Legal***

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives local government scrutiny the predominant role in securing improvement and accountability of the PSB. The committee must send a copy of any report or recommendations it makes to the Welsh Ministers, the Well-being of Future Generations Commissioner and the Auditor General for Wales.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The Governance and Partnership Division of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council leads on supporting the PSB on delivering their collective duties under the Act, and provides the administrative support to the PSB for the production of the Annual Progress Report. Other partners support the process by providing key information on the PSBs work programme for the relevant time period.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The PSB Annual Report 2020/21 is provided as an Appendix. The report presents the progress made in the second year of the PSBs programme for delivery against the Well-Being Plan under five key sections.

6.1.1 During the third year the Blaenau Gwent Public Services Board continued its focus on making progress towards achieving the following well-being objectives:

- Best Start in Life for Everyone (Page 11)
- Safe and Friendly Communities (Page 14)
- To Look After and Protect our Environment (Page 21)
- To Forge New Pathways to Prosperity (Page 27)
- To Encourage and Enable People to make Healthy Lifestyle Choices (Page 34)

6.1.2 Many of the existing programmes initiated in the PSB's current strategic work programme continue to be appropriate, if anything even more so, to mitigate the long-term effects of the pandemic. The PSB continued to focus on:

- Early Years Integration Transformation (Page 11)
- Community Safety (page 15)
- Age-Friendly Communities (Page 17)
- Climate Change Mitigation (Page 21)
- Foundational Economy (Page 28)
- Sustainable Food (Page 35)
- Integrated Well-being Network (Page 40)

6.1.3 The report also includes some additional work and case studies of local initiatives that help support progress towards meeting the well-being objectives, highlighting some of the good work being carried out that will help to make a difference towards progress. Some examples being:

- Communities for Work (Page 29)
- Disability Employment Support (Page 32)
- Local Food Insecurity Provision (Page 38)
- Well-being Friends (Page 42)
- Participatory Budgeting (Page 46)
- Gwent Travel Charter (Page 48)

6.1.4 Furthermore, there are Covid-19 related case studies:

- Locality Response Teams (Page 57)
- Tredegar Community Taskforce (Page 59)
- Telephone Befriending Support (Page 60)
- Community Impact Assessment (Page 63)

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

The public will benefit from the delivery of the Well-being projects outlined in the Annual Report.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The Well-being Objectives in the Well-being Plan were identified through 'The Blaenau Gwent We Want, 2018-23' engagement programme. Our plan was the result of a comprehensive programme of involvement and collaborative work to develop a coherent plan for delivering well-being. Key examples of engagement and involvement activities held throughout 2020/21 are provided throughout the annual report. Due to COVID19, most of the public engagement was paused with many activities now only being to take place virtually.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

In this rapidly changing context the PSB shares the view of the vital role it will need to collectively play in achieving well-being outcomes for our local area. The PSB is taking a proactive approach in looking ahead towards recovery, reconstruction and beyond.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The preventative focus of the Well-being Plan is reflected in all projects across the PSB strategic work programme. For example, the Sustainable Food Partnership Programme takes a long-term, preventative approach towards tackling food insecurity that takes into account the social, environmental, cultural, and economic aspects of food and supports the positive aspects of food as well as addressing the needs and challenges to prevent further issues with food poverty and hunger in local communities.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The PSB encourages collaboration through partnership working to achieve progress across the strategic work programme. For example, the introduction of the Climate Mitigation Steering Group as a multi-agency collaborative to develop an area-based mitigation plan to keep territorial emissions (all emissions produced within Blaenau Gwent) within a science based carbon budget calculated on the basis of Blaenau Gwent's fair contribution to international climate reduction targets.

Furthermore, the five local authority areas in Gwent continue to collaborate through the Gwent Strategic Well-being Action Group (GSWAG) and the new regional Gwent PSB to work collaboratively on regional projects.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The Well-being Plan is a key component in establishing and encouraging integration between public bodies, this includes the connection between the existing well-being programme and supporting our communities to recover from the Covid19 pandemic.

