

T: 01495 357785 Ext./Est: 7785

E: committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Democratic Services



THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

4th February 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee will be held as a Hybrid Meeting: via Microsoft Teams/Abraham Derby Meeting Room, General Offices, Ebbw Vale on Wednesday, 9th February, 2022 at 1.00 pm.

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

AGENDA

Pages

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

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

will be provided if requested.

2. APOLOGIES

To receive.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

To receive.

4. REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 5 - 18

To receive the minutes of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 8th December, 2021.

(Please note the minutes are submitted for points of accuracy only.)

5. ACTION SHEET - 8TH DECEMBER 2021 19 - 20

To receive the Action Sheet.

6. LEVELLING UP FUNDING BID REQUEST 21 - 26

To consider the report of the Service Manager Business and Regeneration.

7. ANEURIN BEVAN DESTINATION STRATEGY 27 - 46

To consider the report of the Service Manager Business and Regeneration.

8. ASPIRE SHARED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME 47 - 54

To consider the report of the Corporate Director Regeneration and Community Services.

EXEMPT ITEM(S)

To receive and consider the following report(s) which in the opinion of the Proper Officer is/are an exempt item(s) taking into account consideration of the public interest test and that the press and public should be excluded from the meeting (the reason for the decision for the exemption is available on a schedule maintained by the Proper Officer).

9. TRANSFORMING TOWNS EMPTY PROPERTY 55 - 80

MANAGEMENT FUND

To consider the report of the Team Manager
Regeneration Opportunities.

To: Councillor J. Hill (Chair)
Councillor G. A. Davies (Vice-Chair)
Councillor M. Cross
Councillor M. Cook
Councillor G. L. Davies
Councillor P. Edwards
Councillor H. McCarthy
Councillor K. Hayden
Councillor S. Healy
Councillor W. Hodgins
Councillor J. C. Morgan
Councillor L. Parsons
Councillor G. Paulsen
Councillor K. Rowson
Councillor B. Willis

All other Members (for information)
Manager Director
Chief Officers

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

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

**SUBJECT: REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
8th DECEMBER, 2021**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR J. HILL (CHAIR)

Councillors G.A. Davies
G.L. Davies
M. Cross
P. Edwards
K. Hayden
S. Healy
W. Hodgins
J.C. Morgan
H. McCarthy
J. Holt (***substituting for L. Parsons***)
G. Paulsen
K. Rowson
M. Cook
B. Willis

AND: Managing Director
Corporate Director Regeneration & Community
Services
Head of Regeneration
Service Manager Business & Regeneration
Service Manager Development Services
Service Manager Policy & Partnerships
Professional Lead Strategic Partnerships
Policy Officer
Team Manager, Regeneration Opportunities
Team Manager, Connected Communities
Marketing & Communications Officer
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
----	<p><u>CONDOLENCES</u></p> <p>The Committee expressed sympathy on the sad death of Councillor David Wilkshire's wife Helen, and Members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.</p>	
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>Apologies for absence were reported for Councillors L. Parsons</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>The following declarations of interest were reported:</p> <p>Councillor W. Hodgins - Item No. 10 Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Performance Review 2020/21 Q2</p> <p>Councillor G. Paulsen - Item No. 8 Regional Approach to Employability</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd November, 2021 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET – 3RD NOVEMBER, 2021</u></p> <p>The Action Sheet arising from the meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd November, 2021 was submitted, whereupon:</p>	

	<p><u>Trinity Chapel</u></p> <p>A Member said he had requested the total cost of the scheme.</p> <p>In response the Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities said the figure detailed in the action sheet was the total being sought from Coalfields Regeneration Trust and Welsh Government, and included the internal refurbishment of Trinity Chapel and the existing library building. The Officer undertook to provide a more comprehensive breakdown of costs to Members.</p> <p>A Member asked whether the 'community shop' element was still intended, and the Officer confirmed that the community shop would be located in the existing library building to complement other community focussed facilities.</p> <p>Members expressed concern regarding the escalating costs of the Trinity Chapel project and relocation of the library into the town centre. They also expressed concern regarding the spend on Anvil Court when the Council did not own the building.</p> <p>Another Member pointed out that funding had been secured through Welsh Government and Coalfields Regeneration Trust. In terms of relocating the library, he said Aneurin Leisure Trust who managed the library facility felt that relocation into the town centre would increase footfall not only to the library but also Abertillery Town Centre.</p> <p>A Member pointed out that funding from Welsh Government was public money and in his opinion the escalating costs was a waste of public money.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Action Sheet be noted.</p>	
No. 6	<p><u>NET ZERO REPORTING, CLIMATE ASSEMBLY RESPONSE AND PROGRESSING TRANSITIONS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Managing Director.</p>	

The Managing Director presented the report which outlined the response to Welsh Government's Net Zero reporting requirements, and sought comments on an initial response to the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly report. The report also provided an update on the action plan development for the Decarbonisation Plan transitions.

The Managing Director spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein as follows:

Welsh Government Net Zero Reporting

The Council had responded to Welsh Government's Net Zero Reporting requirements at the end of October and this would form part of annual report to Welsh Government.

Section 2.5 of the report showed a fall in our carbon footprint of just over 3k tonnes of CO₂e for 2020-21 which equated to a 6% reduction. However, it was recognised that the Covid pandemic had contributed to this reduction, particularly in the way we are now working and delivering services and this would continue to be monitored in future years. The Managing Director said this was a positive start but demonstrated that in order to reach the Net Zero target there was a lot of work to be done.

Section 6 of the report provided a breakdown of the reduction in our carbon across different sections of the Council.

Responding as a Council to the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly

Also included within the report was the Council's proposed response to the recommendations of the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly.

The Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly was held in March 2021 and was the first of its kind in Wales. A number of residents took part in the Assembly and recommendations were made.

The Council continued to take an active role in responding with our partner organisations from the Public Services

Board, and attached to the report was the proposed response. The Managing Director referred to Section 2.14 and said this was a real opportunity to continue to engage with members of the Climate Assembly, as it was recognised that climate change needed a whole population response and working with the community was very important to bring about change. The report also highlighted the commitment to continue to engage with Climate Assembly members into the future.

Further Progress on Decarbonisation Plan Transitions

The Managing Director said the final aspect of the report was the action plan arising from the Council's latest transition works on electricity, heating and procurement (works), as part of the Decarbonisation Plan which set out how we could reduce our organisation emissions across nine transitions. Section 2.20 detailed the high level actions around energy use and the future of construction.

A Member said this was an excellent report and commended the Managing Director and the Team involved. He referred to page 56 which stated that it was intended to have all public buildings supplied with low carbon heating by 2030. He said this was a very ambitious target and questioned the viability of Anvil Court moving forward, as it was a leased building. He asked what energy category the building was currently in, the life expectancy of the building; and what improvements would be required to achieve the low carbon heating target.

In response the Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services said Anvil Court was energy rated 'C'. He said work was being done to determine what works would be required across all our buildings and this would lead to a number of decisions moving forward.

Another Member asked whether funding would be available from Welsh Government to help achieve these targets.

The Managing Director said significant investment would be required across the Council's property portfolio, including schools, as Welsh Government had made a commitment through its 21st Century Schools Programme that any new

school must be built to net zero carbon standard; and there were a number of existing schools that would need refurbishment. Section 2.20 of the report highlighted the work being done to understand the condition of current buildings and what work would be needed to bring them up to standard. The Managing Director confirmed that some of this work would be funded through the Council's capital programme, but she assured that Officers would seek funding opportunities to support our own investment, and while Welsh Government had not provided any indication of funding commitment at this stage this may change during upcoming budget process.

In response to a further question the Managing Director said the work outlined in the report would be undertaken early 2022.

A Member commended the report, but asked whether there was sufficient capacity and expertise within the Council to undertake this significant piece of work.

The Managing Director confirmed that she led on the Decarbonisation Board, and the Team was pivotal to that and included all services of the Council, and recently the Aneurin Leisure Trust. Work was also being done to embed the action plan into the business planning process across all services of the Council moving forward, and make the decarbonisation agenda 'business as usual' in terms of how we deliver our services. In terms of the expertise required, she confirmed that external support would be required in developing parts of the plan and the transformation fund would be used to support and boost capacity for specific pieces of work.

