

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 24TH JUNE, 2019**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. HEALY (CHAIR)

Councillors: P. Baldwin
M. Cook
M. Cross
P. Edwards
H. McCarthy
C. Meredith
M. Moore
J.P. Morgan
G. Paulsen
J. Wilkins

AND: Corporate Director of Social Services
Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community Services
Corporate Director of Education
Chief Officer - Commercial
Head of Community Services
Head of Organisational Development
Professional Lead for Engagement, Equalities &
Welsh Language
Chief Accountant of Revenues Services
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.	

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Hill, L. Parsons and D. Wilkshire.</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 17th April, 2019 were submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>No. 5</p>	<p><u>PROPOSED SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019-20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Chair of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee which was presented for Members approval of the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019/20.</p> <p>The Chair spoke to the report and informed Members that the Forward Work Programme was a fluid document and items could be added if necessary.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and Option 1 the Forward Work Programme 2019/20 for the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee be approved.</p>	
<p>No. 6</p>	<p><u>FORWARD LOOKING CORPORATE PLAN 2019/20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Managing Director which presented Members with the planned activity for the forthcoming year as identified within the Forward Looking Corporate Plan.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Commercial spoke to the report and informed Members that Directorates had considered their planned areas of activity as identified within the Corporate</p>	

	<p>Plan and agreed that for this year there would be no change to the priorities.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1, namely that the Forward Looking Corporate Plan be approved for publication before the end of July 2019.</p>	
<p>No. 7</p>	<p><u>DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S STATUTORY STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN FOR 2020-24</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Governance and Partnerships which was presented to set out the intention for developing the Council's third Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-24 and Equality Objectives, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The Professional Lead for Engagement, Equalities & Welsh Language spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein. In relation to establishing a Working Group, the Officer said that Members would have a key role in helping to shape the development of the Strategy from inception to adoption in March 2020.</p> <p>The Committee, therefore AGREED that the following Members be nominated to the Working Group:</p> <p>Councillor Stewart Healy Councillor Martin Cook Councillor Malcolm Cross Councillor Mandy Moore Councillor John P. Morgan</p> <p>The Committee FURTHER AGREED to recommend, subject to the foregoing, that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the proposed approach for developing the Strategic Equality Plan be approved; and ii. a Working Group be established so that Members are actively involved in helping to develop and shape the Strategic Equality Plan. 	

<p>No. 8</p>	<p><u>QUARTER 4 (JANUARY TO MARCH 2019) JOINT FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Governance and Partnerships which presented the Finance and Performance Report for quarter 4, covering the period January to March 2019.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Commercial spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein which included that the report provided a summary of the performance of the Council and further detail was provided in other monitoring reports such as the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services, Education data reports and waste data reporting.</p> <p>Councillor M. Moore joined the meeting at this juncture.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the information contained within the report be accepted.</p>	
<p>No. 9</p>	<p><u>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SCHEME – 1ST YEAR UPDATE</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Organisational Development which was presented to provide Members with a 1st year position of the Employee Benefits Scheme and outlined the opportunities for improvement and expansion.</p> <p>The Head of Organisational Development spoke to the report and gave an update on the benefits available to employees and elected Members in relation to Retail and Leisure discounts, Cycle to work and the Green Car Leasing scheme. A saving of £6,000 had been achieved and it was anticipated that this figure could increase if more employees took advantage of the car lease scheme.</p> <p>The Employee Benefit scheme was advertised on employee payslips and via newsletters and further promotion of the benefits of the scheme was proposed.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question regarding the Purchase of Annual Leave scheme, the Head of</p>	

	<p>Organisational Development said that there was a limit of 10 days that could be purchased and Managers would be responsible to ensure continuity and business delivery before approval of any leave.</p> <p>In relation to absence levels, it was difficult to say if the Purchase of Annual Leave scheme had impacted on sickness absence. The Head of Organisational Development commented that a report reviewing sickness absence levels would be prepared for Members consideration in the autumn.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely to deliver a communication/marketing plan to further promote staff benefits and explore opportunities to further expand the offer for employees. The results of the staff survey also gave the opportunity to target marketing.</p>	
<p>No. 10</p>	<p><u>TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the commencement times of future Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Meetings.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that future Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee meetings be held on a Wednesday at 10.00 a.m.</p>	