6.8 ***EqIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

EQIAs are and will be carried out as required for individual projects as part of the PSB's strategic work programme.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

The PSB Scrutiny Committee is a statutory recipient under of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 of the Annual Report and has the primary responsibility for providing democratic support and challenge to secure continuous improvement to the work of the PSB through scrutiny.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- APPENDIX 1: 'The Blaenau Gwent We Want' - Three Years of Progress 2020/21 Annual Progress Report: https://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/fileadmin/documents/Council/Partnerships/PSB_Annual_Report_20-21_eng_version_FINAL.pdf

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Agenda Item 6

Committee: **Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **13th December 2021**

Report Subject: **Welsh Government Early Years Integration Transformation Programme Pilot Childcare Offer – Joint working Pilot – Blaenau Gwent Pathfinder**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Davies, Chair of PSB**

Report Submitted by: **Robert Holcombe, Interim Director of Finance and Procurement (Aneurin Bevan University Health Board) & Ceri Bird, Service Manager, Blaenau Gwent Children’s Services.**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
08.11.21	02.12.21	02.12.21			13.12.21			BG Local Well-being Partnership

1. Purpose of the Report

To update the PSB Scrutiny Committee on the progress made to date on the Welsh Government’s new Early Years Integration Transformation Pilot in the Blaenau Gwent Pathfinder area, including approval to roll out further into the town of Blaina from January 2022.

2 Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Early Years Integration Transformation Pilot (EYITP) emerged out of a recognition by Welsh Government that there was need to address the inequalities in early years’ services across Wales and develop a fluid, responsive early year’s system that will ensure every child in Wales has the best start in life and access to the same services.
- 2.2 The period of life from pre-birth to the end of the Foundation Phase, or 0-7 years of age, is a critical part of childhood. It is widely agreed that early childhood experiences are crucially important for children’s long-term development and their achievements in later life. At these times children and their families have regular contact with a number of different services such as midwifery, health visiting, various family support workers, childcare and early years’ education provision etc. These services are currently accountable to different bodies and can work independently without sharing information or coordinating their support to families. Welsh Government recognised it was time to streamline these services so all children were able to access what they needed when they needed it with no distinctions and barriers put in the way.
- 2.3 Following an offer from Welsh Government to be part of a pilot study, Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) agreed to become a pathfinder for the Early Years Integrated Transformation Pilot in June 2019. The Board agreed it

would have the main governance and oversight for the Blaenau Gwent element of the pilot as the programme crosses over Health, Social Services and Education services. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), who is the PSB sponsor for the EYITP in Blaenau Gwent has responsibility for the pilot in Blaenau Gwent and is assisted by Ceri Bird, Service Manager, Children's Services who manages the pilot for Blaenau Gwent.

- 2.4 The Gwent Regional Early Years Transformation Steering Board oversees the regional footprint element of the Early Years Integration Transformation Programme and the fluid work between Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Caerphilly Borough Council and Newport City Council and liaises directly with Welsh Government. Caerphilly County Borough Council are the grant recipients for the Gwent region.
- 2.5 It was agreed by Blaenau Gwent PSB in January 2020 that Phase 1 of the pilot in Blaenau Gwent would be a small pilot to test the model in the self-contained village of Cwm, Ebbw Vale in September 2020. Cwm was chosen by the PSB as it is a self-contained village with a definitive divide between the 2 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that make up the community. One LSOA is Flying Start and the other non-Flying Start and this would give a perfect base to test the new way of working on a small area. It was agreed in March 2021 that then following a successful pilot in Cwm, Phase 2 would be in the Brynmawr / Nantyglo area in Autumn 2021 which currently has no Flying Start infrastructure. It was agreed that further areas across Blaenau Gwent will then follow on into the pilot if funding was agreed by Welsh Government.

3.0 **Progress to Date**

- 3.1 Phase 1 of the pilot went live in Cwm in September 2020. The new model has brought services together in an integrated way, so they are readily available and accessible to the whole community as they need them without the problem of the Flying Start / non Flying Start geographical divide. Feedback from families has been extremely positive and we have evidence that families feel listened too and not separated from friends and neighbours who live in Flying Start areas. Families are now happy they are able to access services when they needed them, rather than being dependant on postcode eligibility and that they now have a Family Support Worker allocated to them that is there to support them.
- 3.2 The pilot core team in Cwm was established in September 2020 and consists of the Flying Start and Generic Midwives, the Flying Start and Generic Health Visitors, a Family Support Worker, a Clinical Psychologist, the Community Psychiatric Nurse, a Dads Support Worker and the Project Coordinator. Other agencies are invited to attend team discussions when the cases being discussed might necessitate that additional support. Wider support might be in the form of Families First, Supporting People, other housing support, Communities 4 Work, Bridges into Work, various financial support services, ALN support, Speech and Language Therapist, Play Therapy, Parent Infant Mental Health, substance misuse services, domestic abuse support etc.