The Service Manager Policy & Partnerships said this was an organisational approach, including Members in their scrutiny role. He pointed out that decarbonisation would form part of the reporting framework for all reports to Committee and provide Members with an opportunity to challenge specific areas. The structures set up in response to Bridging the Gap arrangements had appropriately embedded this work within the Council, and the Team would have corporate oversight moving forward.

	<p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and support the progress made and supports the response to the Climate Assembly and submission of report to the Executive Committee (Option 1).</p>	
No. 7	<p><u>ENERGY PROSPECTUS ANNUAL REVIEW</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities.</p> <p>The Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities presented the report which provided an update on progress for the last 12 months on the Energy Prospectus and emerging opportunities for the future.</p> <p>The Officer spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein. Section 2.7 of the report highlighted some of the activities that were completed during 2021, and further detail on the projects was contained within Appendix 1 – Energy Prospectus Annual Review 2020-21.</p> <p>A Member said this was an excellent report and commended the approach taken by the Council. He said climate change was one of the biggest challenges moving forward and he was proud to be part of a Council driving in forward. He referred to the role out of the electric taxis and expressed concern that taxi drivers in the area have stated that it would be difficult for them to achieve sufficient fares to cover the cost of an electric vehicle. He also expressed concern that people were parking next to charging points and blocking access and asked whether parking restrictions could be implement.</p> <p>In response the Team Leader Regeneration Opportunities said the cost of the taxis had been recognised as an issue for drivers, and Cardiff Capital Region City Deal was looking at funding opportunities. Following the 2 year programme the taxis would be available to purchase and CCRCD were looking at potential incentive schemes and funding options for that purpose. She also confirmed that new electricity charging points would be subject to traffic regulation orders to prevent people blocking access.</p>	

	<p>A brief discussion ensued when Members expressed disappointment that a proposal for a micro hydro power project had been rejected. A Member also asked whether there were any plans to install solar panels on our buildings, particularly on our industrial units.</p> <p>The Officer said it was important to note that other schemes were being considered, and the micro hydro power project may become viable in the future and the background work had already been undertaken.</p> <p>She confirmed that solar panels had been installed on some buildings as part of the RE:Fit Programme, and a number of potential schemes for our business parks were being considered including an energy sharing scheme.</p> <p>In relation to the electric vehicle charging points, a Member asked whether the location of these had been advertised, and suggested that they be advertised on the notice boards in town centres. He also asked whether taxi drivers had been informed of the new scheme.</p> <p>The Officer confirmed that work was currently ongoing to advertise the charging points, and the town centre notice boards could be used as part of that work. She also confirmed that taxi drivers in areas where charging points were up and running had been informed of the scheme, and hopefully by next week all the charging points would go live and all taxi drivers would be informed accordingly.</p> <p>In response to a further question the Officer confirmed that the public charging points were being utilised across the Borough, and usage had doubled in Ebbw Vale in November.</p> <p>A Member asked whether registered social landlords had expressed an interest in charging points on their housing estates.</p> <p>The Officer said this had not been discussed, however, there had been some discussion around charging points for their fleet vehicles moving forward.</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>In response to a further question regarding charging points at fast food outlets and new developments, the Officer said she understood there were some planning requirements, but this depended on the scale of the development etc.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support and promote and develop the projects within the energy prospectus; and to ensure that the document was updated to reflect any additional projects that have emerged; and • Continue to identify future projects that will also meet the vision and objectives of the Council with respect to energy and decarbonisation. (Option 2) 	
No. 8	<p><u>REGIONAL APPROACH TO EMPLOYABILITY</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Team Manager Connected Communities.</p> <p>The Team Manager Connected Communities presented the report which sought endorsement of the regional paper and the principles of a locally delivered, regionally co-ordinated approach to employability (appendix 1). The paper was developed with contributions from each of the 10 Local Authority areas within the Cardiff Capital Region. This report was specific to the regional paper; however, consideration to the “Blaenau Gwent Employability Provision – Position Statement” report, presented separately, should be made.</p> <p>The Officer then went through the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>A Member referred to section 2.14 of the report and said he would like to see all industries in the HoV area prioritised.</p> <p>In response the Team Leader Connected Communities confirmed that provisional support across the full breadth of employment opportunities would be needed in the HoV region, and the Council would make this point to the CCR.</p>	

	<p>A Member expressed concern regarding the number of employability schemes/providers in the area and whether their performance was being scrutinised.</p> <p>The Officer confirmed that early discussions were taking place with partners to understand how best to deliver on a regional framework, but to ensure that it delivered for us locally.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when the Corporate Director said this was an opportunity to look at what we need in Blaenau Gwent and regionally in terms of employability, and enable us to shape any future funding streams around that need. He said our communities needed that help and support but funding was coming to an end, and this work was about trying to get collective agreement across the 10 LA's to allow us to have local flexibility within the overall regional programme.</p> <p>A Member agreed and said the provision needed to fit locally for the people of Blaenau Gwent. He said a reduction in service providers was inevitable, and enquired as to the Council's position regarding the risk for existing staff in ESF projects that may not continue</p> <p>The Team Leader Connected Communities confirmed that it had been highlighted as a risk and the situation would continue to be monitored. She said it was important to protect staff and retain that knowledge and experience.</p> <p>The Corporate Director said the Council had made the point politically and professionally that we cannot afford to lose the capacity and expertise in this area, and that the Council was keen to know what future programme was intended.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorsement of the regional paper and the principle of a locally delivered, regionally co-ordinated approach to employability. (Option 1)</p>	
No. 9	<p><u>EBBW VALE PLACEMAKING PLAN</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities.</p>	

The Team Manager Regeneration Opportunities presented the report which sought endorsement of the Ebbw Vale Place Making Plan.

The Officer went through the report and highlighted points contained therein.

A Member expressed concern regarding the plan and felt that it did not contain anything different from various other plans developed over the years.

Another Member expressed concern that the transport options was an obstacle for people accessing the town centre from Rassau and Garnlydan.

In response to comments made the Team Leader Regeneration Opportunities confirmed that the multi storey car park had been identified as a key site needing action, and options had been modelled and these options would form part of the delivery plan for Members to consider and make decisions on projects.

A Member felt that public consultation should have been undertaken at an early stage.

The Officer explained that Members were involved at the initial fact finding stage, and the Plan was presented to Ward Members. The Officer confirmed that public consultation had not been undertaken at this stage, however, the retail and leisure studies undertaken as part of the replacement LDP had been used, and the Consultants had engaged with businesses within the town centre. The next stage would include engagement with young people and schools and the College.

A discussion ensued when the Officer clarified points raised by Members regarding the options detailed in the Plan.

A Member said the multi storey car park was not fit or purpose and expressed concern that the Council was spending money when it was in private ownership.

	<p>The Officer confirmed that discussions were taking place with the landowner.</p> <p>The Corporate Director said he understood Members' frustrations regarding the multi storey car park, however, the arrangement was entered into by the old Urban District Council, and the Council did not have the leverage expected under a normal lease arrangement. He said this work was about find a solution that best fits the.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted endorsed the Ebbw Vale Placemaking Plan, its vision and core ambitions for the future, to enable the draft of the delivery plan to be finalised, and steps towards implementation of the projects that will be contained within it. (Option 2)</p>	
No. 10	<p><u>CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2020/21 Q2</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 provided an update on the performance of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) against projects relating to investment in Blaenau Gwent during over the middle period of 2020/21.</p> <p>The Officer went through the report and highlighted progress against key targets identified within the CCR Business Plan for 2020/2, with the highlights for Blaenau Gwent including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Plus Programme - Transport for Wales (TfW) progress • Ultra Low Emission Transformation Fund • Housing Catalyst Fund • Challenge Fund Application • Aspire Roll Out <p>A Member referred to a recent press report which stated that the railway line between Crosskeys and Newport would commence service in the next few weeks, and asked</p>	

