

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

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

**SUBJECT:** **PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER, 2019**

**REPORT OF:** **LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER**

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**PRESENT:** COUNCILLOR S. HEALY (CHAIR)

Councillors M. Cook  
G.L. Davies  
J. Hill

**WITH:** Managing Director  
Head of Partnerships and Governance  
Service Manager: Policy and Partnerships  
Professional Lead for Engagement, Equalities & Welsh Language

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>No. 1</b>	<b><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></b>  It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	
<b>No. 2</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b>  Apologies for absence were received from:-  Councillors M. Cross, P. Edwards, G. Paulsen, L. Parsons, C. Meredith, S. Thomas, H. Trollope and J. Wilkins.	

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 3	<p data-bbox="336 327 1315 365"><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="336 412 1315 495">There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p data-bbox="336 542 1315 580"><b><u>PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p data-bbox="336 627 1315 748">Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2018; whereupon:-</p> <p data-bbox="336 795 1315 920">The Head of Partnerships and Governance provided an update in respect of the following points raised at the last meeting:-</p> <p data-bbox="336 967 587 1005"><u>Gwent Futures</u></p> <p data-bbox="336 1052 1315 1178">It was reported that a Members Briefing would be provided and linked with that session officers were progressing some work.</p> <p data-bbox="336 1225 549 1263"><u>Credit Union</u></p> <p data-bbox="336 1310 1315 1393">It was confirmed that the Credit Unions are involved in the work around Universal Credit.</p> <p data-bbox="336 1440 1315 1520">The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
5.	<p><b><u>FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Public Services Board Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for the meeting scheduled to be held on Monday 6th January 2020.</p> <p>A Member felt that transport should be included as part of the Forward Work Programme in order to strengthen the links within Blaenau Gwent and the wider area. The Member added that adequate transport links are paramount for the residents of Blaenau Gwent and should be considered by the Public Service Board.</p> <p>The Head of Partnerships and Governance advised that the transport infrastructure and building links within Blaenau Gwent and across the region would feed into the Maximising Prosperity work stream. This work stream would also include work with the Cardiff City Region and the lead officer was the Managing Director.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the meeting scheduled to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2020 be approved.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>BLAENAU GWENT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2018/19</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Partnerships and Governance.</p> <p>The Head of Partnership and Governance referred to the report which detailed a look back at the progress made against the Plan. The Officer advised that the Annual Progress Report was an easy accessible report which allowed Elected Members and residents to access the information easily. It had also been produced in an 'easy read' format to make it understandable.</p>	

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	<p>The Head of Partnerships and Governance continued that a great deal of work had been undertaken and advised that it was important the report captured the amount of work undertaken and the impact it had in communities.</p> <p>The Managing Director added that the report represented the strong position in its first year and advised that a 30 year plan had been agreed. The PSB had focussed on priorities where they had felt all partners could collectively make a difference.</p> <p>The Managing Director referred to 'Blaenau Gwent on the Move' project and advised that this was a good example of how partners worked together to make a difference in communities. She reiterated that the work was part of the 30 year plan and the first year was important. She added that as the PSB work progressed against priorities the work would be dropped in 'business as usual'. The Managing Director further added that at the next PSB meeting consideration would be given to their priorities for the next 12 months. The areas for consideration included our carbon footprint, partnership links to improve skills as well as some projects continuing from the past year. This work would provide an opportunity to create a more skilled work force and identify links to better transport to ensure these opportunities would be accessible.</p> <p>The Managing Director reiterated the progress made by the PSB and welcomed views from Scrutiny Members as these would fed back to the PSB.</p> <p>A Member asked if the Annual Report was a public document as it contained a great deal of good work carried out in Blaenau Gwent and he felt that the Authority should make it public. The Head of Partnerships and Governance reiterated that it was a public document which had been developed as an 'easy read' document to encourage residents to access the report and watch the video clips. It was available online and promoted through our networks of older people and the Youth Forum.</p>	

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	<p>The Annual Report was also promoted through the sub groups which had a representation of multi-agency officers and therefore available via a number of networks. The Officer continued that the Launch Event on 15<sup>th</sup> July had approximately 140 attendees representing various groups and forums as well as Town and Borough Councillors.</p> <p>The Member further asked if the Authority engaged with youth and older peoples groups to gain their involvement.</p> <p>The Head of Partnerships and Governance confirmed that engagement was undertaken with older people groups and youth groups including the Youth Forum. It was added that local groups from all areas are identified via networks and are involved in the Well Being Plan. It was further advised that the work undertaken with these specific groups are key to ensuring that the Plan felt like it belonged within communities.</p> <p>Another Member noted the work undertaken in partnership with Tai Calon around Universal Credit and asked that although Tai Calon was a social landlord and had responsibilities for their tenants what had been in place for private tenants. The Head of Partnerships and Governance advised that although Tai Calon sponsored this project the work undertaken was for all tenants in Blaenau Gwent. She further added that this work was also looked at by the Welfare Reform Group with representatives from the benefits department and other related sectors. This Group looked at the challenges faced in all sectors in order to mitigate issues which are faced by social and private tenants.</p>	

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and Option 1; namely the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee considered the progress made in the first year of delivery against the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and provided comments.</p>	
7	<p><b><u>BLAENAU GWENT ON THE MOVE, PSB WELL-BEING PLAN DELIVERY PROGRAMME 2018-19</u></b></p> <p>The Head of Partnership and Governance advised that the report provided an overview of progress on the PSB Well-being Plan Delivery Programme's Blaenau Gwent on the Move Project which had been identified by the PSB as a well-being project in line with the Delivery Programme.</p> <p>The Head of Partnerships and Governance continued that the aim of the project was to encourage healthy lifestyle choices in local places and increase the uptake of walking and cycling. The Group, set up to oversee the implementation of the project had representation from a number of public and third sector organisations and had agreed to open a trail which would otherwise had been lost. The Officer felt that the Lead Officer, had done an excellent job with partners in delivering the project and at this juncture the Lead Officer gave a presentation with the assistance of slides on the BG on the Move Project.</p> <p>Following the presentation the Chair invited questions from Members.</p> <p>A Member noted the £43,500 funding made available to assist with the project and asked if this would need to be applied for annually to ensure the areas were maintained.</p> <p>The Lead Officer for Engagement, Equalities &amp; Welsh Language advised that Natural Resource Wales would be rolling out funding next year, however it would be for a different focus and we would therefore wait to see what was received. The Lead Officer added that the PSB would also give consideration to investment going forward and how we could apply for grants.</p>	

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	<p>Another Member felt the project had been very successful, however he raised concerns around the commitment of community groups and volunteers in the long term. The Lead Officer advised that since the start of the project the involvement of local community groups and volunteers had significantly increased. She advised that the work being carried out had encouraged the community groups to be involved and she felt that this enthusiasm would continue going forward.</p> <p>In response to a question raised in relation to linking the Ebbw Fawr Trail with other walks in the area, it was advised that the Ebbw Fawr Trail linked to Sirhowy Woodlands and the Ebbw Fach valley from the Marine Colliery Site. It was added that work had also been undertaken with Active Travel Wales to ensure these routes are sustained and connected.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Lead Officer for Engagement, Equalities &amp; Welsh Language for an excellent presentation and welcomed the legacy that this work would leave for our communities. The Chair also wished his thanks to be passed to all involved in the Blaenau Gwent on the Move Project.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and gave consideration to the progress made on the Blaenau Gwent on the Move and provided comments.</p>	