- 3.4 Despite the pilot needing to be delivered in a different way due to the pandemic, we have still managed to successfully launch the pilot and bring the team together virtually every Monday morning for the “What Matters Meetings”.
- 3.5 The ‘What Matters Meetings’ have been successful in opening up services to all families with children 0-7 years in Cwm regardless of postcode. The meetings bring together services in an integrated way to avoid multiple visits to families by different services and this reduces a delay in support. The pilot has been able to increase local based support for generic families with a named support worker or dad’s worker and ultimately opening up responsive specialist services for all families without the need for waiting lists.
- 3.6 Early feedback from generic staff is that they are feeling more responsive and able to bring in additional support quicker and Flying Start staff are able to focus on what matters to the family rather than being restricted to the 4 core elements of the FS programme.

Other successes to date are: -

- More focus on the Blaenau Gwent Flying Start electronic birth book and ABUHB Responsive Feeding pilot to bring the registration age to 12 weeks after conception to track the child and provide support at the earliest possible stage. This will also enable the accurate planning and allocation of workloads with the aim of ensuring that no family is missed out.
- ABUHB being able to access WCCIS as a joint pilot alongside BGCBC.

4.0 **NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Plans are currently underway to move into Brynmawr this month, November 2021, and then Nantyglo in January 2022 as already approved by BG PSB but ABUHB Health Visiting Department has recently had a restructure and Health Visitors have been given new caseloads in Blaenau Gwent.
- 4.2 Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina caseload are being run as a team, if we took Brynmawr and Nantyglo without Blaina this would mean one Health Visitor would have a caseload half in the pilot and half outside the pilot which would mean the services would be very difficult to run and there would be inequality of services being provided to clients. As a result of this we sought the BG Local Well-being Partnership’s to roll into Blaina at the same time as Nantyglo in January 2022, which was approved in November 2021.

5. **Options for Recommendation**

5.2 Option 1

That the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee notes the roll-out outlined for 2022 and accepts the report.

5.3 Option 2

That the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee considers the proposed roll-out outlined for 2022 and make specific recommendations to the Local Well-being Partnership

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

This programme supports the Corporate Plan under the Social Services priority “To promote and facilitate new ways of delivering health and social care involving key partners and our communities”.

The Blaenau Gwent Well-being plan lists as one of its five objectives ‘The best start in life for everyone’. Key to this priority is aligning services to mitigate inequity.

7. **Implications Against Each Option**

7.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

Funding is allocated from Welsh Government on a Health Board footprint basis and is managed by Caerphilly County Borough Council as the grant recipient. In 2020/21 Blaenau Gwent received £50,000 to fund the project coordinators role and £48,000 for staffing infrastructure. Aneurin Bevan University Health Board received regional funding to support the cost of additional health visiting, CPN and midwifery support for Blaenau Gwent.

7.2 The funding for 2021/22 has been confirmed as £50,000 for the project coordinators role and an indicative grant allocation of approximately £388,642 for the Gwent Pathfinders between the 4 partners.

8 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

- That synchronising organisations and programmes will be too complex and the pilot will have to be abandoned.
- Funding may limit scope to roll out into the areas that really need it.
- That COVID 19 will have a third wave and the Pilot will be paused or abandoned.

9. ***Legal***

Welsh Government provide full terms and Conditions of the grant. The grant will not allow for redundancy costs.

10. ***Human Resources***

Fully funded by this Welsh Government grant.

11. ***Supporting Evidence***

11.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Not yet provided as pilot in its infancy

11.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

In the long term a more joined-up, responsive early years system leading to better outcomes for children.

11.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

Welsh Government has undertaken extensive consultation with stakeholders and aims to involve service providers and parents joining forward.

11.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
An approach that ensures services delivered before birth and in the early years work together in an integrated, multi-agency way to nurture children, support parents and promote child development in the broadest sense. This will improve the immediate impact for families and develop better longer term outcomes for children.

11.5 **Preventative focus**
There is compelling evidence, for example from Professor James Heckmann and Professor Sir Michael Marmot, that demonstrates the effectiveness, value and high return on investment in early years intervention programmes in tackling inequalities, giving children the best start in life and improving the development of children and their prospects in adulthood.