	<p>whether the Council would receive payback of the fares when that became operational.</p> <p>In response the Head of Regeneration confirmed that the Agreement and the drawing down of fares would commence upon completion of the whole project. Crosskeys to Newport was not part of the project we are delivering.</p> <p>The Member asked when this could be expected, and the Corporate Director said it was likely 2023/24, but this depended on progress of the contractor. The project would initially enable 2 trains per hour, but the infrastructure would be in place to eventually increase to 4 trains per hour, however, the Abertillery spur would be needed for this.</p> <p>A Member referred to section 2.15 and the number of housing developments currently underway in the Borough, and asked whether any interest had been expressed by RSL's and private developers regarding the use of green energy technology in their buildings.</p> <p>In response the Head of Regeneration confirmed that a lot of work was being done around decarbonisation. There was very limited low carbon housing in the Borough, and refurbishment of old houses was more important than new builds because they were in greater numbers. Building Regulations already had high standards for new developments, but she confirmed that work was being done with RSL's to look at making some of their sites more carbon neutral, and also with private developers, however, we could only ask them to do as much as planning and building regulations required.</p> <p>The Team Leader Connected Communities pointed out that Welsh Government have significant ambitions for affordable housing and the green agenda, and hopefully they will introduce incentives for RSL's with grant funding.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and the information contained there be noted.</p>	
No. 11	<u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME – 9TH FEBRUARY, 2022</u>	

<p>Consideration was given to the Forward Work Programme for the meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Committee scheduled for 9th February, 2022.</p> <p>A Member asked that Tredegar Member have sight of the Aneurin Bevan Report and Tredegar Place Making Plan prior to it being submitted to Scrutiny.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and the Forward Work Programme for 9th February, 2022 be approved.</p>	
--	--

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Action Sheet

Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 8th December 2021

Item	Action to be Taken	By Whom	Action Taken
5	<u>Action Sheet – 3rd November 2021</u> Trinity Chapel – A comprehensive briefing note to be provided on the costs associated with the refurbishment of Trinity Chapel.	Amy Taylor	Update to be provided.
8	<u>Regional Approach to Employability</u> GAVO Communities for Work Programme performance targets to be provided.	Bethan McPherson	GAVO Communities for Work (CfW) Programme in BG are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total Number engaged in the programme: 884• Number into Employment - 384 - 43.4%• Number undertaking work related training/ qualifications - 355 - 40.1%• Number undertaking work experience placement /volunteering opportunities - 230 - 26% *The figures relate to GAVO delivery of the CFW programme only and are not inclusive of the DWP delivery element.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **9th February 2022**
Report Subject: **Levelling Up Funding Bid Request**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr David Davies, Executive Member for
Regeneration and Economic Development**
Report Submitted by: **Owen Ashton, Service Manager Business and
Regeneration**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
11.01.22	13.01.22	31.01.22			23.02.22	02.03.22		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To request authority to submit Levelling Up Funding (LUF) bids during the second call in line with the UK Govt LUF timetable.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The LUF is a UK Govt fund of £800 M for the devolved nations over the next four years (up to 2024-25). Bids for the first round of funding had to demonstrate investment or delivery could begin on the ground in that financial year. The funds are administered on a competitive basis.
 - 2.2 The second call for bids is expected to open in April/May 2022 and close in June/July 2022; exact dates will be reported when they have been confirmed. We are anticipating that the call will be focussed around capital works and towns with money having to be spent by 2024/25. This could provide an opportunity to secure funds to implement projects that are emerging out of the Master Plan/Place making Work undertaken in Brynmawr and Ebbw Vale.
 - 2.3 The Regeneration and Development Team have been working on Placemaking Plans for BGs towns to prepare for funding applications to UK and Welsh Government. The detail of the deliverability and sequencing of projects in these plans is still being developed.
 - 2.4 In preparation for the expected announcement in the Spring it is prudent that the Council agrees that a bid for the LUF can be developed. Some of the key principles around the regeneration of towns post pandemic are set out below. The combined
 - Facilitating towns as multi-purpose locations with a variety of uses, such as residential, education, healthcare, cultural, technology, community and purpose-focussed retail and hospitality;
 - New purposes for sites and town buildings to encourage more uses in the town centre;
 - Working with the changes in retail to encourage business start-up in our towns;

- Working with towns/communities to encourage more sustainable buildings, landscape and infrastructure as part of the decarbonisation agenda.
- 2.5 An adequate lead in time will be required as HM Treasury Green Book applications will need to be worked up which are very detailed and require a lot of technical input which means that if the Council wishes to submit a bid or bids preparation may need to begin before there is a Council structure to make decisions. However, this work has begun with the Placemaking plans which will form part of the background evidence for the bids, but there is still a large amount of work to be done.
- 2.6 The LUF Town Centre criteria from the current guidance sets out the following:
“Regeneration and town centre investment, building on the Towns Fund framework to upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces into town and city centres.”
- 2.7 Currently the projects that meet the current LUF criteria and more developed are the Ebbw Vale Multi Storey Car Park, and/or possibly the police station; and the Brynmawr Bus Depot site. There may also be an opportunity to bid for monies for BG Town centres to decarbonise all the town centres through buildings improvements; and green and blue infrastructure critical to the future of sustainable development, health and wellbeing. Further details of these will be brought back to Members during the new Council session.

However, UK government could change the criteria for the next round and so previously mentioned projects may no longer be suitable which would mean we would be unlikely to submit any application in round two.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Option 1: (Preferred) To prepare applications for the next LUF round of bidding for the schemes identified in the report in paragraph 2.7.
- 3.2 Option 2: not to support the report and miss the next round for the LUF UK Govt funding.
- 4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**
- 4.1 **Corporate Plan** - BG's towns can play a part in a number of the Corporate Priorities. The Strong and Environmentally Smart Communities does not mention towns specifically but it is embodied in the aims of the priority. Similarly, the Education and Social Services priorities can fit into the new vision for towns and link to the new Town Hubs that have already been developed.

Finally, the Economic Development and Regeneration priority sets out the main areas of work that we would associate with facilitating improvements in our town centres.

- 4.2 **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act** - There are a number of goals that town centres touch in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; one could argue that towns actually impact all of them. However the main goals are:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A globally responsible Wales
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A Wales of cohesive communities

- 4.3 **Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan** -Town centres do not feature as an objective in themselves but they are intrinsic in a number of the objectives in the BG Wellbeing Plan:

- Safe and friendly communities
- Look after and protect its natural environment
- Forge new pathways to prosperity
- Encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play.

- 4.4 **Social Services and Wellbeing Act** - Town centres can play a part in the main principles of the Act through provision of a place that is suitable to provide social and economic wellbeing, and where individuals are able to participate and contribute to society.

- 4.5 **Environment Act (specifically the Section 6 Duty)** - Section 6 of the Environment Act is to do with our responsibility as a Council in maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, and promoting the resilience of ecosystems.

- 4.6 The bid for LUF will need to address both decarbonisation and biodiversity of town centres. Providing access to open and green space is strongly associated with wellbeing and successful, sustainable and attractive town centres.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Submitting the bids to UK Govt will not have an immediate effect on the Council budget. A further report setting out what match funding will be expected will be brought to Council in the Summer.

- 5.2 If the report is not agreed and no applications are submitted there will be no immediate budget implications however this could have future negative consequences for the towns in BG.

5.3 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The risks around submitting a bid, and the bid content will be dealt with through the project development/LUF bid.

5.4 The risks around not submitting a bid are both reputational and the potential loss of capital investment into the town centres in BG.

5.5 ***Legal***

There are no legal implications associated with the content of this report.

5.6 ***Human Resources***

Additional technical expertise will be required to work on the bids. There is separate funding identified by UK Govt for this work to assist local authorities with development costs.

6. ***Supporting Evidence***

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

There is currently no PI or data to support this report.

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

There are no outcomes associated with this report; the outcomes will be linked to the bid for LUF.

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

Involvement through consultation and engagement will be part of the bid process.

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

There are no implications to consider as part of this report.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The bids for LUF are aimed at improvements to towns in BG and as such should have a preventative focus in terms of the built environment. Not submitting a bid may have a detrimental effect.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Regeneration team will be working in partnership to develop and deliver the bids to LUF.

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

Integration will be achieved across service areas through formal and informal arrangements.

6.8 ***Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions***

Decarbonisation will be a key consideration in the LUF bid.

6.9a ***Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment***

Not applicable for this report, although the project will be subject of this assessment.

6.9b. ***Equality Impact Assessment***

Not applicable for the bid process.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 Monitoring of the bid, if successful will be through a dedicated Project Board with town groups involved in individual projects.
Formal evaluation will be through UK Govt following the project implementation.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **9th February 2022**

Report Subject: **Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr D Davies, Executive Member Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Owen Ashton, Service Manager – Business & Regeneration**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
18.01.2022	20.01.2022	31.01.22			09.02.2022			

1. **Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Members endorsement of the Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy.

