

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 28TH FEBRUARY, 2022

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M. MOORE (CHAIR)

Councillors C. Meredith (Vice-Chair)
P. Baldwin
M. Cook
M. Day
P. Edwards
S. Healy
W. Hodgins
J. Holt
J. C. Morgan
L. Parsons
B. Summers
L. Winnett

WITH: Corporate Director Regeneration & Community Services
Head of Community Services
Service Manager Neighbourhood Services
Service Manager Public Protection
Team Manager Frontline Enforcement Service.
Team Manager Housing Solutions & Compliance
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u>	

	It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>No apologies for absence were reported.</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 15th 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 - 15TH NOVEMBER 2021</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting held on 15th November, 2021 was submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p><u>Civil Parking Enforcement</u></p> <p>A Member requested an update to the end of February 2022 for Nantyglo, and the Chair confirmed that the Officer would provide all Members with an update for their ward.</p> <p>Another Member asked whether the number of CPE Enforcement Officers in the Borough was sufficient.</p> <p>In response the Head of Community Services reported that the fully staffed number of enforcement officers was two. However, one Enforcement Officer had recently left and the recruitment process was underway to fill the vacant post. In terms of whether the number was sufficient, the Officer confirmed that the annual report was brought to Committee and provided Members an opportunity review the service. The last report was submitted in November 2021 and the current arrangements were agreed.</p> <p><u>Action Sheet – 4th October (Update on Catch 22)</u></p>	

A Member said it was reported at the last meeting that Catch 22 was considering a CAT of either Rassau Resource Centre or Newtown Community Centre. The note attached to the Action Sheet stated that the organisation was considering a CAT for the provision of an SEPD Centre, however, the Member said in a recent press report the Chief Executive of Catch 22 said it was for the purposes of an ALN Centre. The Member sought clarification on the issue. He also expressed concern regarding the proposals and said a public consultation exercise should be undertaken.

The Chair said the relevant Officer was not in attendance. However, she pointed out that the proposed use of the building would come under the remit of the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee.

The Member pointed out that the CAT had been discussed at the last meeting and information brought back to Committee. However, he agreed that the issue should have been referred to the Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee, and he asked that this be actioned and an updated provided to Members.

Active Travel and Safe Routes to Communities (Cableway)

A Member raised concerns regarding the ongoing closure of the cableway due to the Covid restrictions. In response the Head of Community Services confirmed that a risk assessment would be undertaken, however, he pointed out that any decision to reopen the cableway would need to align with the broader Council workplace policy which was still under the remit of essential activities only.

The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the action sheet be noted.

No. 6

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Special Meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 24th January, 2022 were submitted.

The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.

No. 7

FLY TIPPING ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 2021/22

Consideration was given to report of the Team Manager Frontline Enforcement Service.

The Team Manager Frontline Enforcement Service presented the report which provided an update on the Authority's enforcement activities in relation to fly tipping and other waste regulation offences and the level of fly tipping activity within Blaenau Gwent for the year 2021/22.

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

A Member asked whether the booking system in place for the HWRC's was having a detrimental impact on fly tipping.

In response the Service Manager Neighbourhood Services explained that the booking system, introduced in response to the Covid pandemic, was being reviewed and options were being explored. However, he said the report demonstrated that fly tipping had reduced in the last 12 months.

A Member asked whether CCTV could be deployed in problem areas.

The Team Manager Frontline Enforcement Service confirmed that a number of locations were being considered and prioritised, but he would be happy for Members' input.

Another Member expressed concern regarding the low level of fixed penalty notices issued for fly tipping.

The Officer explained that 424 complaints of fly tipping were investigated by Enforcement Wardens, however, the majority of the materials dumped do not contain any evidence for the Enforcement Wardens to pursue. However, moving forward FPN's will be issued on a lower level of evidence so it was anticipated that the figures would increase significantly in the next financial year.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Officer confirmed that the Council worked closely with the Duke of Beaufort Estate regarding fly tipping, and also with other Partners and private landowners to get waste removed as soon as possible.

	<p>A discussion ensued when Officer clarified points raised by Members.</p> <p>A Member sought an update on rear lane collections.</p> <p>The Service Manager Neighbourhood Services confirmed that some rear lane collections have been reinstated but there was still work to be done.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and supported the continuing waste regulation work and development of the Frontline Enforcement Service. (Option 1)</p>	
No. 8	<p><u>DISABLED ADAPTATIONS – POLICY AMENDMENT PROPOSAL TO REMOVE MEANS-TEST</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Service Manager Public Protection and the Team Manager Housing Solutions & Compliance.</p> <p>The Service Manager Public Protection presented the report which sought Members’ views relating to a proposed policy amendment that would remove the current means test for grants for disabled adaptations in Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>The Officer spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the means-test for large adaptations.</p> <p>A Member proposed Option 1 with the following amendment, namely ‘that the means-test for large adaptations be retained on a sliding scale’.</p> <p>The proposal was seconded.</p> <p>Another Member proposed Option 2, and this was seconded.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and Members support the proposed policy amendment that would remove the current means test for grants for disabled</p>	

	adaptations in Blaenau Gwent from April 1st 2022; and that the means-test for large adaptations be retained on a sliding scale. (Option1)	
No. 9	<p><u>CONTRACT EXTENSION – PEST CONTROL TREATMENT SERVICE TO 31 DECEMBER 2023</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Service Manager Public Protection.</p> <p>The Service Manager Public Protection presented the report which provided an update on the pest control treatment service currently provided by Rentokil. The Officer went through the report and highlighted points contained therein.</p> <p>A Member asked whether local companies had been considered for the contract.</p> <p>In response the Officer confirmed that the Council's procurement framework was applied. He said a national company also had resilience within the workforce that a smaller local company may not have.</p> <p>A discussion ensued when the Officer clarified points raised by Member.</p> <p>A Member proposed Option 2 with the recommendation to the Executive that at the end of the contract (31st March, 2023) a local procurement exercise be undertaken for the service.</p> <p>The proposal was seconded.</p> <p>Another Member proposed Option 1 and this was seconded.</p> <p>Upon a vote being taken</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and Members note the service performance and continuation of the contract with Rentokil until 31st March 2023 when it would be reviewed and retendered, as necessary, in accordance with Corporate Procurement rules. (Option 1)</p>	