The benefits from early intervention are vast, but not exclusive to disadvantaged children and families. Early action can bring cost effective benefits by reducing the knock-on costs of expensive health, social care, criminal justice and welfare support later in life.

11.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
This programme is very much focused on collaboration and partnership working with other departments of the Authority and also third sector and Health Board partners. The three local authorities chosen for this pilot, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Newport are working together and also have excellent strong historic working relationships with Swansea and Flintshire who have also been chosen as pilot authorities and were also colleagues for Childcare Offer pilot.

11.7 **Integration(across service areas)**
We have held the first workshop in Blaenau Gwent and are working alongside the Education Department, Governance, Education Achievement Service and Health. To ensure integration between services for children aged 0-7.

11.8 **EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**
NA

12. **Monitoring Arrangements**

12.1 Blaenau Gwent Local Well-being Partnership will take over the BG PSB's role of having the main governance and oversight for the local element of the Early Years Integration Transformation Programme through the ABUHB representative who is the PSB sponsor for the EYITP programme.

Blaenau Gwent CBC Corporate Leadership Team will have accountability for the funding awarded through this grant as well as other grant decisions and commissioning. Blaenau Gwent Social Services Senior Management Team will hold operational accountability.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

N/A

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Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **PSB Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **13th December 2021**
Report Subject: **Blaenau Gwent Participatory Budget programme:
“Community Voice, Community Choice”**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Dai Davies, Chair of PSB**
Report Submitted by: **Andrew Parker, Service Manager: Policy &
Partnerships**
**David Arnold, Blaenau Gwent County Borough
Council**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
		02.12.21			13.12.21			BG Local Well-being Partnership

1. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update about the results of the Blaenau Gwent “Community Voice, Community Choice” Participatory Budget programme.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Participatory budgeting (PB) is a democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a public budget. In November 2020, the PSB agreed that a PB steering group formed by PSB partners be set up to consider the PB process and make key decisions around programme coordination, aims and apportionment of the budget, eligibility and maximum bid limits, and to promote of the programme amongst local communities for action in 2021/22.
- 2.2 A Blaenau Gwent PB programme led by PSB partners and community members, coordinated by Mutual Gain, enabled local people and community groups to bid for funding towards local projects that contribute towards the well-being objectives for Blaenau Gwent. This included projects that benefit certain community and neighbourhood environments, connect people to well-being support services in their local community, or support communities to recover from the Covid19 pandemic.
- 2.3 This integrated, partnership approach amongst public service partners, community members and Mutual Gain encouraged local projects from across the well-being spectrum to be considered for funding, resulting in a wide range of community-led projects that contribute towards all of the PSB’s strategic well-being work programmes. There was £250,000 participatory funding available for local organisations and groups to bid for during the PB programme.
- 2.4 The PB steering group, comprising representatives from ABUHB (Chair), BG CBC, NRW, Tai Calon, GAVO and Aneurin Leisure Trust, worked closely with Mutual Gain to invite community members to set up a planning group

during the design, application, voting and monitoring stages. The Community planning group named the Participatory Budget programme “Community Voice, Community Choice”.

- 2.4 Over 70 PB funding applications were received, comprising over £450,000 worth of bids in total for the £250,000 funding available. Due to health and safety concerns around hosting large in-person voting events during the Covid19 pandemic, four Voting Events were held via Zoom during September 2021, all hosted and administered by Mutual Gain.
- 2.5 There were 40 successful applicants across the four Voting Events, including a wide range of projects to enhance well-being and/or support local communities recover from the Covid19 pandemic. Full information about the Community Voice, Community Choice programme are provided in Appendix 1.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

That Members of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee consider and accept the report as provided prior to it being submitted to the Public Services Board.

Option 2

That Members of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee consider and provide specific comment for consideration by the Public Services Board before approval.

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

This report is in-line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

The Participatory Budgeting funding awarded to the Blaenau Gwent area was initially for the period April 2020 – March 2021, however it was agreed for the funding to be used in 2021/22 due to partner organisations having to respond to the Covid19 pandemic since March 2020. The funding awarded for the period up to 31 March 2022 was for £265,000.