1.2 The report provides a summary of the Strategy's content, and the Themes around which a range of projects are based.

2. **Background and Current Position**

Context

2.1 Celebrating the life and legacy of Aneurin Bevan in an appropriate and meaningful way has been a priority for a number of years. In addition to the intrinsic value of celebrating 'the architect of the NHS', it has also been seen as a way to help support and promote the area, its heritage, and wider economic regeneration.

2.2 In 2018 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, working collaboratively with Visit Wales, commissioned a Strategy with the aim of:

- Increasing visitor numbers to the area.
- Raising the profile of the area.
- Challenge and change perceptions of the area.
- Encourage the growth and sustainability of existing product.
- Increase footfall into our town centres.
- Stimulate and support new regeneration projects.
- Stimulate and support economic growth through inward investment and job creation.

The Strategy

2.3 Following a competitive procurement exercise, a collaborative bid was received from a consortium of consultants including comprising Can Do Team, Letha Consultancy and Wye Knot Tourism who were awarded the commission.

2.4 The consortium co-produced a Strategy in consultation with a range of stakeholders including members of the public, community groups and identified a series of Themes around which projects could be developed. These Themes are:

- Bevan – Creator of the NHS
- Bevan the Politician
- Bevan – Son of Tredegar
- Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist
- Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater
- Bevan the Bibliophile and Author

2.5 A range of projects have been identified within the context of these themes and are included in the attached Executive Summary. Since the projects have been identified, due to a range of factors including time elapsed due to Covid-19 further work is needed to establish more up-to-date costs for the projects identified.

Current Position

2.6 The Strategy ties into and complements the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Plan (DMP) and will provide a framework for delivering local projects under the strategic umbrella of the DMP.

2.7 Approval is being sought to endorse the proposals and enable officers to further develop the projects, including feasibility work and establish updated costs. Should this be endorsed, a further report will be presented in future updating on progress on the development and delivery of projects.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option one – Scrutiny support the Aneurin Bevan Strategy and recommend approval by the Executive.

3.2 Option two – The Aneurin Bevan Strategy is supported with amendments requested, prior to approval by the Executive Committee.

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

4.1 Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board: Established in April 2016, and is currently working towards preparing a Well-being Plan for the area. Tourism will offer an opportunity in Blaenau Gwent to help the area contribute towards the long-term future of the area.

4.2 The Blaenau Gwent Local Plan 2018-2022
The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Section 15), places a duty on all Local Authorities in Wales to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. As part of this, the Council is required to develop a Corporate

Plan. The priorities developed for the Corporate Plan incorporate the previous Council Well-being Objectives and also represent our Improvement Objectives, as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure.

5. Implications Against Each Option

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

- 5.1.1 The Strategy will be developed and delivered collaboratively with partners, with funding sought from a range of sources including internal budgets e.g. Destination Management and where necessary from external funders.
- 5.1.2 The Strategy will support the Authority in making funding applications to external funding bodies including Welsh Government, Visit Wales and others, to deliver projects.
- 5.1.3 Any priorities identified within the Strategy requiring additional funding will be reported as appropriate, identifying any potential impact on BGCBC resources.
- 5.1.4 Retention of the Destination Management budget is essential to supporting the five-year delivery of the Aneurin Bevan Strategy.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

- 5.2.1 The Strategy will form part of the wider DMP which is Blaenau Gwent's strategic document to support destination related activity. Without such a Strategy it will be difficult to ensure buy-in from stakeholder and secure funding to deliver projects.
- 5.2.2 Reduction in available staff resources will impact upon the Council's ability to implement activity contained within the action plan.
- 5.2.3 There is a risk of partner organisations not prioritising agreed actions which could negatively impact upon the implementation of the overall plan.
- 5.2.4 Failure of local tourism stakeholders to engage in the Destination Management Partnership will result in a weak monitoring of the Strategy. The Destination Management Officer will dedicate time to strengthening the partnership membership.

5.3 *Legal*

- 5.3.1 There are no legal implications to the development of the Strategy at this stage. Any activities arising as a result of the Strategy will be delivered within existing legal governance arrangements.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

- 5.4.1 Delivery of the Strategy will be co-ordinated through the Council's Destination Management Officer and overseen by the Destination Management Partnership

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

- 6.1.1 Nationally - The Strategy will form part of the DMP which is referenced Welsh Government's / Visit Wales new tourism framework and The Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- 6.1.2 Regionally – South Wales Tourism Forum, South East Wales Destination Management Group and South East Wales Destination Implementation Group
- 6.1.3 Locally - Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board, the Blaenau Gwent Local Plan 2018-2022 and the Blaenau Gwent Corporate Plan.

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

- 6.2.1 The Strategy could benefit local businesses, residents and visitors alike through developing a more prosperous economy, pleasant environment and inspiring pride in our heritage and the areas role in the establishment of the NHS.

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

The Destination Management Partnership meet quarterly at various venues across the County Borough. The group has increased membership and is a strong and cohesive voice for local tourism and will support and oversee the development and delivery of the Strategy.

- 6.3.1 The Destination Management Officer regularly engages with stakeholders and the community to ensure that their voices are heard and acted upon and ongoing consultation will be undertaken on the development and delivery of the Strategy.

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

- 6.4.1 The BGDMP lifetime has been extended from 3 years to 5 years to allow the partnership to take a long term vision for tourism. This will assist in providing continuity of oversight for the Strategy.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

- 6.5.1 Without a Strategy there will be no focus and monitoring of delivery nor a framework in place to secure funding for projects.

6.6 *Collaboration / partnership working*

- 6.6.1 The Local Authority works collaboratively with Welsh Government, other local authorities, local businesses, trusts, public bodies and the voluntary sector in delivering the Destination Management Plan of which the Strategy forms a part. Ongoing consultation with the community will ensure that projects are supported and are collaboratively delivered.

6.7 *Integration (across service areas)*

- 6.7.1 Prosperous - The Destination Management Plan aims to improve the profitability of business performance through building the capacity of the industry.
- 6.7.2 Healthier - walking and activities in the outdoors through the development of walking and cycling routes will benefit the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and visitors.
- 6.7.3 Equal- By making recreational activities accessible to all.
- 6.7.4 Culture & Language - Through the use of the Welsh language in all our promotional materials and on line and celebrating our heritage and culture.
- 6.7.5 Globally Responsible - By protecting and promoting our unique natural and built environment, encouraging use of sustainable transport and supporting businesses in securing the Green Dragon environmental standard awarded to organisations that are taking action to control their impacts on the environment.

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

- 6.8.1 The Strategy and the wider DMP embraces all residents and visitors. It has no adverse impact on people or groups from the nine protected characteristics.

7. *Monitoring Arrangements*

- 7.1 The delivery of the Strategy will be overseen and monitored quarterly through the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Partnership.
- 7.2 Annual updates will be provided to Scrutiny Committee and Executive and on request.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 - Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy Executive Summary

This page is intentionally left blank

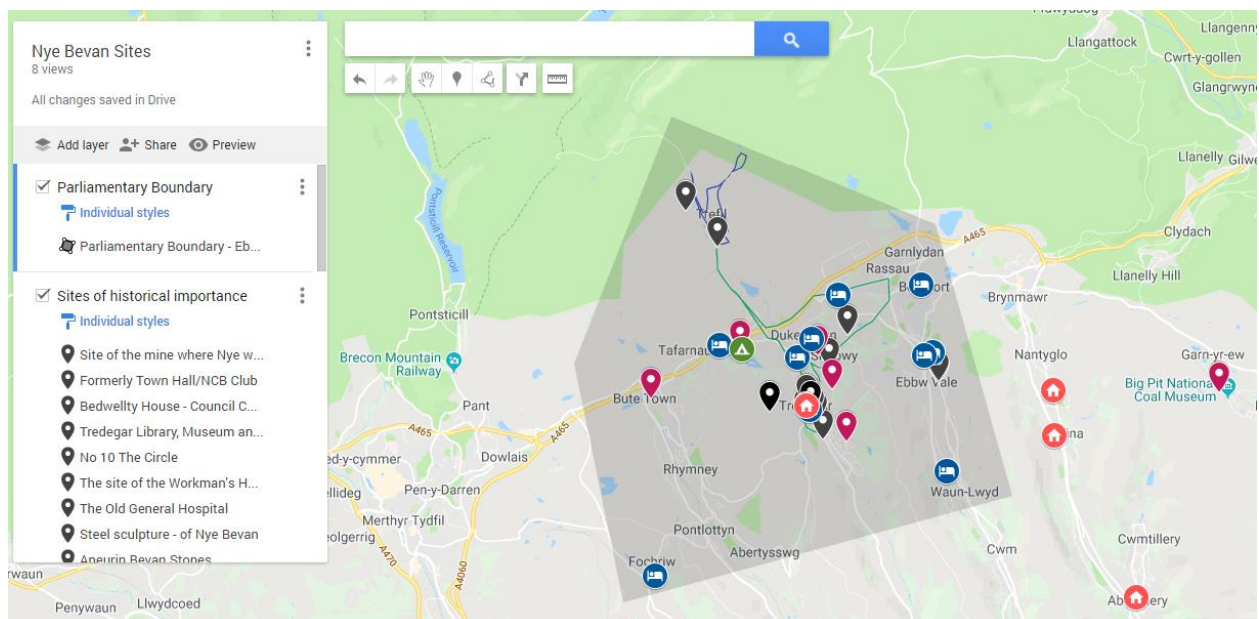
Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy

Executive Summary

This strategy has been commissioned by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Visit Wales (Welsh Government) specifically to examine how the legacy of Aneurin Bevan can be harnessed to develop and expand the tourism sector primarily within the area that he represented, as well as challenging and changing the perception of the area.

Review of the Current Situation

Across the area that Nye Bevan represented there are a range of memorials, buildings and collections that have a connection with him. There are also a few sites in other parts of Wales that add to the story.



There are currently a wide range of artworks and interpretation sources available about Aneurin Bevan and his connections to the area. However, most are:

- out of date
- poorly maintained
- and are not connected in their development or operation, leading to considerable duplication in the narrative, i.e. all saying about the NHS.

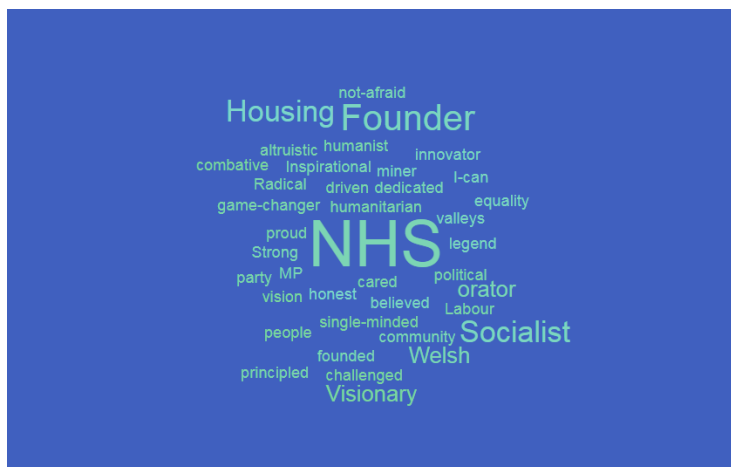
Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken through a number of channels:

- Face to face meetings – see Appendix 1
- Public consultation event promoted by posters, direct messages and via various social media channels (related to history and the area)
- Online survey for the general public, promoted by direct messages, as well as through social media posts on pages related to history and the area.
- A targeted online survey to tour guides who bring visitors to south Wales (WOTGA members)

Public Consultation

Public Consultation was undertaken to elicit the views of local people as well as some outside the area with a keen interest. The consultation took the form of a public meeting, survey monkey questionnaire and questionnaires left at Tredegar Museum. In total 20 responses were received.



Summarising Nye

Respondents were first asked to identify key words that they felt described Bevan. These words were then analysed using a word cloud programme. This generated the following graphic. The larger the word/phrase appears, the more often it was cited by respondents. Clearly the NHS (and his role as founder of it) are the key messages that people associate with Nye Bevan. It is interesting to also note that he is remembered for his work on social housing and that he is remembered as a socialist, a visionary and an orator – as well as being Welsh.

How Tredegar Shaped Nye

Respondents were asked “How do you think that Tredegar shaped Nye Bevan? What drove him and inspired him?”

People clearly thought that his experiences growing up and as a miner were very influential on him - in particular injustice, inequality, poverty/poor living conditions, ill-health and the exploitation of working people. Respondents also felt that he was influenced by the strong sense of community spirit he witnessed through things like the Medical Aid Society.

“Seeing Tredegar Medical Aid Society in action he wanted to Tredegarise Britain”

What aspects of Nye can be used to help engage, inspire and influence people today?

Respondents were given a series of ‘storylines’ and were asked to rank them.

- i. Bevan’s Achievements - Establishing the National Health Service and his ambitious programme of building over 800,000 homes after WW2.
- ii. Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist - Miner – miners’ agent – Trade Unions – helping miners on strike.
- iii. Charismatic Bevan – Part of the Query Club; securing power in council and parliamentary chambers; securing the BMA to establish the NHS. Also being an International Statesman – links to Soviet Union, USA, etc.
- iv. Bevan the Master Orator - Overcoming his stammer by reciting poetry and prose; learning a huge vocabulary; holding public meetings in village halls and open air meetings for election rallies to the huge gatherings in Trafalgar Square. His oratory is well documented.
- v. Bevan the Bibliophile - His love of reading, libraries, reciting poetry and prose to overcome his stammer.
- vi. Bevan the Politician - His journey from Trade Union representative to Tredegar Urban District Council then Monmouthshire County Council and ultimately to Parliament. His transition from representing miners to representing constituents.
- vii. Bevan’s personal life - His marriage to Jenny Lee. His love of walking. His love of music, plays, books – and good times. Overcoming adversity – his stammer, TICC, Mine owners, poverty etc.

As with the key words, it was the changes that Bevan made to the health and wellbeing of the nation – the NHS and Housing - that were felt to be the strongest storyline. What also became clear was that these storylines didn’t give the complete picture of the inter-related story of Bevan, Tredegar and the NHS, and as such, they were subsequently expanded upon to include:

- Bevan the Inspiration

- How Tredegar shaped Nye
- Birthplace of the NHS
- Life before the NHS

Celebrating Bevan

There are already a number of sites that tell part of Bevan's story. Respondents were presented with a list and asked to rank them. They were also asked to say what they thought could be improved at each one. The combined results are shown below:

1st Bevan Stones:

- There were concerns over the condition and maintenance of the site. It was also felt that it needed better interpretation and perhaps an outdoor classroom space. Signage needed and explanatory material needed

Joint 2nd 10 the Circle:

- It was felt the site suffered from lack of profile. People were unaware of the existing plaque.

Joint 2nd NUM/Town Hall Building, Tredegar:

- People were unsure of the condition/ownership of the site, but felt it was important in the story of Bevan and should be interpreted.

Joint 2nd Bedwellty House:

- Respondents were complimentary about the site but felt that more could be done to emphasise the story of Bevan as a local politician.

Joint 3rd Aneurin Bevan Trail and the 'In the footsteps of Nye Bevan' walking route:

- People felt the routes could be enhanced/updated.

4th Tredegar Museum:

- People appreciated the role the museum plays but felt more could be done to help the story of Nye 'stand out'. They also felt it could be moved to bigger premises.

5th Gwent Archives:

- Most people appreciated the value of the collections held by the archive and felt they could be used to enhance the story.

6th Artwork:

- People felt it was of variable quality and sometimes needed explanation.

Participants also added the Bevan Festival.

Bevan's Legacy and project ideas

Respondents were asked "Where and how do you think Bevan's legacy should be celebrated"? The key ideas coming through included

- the creation of a multimedia experience/ National Museum of Health and Medicine/ new NHS heritage centre
- closer links to education and the curriculum
- setting up an annual Bevan award for achievement, aimed at young people
- development of the Bevan Festival
- Embedding the development of the NHS and the influence of the Medical Aid Society into courses for student nurses/doctors and health workers.
- Webpage
- Local guides/ambassadors
- An Ironbridge style tourist attraction pulling all the sites together
- Debating societies
- A statue.
- Innovation and technology centre linked to education
- To utilise the town and use the knowledge of the community

Conclusion re Public Consultation

Although based on a small sample, it was clear from the consultation that people felt passionately about Nye Bevan and his legacy, epitomised by the NHS. They were all positive about the potential to use his story to improve the area and to engage with people and from the ideas generated it was apparent that they supported an ambitious approach.