The PB steering group recommended to the PSB that the services of a contractor who specialises in delivering virtual PB programmes could be employed to oversee delivery of the Blaenau Gwent PB programmes. The contractor would provide the following services:

- Train a PB steering group of up to 25-30 people, which would include members of the public and community groups, as well as PSB partners.
- 4 x two hour Supported Delivery sessions for the steering group, where the members make a series of decisions that shape the local PB process e.g. criteria for successful projects to move onto the voting stage,

maximum individual project bid amounts, minimum bidding and voting age, number of bids allowed per individual/ organisation etc.

- The development of a social media footprint and webpage with local branding to be decided by the steering group.
- A series of online support surgeries throughout the bidding process to engage with communities and help prospective applicants prepare their bid.
- Support for the steering group with the paper sift process to ensure all bids that go forward to the voting event meet the PB criteria.
- Delivering four PB voting events, including managing attendance via Eventbrite, Charing and collecting votes, as well as providing all technical support on the day.

This service would be paid for using a combination of contributions from PSB partners and part of the Early Years & Transformation PB funding from ABUHB, ensuring that at least £250,000 remained available for local community groups, organisations and individuals to bid for.

The funding is held, administered and monitored by the council as the designated administrator for the Blaenau Gwent PSB.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

Successful projects have been advised that the funding relates to the 2021/22 financial year, and will be asked during December – January to highlight how the money will be spent by April 2022.

5.3 Legal

The programme is being developed in line with the 5 Ways of Working and other requirements stated in Well-being of Future Generations Act.

5.4 Human Resources

Mutual Gain provided training for 15-20 members of the PB planning group in order to help develop and deliver the PB programme effectively, as outlined above and in Appendix 1.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 Performance Information and Data

The criteria for applications to receive funding was based around Covid19 recovery planning and working towards the objectives in the Blaenau Gwent We Want Well-being Plan.

Full information about the Community Voice, Community Choice programme are provided in Appendix 1.

6.2 Expected outcome for the public

Members of the public were invited to attend the virtual Voting Events to make their own decisions about which local well-being projects are funded to meet the needs of their community.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
PSB partners and Blaenau Gwent residents were involved in setting priorities for the funding and the public decided which projects should receive funding by being invited to attend virtual Voting Events in September 2021, where they were given the opportunity to read project summaries and see a video from each applicant outlining what they're project will achieve and how much funding they're applying for.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
The PB funding is now being used to improve community well-being through local projects run by local people, as outlined in Appendix 1. Organisations are encouraged to shape their projects to develop the skills, knowledge and social network of people in the community; improve the neighbourhood environment so it contributes to the well-being of the people that live there; and join up services that connect people to well-being support or resources in their community.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***
The PB programme will provide local people and community groups to deliver projects that join up services and connect people to well-being support or resources that they either weren't aware of or weren't previously available. Local well-being projects that involve active filling any gaps in existing provision were encouraged.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
Robust partnership networks through the Local Well-being Partnership, the PB steering group and the wider well-being landscape. The PB programme involved collaboration between PSB partners, community groups, residents, Third Sector and other external organisations.

Steering Group partners are now working together to signpost any unsuccessful applicants towards relevant alternative funding streams that could support their projects.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
The aim of the PB programme is to improve community well-being through funding local activity via the successful projects outlined in Appendix 1. Many of the projects now being delivered align with the well-being objectives that the Local Well-being Partnership are working towards through the continuation of the PSB's well-being programme, supporting age-friendly communities, the Integrated Well-being Network, sustainable food initiatives and natural environment programmes in particular.

6.8 ***EqIA***
Community Voice, Community Choice applicants were screened by the community planning group.

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***
The council's Partnership and Engagement Teams are overseeing the financial monitoring arrangements on behalf of the Local Well-being Partnership and the

PB steering group, as the council is the designated administrator for the local delivery group of the Gwent PSB.

APPENDICES & BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- [APPENDIX 1: Participatory Budgeting Programme Mutual Gain Final Report October 2021](#)

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Agenda Item 8

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **13th December 2021**
Report Subject: **Sustainable Food Partnership Programme progress update**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Davies, Chair of PSB**
Report Submitted by: **Howard Toplis, Chief Executive & Andrew Myatt, Director of Communities and Housing (Tai Calon Community Housing)**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
		02.12.21			13.12.21			Local Well-being Partnership

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Public Services Board (PSB) Scrutiny Committee a progress update regarding the Sustainable Food Partnership Programme.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 A sustainable food programme based on a whole system approach to preventing food poverty was agreed at the PSB meeting in January 2020. It was agreed that the lead PSB sponsor for this programme of work would be Tai Calon Community Housing.
- 2.2 Food poverty is a complex issue and therefore preventing it requires systemic and concerted efforts from a range of public, private and third sectors. The Sustainable Food Partnership programme aims to address a number of wellbeing goals as follows:
- Healthier wales
 - More equal Wales
 - More globally responsible Wales
 - More cohesive Wales.
- 2.3 The programme takes an integrated view of food that takes into account the social, environmental, cultural, and economic aspects of food and supports the positive aspects of food as well as addressing the needs and challenges.
- 2.4 The Sustainable Food Coordinator has been in post since May 2021. The Sustainable Food Programme has started to take shape, building important relationships with key stakeholders influence significant factors to build the whole systems approach required to drive positive change in Blaenau Gwent's local food system.

- 2.5 The first phase of the programme tackled a food system overview, building a map of the community food assets, conducting a stakeholder analysis and policy mapping exercise. As well as a desk-based study for the mapping element, there was an engagement process to collate the perceived food environment of residents and community groups. As a result, the Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership now has a comprehensive food system overview.
- 2.6 The mapping process highlighted the community food assets in the area. It laid out the challenges, largely the high density of hot food takeaways synonymous with foods high in fat, salt and sugar contributing to an obesogenic environment. As widely recognised, this is a leading cause of diet related ill health and poor physical and mental well-being within Blaenau Gwent.
- 2.7 From engagement sessions there was little awareness of the identified community assets, and anecdotally, if there was awareness there was a sense these assets weren't accessible to them. The mapping process also identified a lack of food assets in particular areas, such as Blaina, having no immediately accessible emergency food provisions.
- 2.8 On completion of the food system overview, the next phase of the food partnership saw stakeholder development and building relationships with those identified and organically building a far-reaching cross sector stakeholder list. Meeting with many of these stakeholders built a picture of the needs and challenges in their experience and want activities were successful. This has resulted in several groups and individuals having a key role in the foundational activities of the food partnership. The accompanying food policy mapping exercise identified which local policies could align with the food partnerships aims, such as Community Asset Transfer Policy and the Decarbonisation Plan leading to important connections within BGCBC.
- 2.9 The current work has identified the many challenges facing the households of Blaenau Gwent, challenges set to become only more acute in the short term. This only goes to highlight the continued need for the strong partnership working to tackle the root causes of food poverty, the food environment and access to food being experienced in Blaenau Gwent.
- 2.10 Through committed and sustained engagement with communities and working groups, Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership will be able to set an ambitious direction for sustainable change in the Blaenau Gwent food system.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

That Members of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee note and accept the report and appendices as provided.

Option 2

That Members of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee consider and provide specific comment for consideration by the Local Well-being Partnership.

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

This report is in-line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

Tai Calon and partners were awarded funding from NRW, in addition to funding contributions from Tai Calon, PHW, GAVO, and BGCBC through the Welsh Government EUTF Food Poverty Grant, for a part-time sustainable food coordinator to be put in post to oversee the development of the Sustainable Food Programme during 2021-22.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Due to the impact of COVID 19, people may have become more reliant on Food Banks and Independent Institutions providing emergency food supplies, which can potentially lead to further issues with food insecurity and hunger in local communities going forward.

5.3 ***Legal***

Project reports have been developed with requirements stated in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

Tai Calon, the Soil Association, PSB partners including Public Health Wales, Natural Resources Wales, BGCBC and GAVO, and a Sustainable Food Programme Coordinator (once appointed by Tai Calon) will work together in partnership to coordinate the development of the programme.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

The approach is intended to prevent food poverty rather than just respond to it. Without this shift in focus there is a risk that food banks become an institutionalised fixture of Blaenau Gwent communities. Food aid should not replace the dignity and choice afforded to those who can afford to buy food.

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

The sustainable food plan will cover all key food issues, including:-

- how to tackle food poverty and diet-related ill-health;
- how to build a prosperous and diverse local food economy;
- how to transform catering and procurement;
- positively support tackling the climate and nature emergency; and
- end food waste.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

- Supply of good quality equipment and food, including good food surplus, in particular, larger amounts of fresh food, boosting the capacity of organisations to provide good quality, nutritious food.