Overall Summary of Consultation

Across all the consultation strands it is very clear that there is pride and belief in Nye Bevan's legacy. Whilst people recognise his principles, skill as a visionary politician and as an orator, most define his legacy as the NHS, the first universal healthcare system in the world. In particular the key principles of the NHS, which separated what was delivered in 1948 from what had been talked about by all political parties beforehand,

- Universality, equality and quality of care.
- A comprehensive service.
- A centrally funded health service, free at the point of delivery.

It is also very clear that people see that the community in which he was born and brought up, made him the man he was; his experiences of hard work, poverty and unfairness left deep marks on him.

There is a recognition that whilst there are numerous sites and resources that relate to Nye Bevan in and around Tredegar, most are in need to investment, reinterpretation and promotion. There is also a perceived need to link the sites and to integrate with other key facilities and projects across the Heads of the Valleys area.

Quality is defined as a key attribute that is essential to all elements of a visit to ensure that visitors have a good experience, comparable to other places that they might encounter in a 2 hour travel area.

Most of the people interviewed and who responded to the online survey have a great interest and enthusiasm in the area and in Nye. The comments from WOTGA are a bit of a reality check, that not everybody knows Nye, and that a visit to this area needs to be enjoyable as well as educational.

Exemplars - Key Observations

A range of personality and medical destinations were examined; here are the key observations.

Geographic focal point

A common thread in the most effective exemplars is that they all have a geographic/ physical focal point to hang their figure on and act as a base for their 'hero'. Some have a complete trail of locations, which can be a stately home, a family home, or a building repurposed because of its proximity to significant history related to the individual. Regeneration of an area is often a goal. The most effective product development work includes walking tours and 'discover X country' tours so that benefits are spread out from the focal point and visitor understanding of the context/setting is assisted.

Walking in their footsteps

The strongest 'offers' are where the attraction or museum relates directly to the life events of the individual – where they were born, lived, worked, died, and where you really feel you are walking in their footsteps. The Churchill Trail is a very strong example of this.

Associated collection

The strongest offers also have depth by having a 'collection'(s) associated with the hero/individual. This ranges from a ship (Brunel) to a library with 20,000 books (Gladstone). Artefacts and historical documents are common elements which help to back up learning opportunities.

Championing a cause

The strongest offers have an element of championing/ campaigning/ being a vehicle for modern day activism. Several of the locations are striving to create a place where like-minded

people can step out of day to day concerns and find a place to think, challenge, solve problems and generally champion the cause of their hero. The Gladstone Library has a commitment to looking forward, as do international examples such as the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Martin Luther King & the National civil Rights Museum.

Status and Governance

Most are charitable trust / membership organisations with common activities such as annual dinners, wreath laying ceremonies at graves and public sculptures, competitions (art/literature/ ideas). Those offering a lively programme of events seem to be the strongest (e.g. Gladstone Library).

Support network

Each one has built a following of like-minded people who share admiration for or love the work of the public figure. Some form of society/ friends' organisation or association provides background impetus and energy, as well as a ready pool of volunteers and visitors.

Education

Education is integral to almost all these examples. It ranges from school and National Curriculum targeted resources and activities to continuing education and life-long learning.

Digital presence

Some of the best examples pay lots of attention to their digital presence. For example Gladstone's Library want to ensure that *'the online presence of the Library is as unique and distinctive as the physical institution'*. That's something to aspire to.

Overall Strategic Approach

The public consultation clearly shows that people principally link Nye with the NHS – that is his primary legacy.

When you read about Nye it is very clear that he created the NHS around principles that he had developed from very early childhood; those principles were created through his contact with people in his home town of Tredegar, how he saw other people being treated and the inequalities that he witnessed. His reading and the debates he engaged with in groups such as the Query Club sharpened his arguments and ways of expressing ideas, as well as his ability to persuade people to his point of view.

So, we see the overall Strategy as working around a simple theme:

“The place that made the man, who created the NHS”

This emphasises the connection of Nye to the unique history of the area that he represented and recognises that we are made by the community in which we live and grow up (*it is not intended to be the branding tagline*). In Nye's life, his past culminated in the NHS with his key, ongoing principles of:

- Universality, equality and quality of care.
- A comprehensive service.
- A centrally funded health service, free at the point of delivery.

In recognising that Nye is a more complex character and has links much wider than the NHS which can be explored, we are proposing that different stories are told at different sites, which then link together, as you find if you visit Ironbridge, where different museums tell different stories. This will allow visitors to explore some or all of the overall story in ways that they choose, over long or short periods of time, in any order that they decide. It will give unique storylines for different sites, removing duplication – creating an “**Ironbridge**” approach across the area.

Interpretative Approach

Recognising that the NHS and Health have higher levels of recognition (than Nye) and that Nye Bevan is a more complex character than just the person who created the NHS, and that his views were influenced by the area in which he grew up, the people he met, the things that he witnessed, an overarching interpretative theme has been developed:

“The place that made the man, who created the NHS.”

This sits above a group of strong themes to be used under this overarching theme

“Home of the NHS” (across the wider area allowing all of his constituency – or Blaenau Gwent to be associated with the creation of the NHS)

“Tredegar – Home of the NHS” (in the town)

These sit above six sub themes which would be used to define the narrative at individual sites, create a rich narrative that is beyond simply linking Nye to the NHS.

1. **Bevan – Creator of the NHS**
2. **Bevan the Politician**
3. **Bevan – Son of Tredegar**
4. **Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist**
5. **Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater**

6. Bevan the Bibliophile and Author

These sub themes will also allow sites across Blaenau Gwent CBC and further afield to be linked to sites in and around the constituency that Nye represented:

	In Constituency	Across Blaenau Gwent	Wider Area
Bevan – Creator of the NHS	No 10 The Circle, Gwent Archives, New Tredegar Health Centre, Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan, Museum/Centre of NHS (Future), Bevan Festival.	A465 highest point (sculpture – Future). Bevan Play	Medical Museums (London and Worcester), Wellcome Collection, Peoples Museum Manchester, St Fagans. Bevan Play
Bevan the Politician	Council Chamber - Bedwellty House, Bevan Stones, Former Town Hall, Bevan Festival, Ebbw Vale Works Museum, Steel Figures located at key sites across his constituency Festival of History and Politics (General Offices, Gwent Archives, EVI, Coleg Gwent)	Festival of History and Politics Brynmawr Cinema	National Assembly for Wales, Parliament, St Fagans (housing), Peoples Museum Manchester,
Bevan – Son of Tredegar	Tredegar Museum, Gwent Archives (Records) Various sites in Tredegar, Aneurin Bevan Trail, In the footsteps of Nye.	In the Footsteps of the Iron Makers	
Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist	Sites where he was a miner, and where he served as a Union Rep including Ty Trist – Tredegar Comprehensive Tredegar Museum. Cwm Miners Memorial	Guardian, Ty Ebbw Fach, Six Bells Mining Memorial Mining exhibits in local museums – Abertillery and Blaina museums, Tyleri Trails, Mining sites in Cwmtillery, Llanhilleth	Big Pit, Rhondda Heritage Park, South Wales Miners Library, Senghenydd Memorial
Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater	Bevan Stones, Council Chamber, Guided walks, Bevan Festival (Future)	Debating Competition – Rotary (EV, Abertillery, Brynmawr) (Future) BG Schools and colleges	National Debating Competition (Future) Wales and UK schools, colleges and universities.
Bevan the Bibliophile and Author	Tredegar Library, poetry and reading events across area Gwent Archives	Poetry and reading events at libraries, theatres and other venues across Blaenau Gwent.	National Library of Wales, Archives with Bevan docs

Audiences

The NHS and Nye, as creator of this much-loved service are a strong subject to generate visits, if the quality, narrative and methods of delivery are attractive, engaging and enjoyable.