- Access to new cooking equipment
- Healthier wales
- More equal Wales
- More globally responsible Wales
- More cohesive Wales.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

There have been several partnership engagement events to inform strategy and direction for the food plan. Initially there was an online food survey targeting groups that had been interested in the food partnership work which resulted in sixty-one responses. Collated with an on the street event at a Brynmawr market event further opinions were gathered to inform the general overview of people's interaction with the Blaenau Gwent food system.

- 6.3.1 The first Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership network meeting was online and acted as an inspiration event to be used as a springboard to gain momentum for the partnership. The event was well attended, having targeted twenty key individuals. This resulted in a subsequent planning meeting with an extended group in person. In this meeting, the burning issues which had been discussed were prioritised.
- 6.3.2 This resulted in two thematic working groups being established, "Food Access" looking to address the lack of coordination in Blaenau Gwent on food poverty and a "Land Use" group looking at accessing land for food growing. A Low Carbon Lunch helped to frame awareness of food and the climate. This is a key area and incredibly useful to address in the build-up to COP26.
- 6.3.3 One action the food partnership promoted was for the local authority to join neighbouring Monmouthshire and sign the Glasgow Declaration. The Glasgow Declaration calls for local authorities across the globe to lead the way placing food and local action at the heart of the global response to the climate emergency. Although the food partnership has so far been unable to see this action, there has good engagement with members of the climate assembly, with the beginnings of a Nature/Climate working group being formed. All of which demonstrate the whole systems approach being taken by the food partnership.
- 6.3.4 The Food Partnership has also made good progress attending and presenting at a wide range of forums such as Schools, Third Sector Community Asset Transfer, Economic Development and Regeneration and the Integrated Wellbeing Network. One such presentation to Deputy Minister for Mental Health & Well-being led to an impromptu and informal visit to see the good work being done to tackle holiday hunger at a local School. These actions have helped increase the visibility, build connections and shape influence within important areas of Blaenau Gwent.
- ### 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
- The Blaenau Gwent Sustainable Food Partnership has recently been accepted as a member of Sustainable Food Places member. The SFP network brings together pioneering food partnerships from towns, cities,

boroughs, districts and counties across the UK that are driving innovation and best practice on all aspects of healthy and sustainable food. Blaenau Gwent's membership demonstrates that our transition to a health, sustainable and more equitable food system requires not only strong national policy but also collaborative action between policy makers, businesses and civil society at the local level.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Through the groundwork and relationship building of the food partnership, the available funding from BGCBC Food Insecurity grant has been identified as to where it would have biggest impact. This will mean funding is both well spent and fairly distributed to areas with the highest level of need. Resulting in food poverty issues being addressed with a community led place based approach.

Further direct action has seen the food partnership establish links with a new charity, The Fed Line Project who will deliver cooking on a budget workshops and recipe cards to those relying on emergency food provisions (food banks and food redistribution centres). This is also being done in partnership with Flying Start and local churches who have suitable community kitchen space. All of which are good examples of partnership working and a food partnership delivering a joined up and coordinated approach to tackling food poverty.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

One of the keys aspects of the Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership has been its ability to support, guide and collaborate with groups operating in the food insecurity space. The best examples being helping with the Welsh Government EUTF Food Poverty grant, where local organisations and community groups were able to secure funding to deliver direct action, their bids helped by being members of the Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership. Examples include a community growing space and healthy eating workshops for young people being delivered whilst also building their capacity to provide much need food relief in the local area.

The structure and governance of the Food Partnership has been well established through monthly meetings with the steering group. These meetings have also received support from Food Sense Wales and the Soil Association, helping build a collective food partnership presence in the Gwent region. With the partnership structure well established, it has led to the application for Blaenau Gwent to become a member of the Sustainable Food Places network, a key step in providing the platform to see sustainable long term, meaningful change.

6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***

Tai Calon and partners recently submitted a bid for NRW funding which has been approved to fund a new member of staff for 3 days a week for a 6-month term. Supported by the coordinator, the partnership will oversee the development of a food strategy and action plan for the county borough that integrates to the social, economic, and environmental needs of its residents and community groups.

6.8 ***EqIA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***
The approach is built on the national principles for public engagement. There are number of established forums which support engagement of people covered by the protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
The PSB and SSG monitor progress through its strategic work programme performance management arrangements.