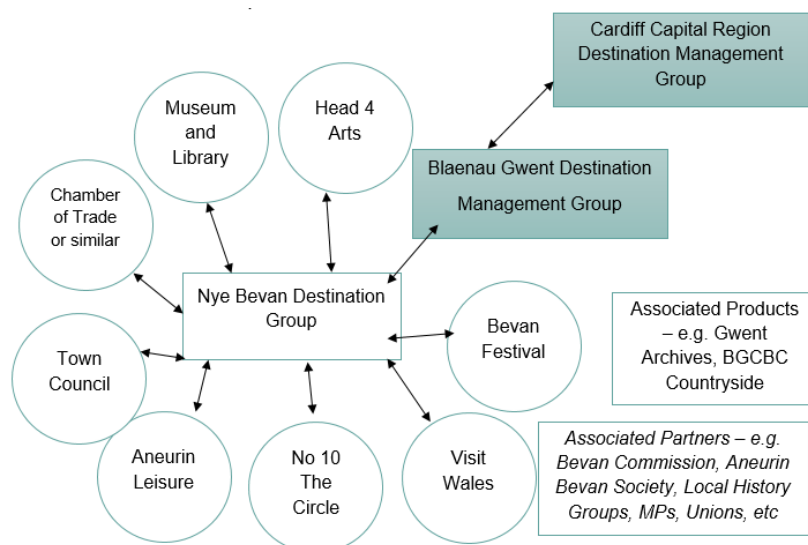
There is the potential, with the right product development to attract:

- General visitors – local, UK and overseas
- General Education visits – all age groups
- Specialist researchers re the history of the NHS and Nye

Another key potential audience is Business Tourism, in particular the health sector – the largest employment sector in Wales, and a significant sector across the UK. The potential to meet in the Home of the NHS is a unique draw for this sector. Even without product development, the Business Sector can be approached under a promotional campaign based around **“Meet in the Home of the NHS”**.

Implementation Organisation

To achieve this strategy coordination is essential, in developing products and interpretation, and in delivering joint marketing and publicity.



It is proposed that a Nye Bevan Destination Group be established, which will sit within the wider Destination Management Partnership and include representatives from the Tredegar THI group and other interested groups and individuals. It is also proposed that the Bevan festival is to be expanded and refocused then an expanded organising committee should be created, to bring a wider range of skills, contacts and experiences to the future development of the Festival.

Branding and Promotion

A key part of the Branding proposals is the creation of a suite of logos that can support the themes and sub themes – linking Nye to the NHS and in colours that are not party political.

A suite of logos were created with Nye, the beat of a heart to indicate the NHS and various words or symbols.



The logos can be used at sites, in promotional print and on commercial items.

Key in promoting the Nye Bevan narrative and the area will be the creation of a website to link all the sites and to show progress as the plan is implemented, as well as print.

New/Major Projects

To really capitalise of the legacy of Nye the area needs to do something radical and bold, as well as improving existing products.

Three New/Major projects are proposed:

- 1. Wales Museum of (Wales Centre for) the NHS – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow**

This would be a hands on, fun experience, exploring the past but also the future. Using all sorts of displays and technology it would explore the creation of the NHS, as well as allowing visitors to find out about the NHS of today and the current research (Technique of Health). It would have meeting and conference facilities, as well as space for researchers and developers.

2. **Bevan Festival – Festival of Health and Well-Being**

This would be an expansion of the existing festival, allowing discussion and exploration of health and well-being issues; lots of things to have a go at, music and entertainment, the march to Bedwellty House and more. Throughout the year events would take place across Blaenau Gwent under the banner of the Bevan Festival, and a Festival shop in Tredegar would allow social activities to take place throughout the year.

3. **Art and Sculptures**

To create a different image for the area the use of art has great potential to challenge, to generate discussions and to champion issues that would have interested Nye. Several large-scale permanent installations or biennial/ triennial competitions are suggested.

Improvement/Enhancement Projects

Suggestions are made for all sites – these can be summarised as:

- **Aneurin Leisure Trust** – Linking Parc Bryn Bach and other sites to the theme through the naming of events, holding of walks, and promotion at Visitor Centre
- **Bedwellty House and Park** – Rebranding the café with a theme related to NHS or Nye, inclusion of Nye in future guidebooks and the addition of medicinal planting in the Park.
- **Bedwellty House – Council Chamber** – A working chamber that is listed – suggestions include sound track of debates, hanging banners on the doors, and simple interpretative paddles about other local politicians.
- **Bevan Stones** – Essential maintenance work is to commence shortly. Interpretation around Nye the Orator with sound posts, benches with text, walk routes, new panels and a local group to keep an eye on the area.
- **Big Pit National Coal Museum** - Find artefacts for a cabinet entry about Nye the Miner and Union Representative.
- **Cefn Golau Cholera Cemetery** – Reminder of what life was like – needs cleaning and if possible, steps to make it easier for visitors to visit.
- **Debating** – A national debating contest for young adults on themes related to Nye Bevan, Health and NHS, in partnership with an organisation such as Rotary.
- **5DCinema – General Office** – Commission a film combining original footage and animation/layering to create an entertaining narrative that showing Bevan with his contemporaries.

- **Ebbw Vale Works Museum** – Discover the images and narrative that links Nye to the Works as the areas MP.
- **Events and Performances** – A range of small and regular events primarily to link the local population to the theme, but some have the potential to attract visitors when established, for instance performances of Owen Sheers *“To Provide All People”* or a Hill Runners Marathon along the Sirhowy Valley Trail.
- **Gwent Archives** – Research, digitisation and annotation projects.
- **Tredeggar Library and Local History Research Centre** – Highlight Nye’s love of books and Nye the author.
- **NCB Club/Town Hall** – Opportunity to integrate interpretation about Nye the Politician within the planned uses for the building.
- **No 10 The Circle** – The building restoration seems to be ready to start. There is a need for the interpretation plan and funding to be identified for integration into the restoration.
- **Physics Garden – Medicinal Planting** – Building on the age-old use of plants in medicine.
- **Roundels around the Clock** – Integrate into updated walks and place copies in sites that can be easily seen by all.
- **Sense of Place** – Develop a Sense of Place handbook for businesses and organisations to use the logo and to develop other associations with the Nye Bevan themes.
- **Steel Figures** – Install a series of Nye Steel Figures at key sites and with key people across Blaenau Gwent and Rhymney – promote as a trail.
- **The General Hospital (Closed)/New Health Centre** – Ensure that the Art Strategy supports the Nye themes.
- **Training for:**
 - **Teachers**
 - **Welsh Guides**
 - **Local People/Guides**
- **Tredeggar Museum** – Develop panels that link Nye to the history of the area – Nye – Son of Tredeggar
- **Tredeggar Town Centre** -Work to making the town look more alive.
- **Walks** – Update and reprint the 2 existing walks.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 8

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **9th February 2022**
Report Subject: **Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme**
Portfolio Holder: **Executive Member Cllr D Davies, Regeneration and Economic Development**
Report submitted by: **Richard Crook, Corporate Director Regeneration and Community 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)
x	27.01.22	31.01.22			09.02.22	02.03.22		

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Members to consider performance of the Aspire programme and associated external business engagement; and to also provide performance information on the BGCBC internal apprenticeship programme.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Aspire Shared Apprentice Programme was initially setup in 2015, with funding from WG, as a response to identified market failure within the engineering and advanced manufacturing sector within Blaenau Gwent. It proved so successful that it was expanded to include provision in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in 2017 and the project has been extended to September 2021 in both localities.
 - 2.2 In 2018 the Aspire Team started working with internal departments to raise the profile of the programme and demonstrate how having an apprentice could strengthen the workforce and fulfil future skills gaps and in October 2020 a designated officer was appointed through Legacy Funding to support this.
 - 2.3 Currently there are 11 apprentices in situ within departments in the Council. There are 4 vacancies with 5 pending. The opportunities are widening to Social Services, Estates and Finance. It has been really encouraging how the Authority has embraced this over the last 12 months and really positive in creating opportunities of long term roles within the Authority not just placement opportunities.
 - 2.4 The mentor alongside the apprenticeship pathways also facilitates work placement opportunities for the 'Children who are Looked After'. At present there are 3 on placement with partners in the borough.
 - 2.5 In 2019 & 2021 Aspire won the 'Large Employer of the Year' award at the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2019 (AAC), The award category entitled 'Large and Macro Employer of the Year' recognises and celebrates the employer's commitment to developing their workforce through

apprenticeships, whilst also supporting their employees during training. To have won the award a second time and during a pandemic, demonstrates the commitment and support the Team has given to apprentices and their employers.

2.6 The Aspire Offer to Apprentices across Blaenau Gwent

- The programme provides an accessible platform for young people to access bespoke apprenticeship opportunities in the region facilitated by a programme management team liaising with local colleges and apprenticeship learning provider.
- The Aspire Team provides a range of support from advice on their application form; to encouragement, preparatory guidance for interviews and the selection processes. Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applicants at all stages of the application and recruitment processes and signposting will be provided to other similar advertised vacancies that may be of interest.
- The successful candidates become part of a cohort that gives them an identity and peer to peer support in the first few months of their working life as an apprentice.
- They are also supported by a mentor throughout the term of the apprenticeship helping them resolve educational and social impediments to the completion of their apprenticeship. The mentors will also act as a point of mediation between the apprentice, the employer and the educational provider.

2.7 The Aspire Offer to Businesses across Blaenau Gwent

- One of the main appeals of the Shared Apprenticeship Programme to businesses is that flexible approach that can be offered, depending on business needs and capacity.
- The main attributes of the Programme are:
 - The creation of 'Partnership Agreement' between industry and the Programme
 - Continued investment in business engagement building upon local level connections
 - The Aspire Team undertake the recruitment process for employers
 - Employers make final recruitment decisions
 - All apprenticeship level positions are paid for
 - Regular reports on the progress of individual apprentices
 - Short surveys are completed at the end of the apprenticeship and feedback is provided to the apprentice and employer
 - The employer has a qualified employee to help take the business forward.

2.8 To date the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme has:

Externally

- Recruited and supported 84 apprentices (2015-2020)
- The Programme has engaged with over 60 manufacturing companies across the Local Authority to facilitate the apprenticeships, 20 have become host employers of which some of the companies are:
 - Continental
 - PCI Pharmaceutical
 - JC Moulding
 - GTEM
 - Cruz Engineering
 - Sogefi Filtration
 - Liberty Steel
 - TCK Electrical
 - Camtronics
- 60% of companies are SMEs
- Learning Pathways include:
 - Electrical Engineering
 - Mechanical Engineering
 - Applied Science
 - IT
 - EEP's
 - Commercial focused Business Administration
 - Quality Engineering
- 100% of apprentices on cohort 1 have been employed, of which 67% retained within host employer
- The programme can now measure the outcomes due to the first two cohorts of apprentices completing their apprenticeships.

2.9 The programme has facilitated 101 apprentices based within industry in Blaenau Gwent on various pathways including: - Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Applied Science, IT, EEP's, Commercial focused Business Administration and Quality Engineering.

2.10 In 2015/2016/2017 academic years Cohort 1 and 2 & 3: -

	Number of apprentices	Completed their framework	Framework completed if transfer was successful	Entered Employment	Progressed onto further learning
Cohort 1	18	15 (83%) 2 transferred onto other apprenticeships	17 (94%)	18(100%)	10 (55)%

Cohort 2	19	16 (84%)	16 (84%)	18 (95%) 1 apprentice when on to a degree	9 (47%)
Cohort 3	19	13 (68%) 2 Transferred	15 (79%)	17 (89 %) 1 Apprentice degree 1 different sector course	8 (42%)
Totals	56	44 (79%)	48 (85%)	53 (95%)	19 (51%)

2.11 From the above data the SAP programme has had good framework completion rates – all above the traditional apprenticeship framework success rate which was 80.9% in Feb 2020 a decrease of 0.6 of a percentage point from 2017/18.

2.12 Entering into employment is also positive, the lowest being 89% in cohort 3 but almost all SAP apprentices are employed within their hosts following framework completion.

2.13 Progression from the Level 3 programme into higher apprenticeships is also successful with almost half of the recruits continuing their learning journey.

2.14 Internally

- Recruited 11 Internal Apprentices employed within BGCBC on a range of pathways.
- Community Services, Audit, Business Support and Social Services are departments who have already engaged.
- Housing and Digital pathways are being reviewed and it is hoped vacancies in these areas will be created in early 2021.

3. Options for Recommendation

Option 1

To consider the detail contained in the report and make specific comments and/or recommendations for improvement for consideration by the Executive Committee.

Option 2

Accept the report as provided.

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

- Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan: Forge new pathways to prosperity through employment and skills development
- Corporate Plan: Economic Development and Regeneration
- Regeneration Priorities: employment and skills, enterprise and innovation.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

Short Term

To date there has been no confirmation of funding post 2022 and this is Welsh Government funding.

Long Term

It is anticipated that the proposals submitted to the Welsh Government and City Deal will generate funding for the programme to continue over the next 6 years for Blaenau Gwent and the City Region

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Demand for the service across the region doesn't materialise; mitigated through market research, early business/LA engagement and a phased approach to delivery.

Demand for the service exceeds resource available; this will be managed within the realms of the funding, some areas may not require the service and because the programme will be centrally funded the programme management team can allocate resource where required.

Duplication of provisions/lack of engagement from FEs; mitigated through early engagement with providers and colleges. Over the last few months a number of meetings have been held to discuss apprenticeship allocation and how best Aspire could potentially facilitate opportunities and support recruitment and compliment their service.

5.3 ***Legal***

Legal advice and joint contracts of employment have been agreed for the programme currently and it is expected that these will remain the same future host employers.

In addition to contracts of employment, there are training agreements in place with the apprentice, Aspire, host employer and training provider.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

Not required for this update

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

To date the Aspire Shared Apprenticeship Programme has:

- Recruited and supported 101 apprentices placed in over 25 manufacturing companies across Blaenau Gwent in addition to employment of 11 apprentices within council departments.
- 51% of apprentices within Cohorts 1 2 &3 have progressed onto higher education / HNC.
- 100% of apprentices on cohort 1 have been employed, of which 67% retained within host employer
- Framework completed: Cohort 1 –83%, Cohort 2 – 79% Cohort 3 – 68%
- 100% of apprentices in cohorts 1-6 have had the opportunity to rotate to another company to fulfil skills gaps

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

The following are future outcomes that are based on the regional proposals submitted to City Deal and Welsh Government respectively which includes Blaenau Gwent and 9 other authorities:

- Recruit and support over 300 apprentices across the region over 6 years should the funding proposals be awarded
- 20% of apprentices to progress onto higher education / HNC.
- 70% of apprentices to be employed within host employer
- 100% of apprentices to have had the opportunity to rotate to another company to fulfil skills gaps

The Employment and Skills plan will outline specific priorities and associated actions to:

- Increase the number of employment opportunities available
- Increase the range of employment opportunities available
- Ensure appropriate employment provision to support people into work and progress once in work
- Train and upskill local residents aligned to demand or growth sectors
- Raised awareness of opportunities to support educational attainment and aspiration
- Increased employment and skills opportunities secured through community benefits.

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

To date the emerging proposals have been developed in consultation/discussions with:

- Merthyr Tydfil Council
- Welsh Government
- City Deal
- Regional Skills Partnership
- Coleg Gwent
- Coleg Y Cymoedd
- Coleg Merthyr Tydfil
- Torfaen Council
- RCT Council

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

The future proposals aim to meet the needs businesses; future skills planning and fulfil current skills gaps. The success within two current local authorities' (BG & MT) demonstrate the need for a coordinated approach to facilitate the recruitment for business and engagement with learning providers.

The team are continually working with education to identify progression routes onto higher education as industry requires these higher level skills and with this apprenticeship pathway it provides alternative routes to employment for young people.

The proposals are offering employers and local authorities to demonstrate the employment opportunities within local areas providing skilled young people locally and meeting regional needs

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Within the plan there is acknowledgement of current employment, skills and attainment figures relating to the local population and our relatively weak performance comparative to other areas within the region. The plan seeks to address this by putting in place measures to address current performance.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The proposals are integral to collaborative working across the city region and with individual local authorities, that is the key to its success, to date there has been RSP engagement, partner LA and FE discussions, business engagement.

There are currently Joint Contracts of employment in place with all current employers with apprentices and these documents will be shared and part of the proposal.

It is vital that the team works closely as they have done in the past with FE. It will be important to utilise the apprenticeship contract within individual providers for each area. Relationship with the FE to support delivery

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

The contents of the plan will link closely with Education.

6.8 ***EgIA***

The plan is aimed at ensuring Blaenau Gwent Prospers, this is inclusive of all in our efforts to raise skills and employment levels for residents.

7. ***Monitoring Arrangements***

7.1 A baseline, aligned to the proposals will be developed to measure the medium and long term impact of the programme. An annual review and update on progress will be prepared and reported through scrutiny, executive and the PSB.

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 12,14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 12,14 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank