

**COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT**

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

**SUBJECT:** **SPECIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE – 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**REPORT OF:** **DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER**

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**PRESENT:** COUNCILLOR M. MOORE CHAIR)

Councillors C. Meredith (Vice-Chair)

M. Cook

W. Hodgins

S. Healy

G. Paulsen

K. Pritchard

B. Summer

**WITH:** Head of Community Services  
Service Manager Public Protection  
Senior Engineer Highways  
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer/Advisor  
Press & Publicity Officer

<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>  An apology for absence was reported for Councillor J. Holt.	
<b>No. 3</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></b>  No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.	

<p><b>No. 4</b></p>	<p><b><u>TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></b></p> <p>The Committee AGREED that future meetings be held at 10.00 a.m.</p>	
<p><b>No. 5</b></p>	<p><b><u>COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE</u></b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on the 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 were submitted for points of accuracy.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
<p><b>No. 6</b></p>	<p><b><u>ACTION SHEET</u></b></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 was submitted.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.</p>	
<p><b>No. 7</b></p>	<p><b><u>PROPOSED SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2020-21</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Chair which presented the Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for 2020/21.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED the Forward Work Programme for the Community Services Scrutiny Committee (Option 1).</p>	
<p><b>No. 8</b></p>	<p><b><u>HIGHWAY CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2019-2021</u></b></p> <p>Consideration was given to report of the Head of Community Services.</p> <p>The Senior Engineer Highways presented the report which updated Members on progress of the current Highway Capital Works Programme 2017-2021 and provided options for a future 2020/21 works programme.</p> <p>The Officer spoke to the report and highlighted points contained therein. He explained that the report was due to</p>	

be submitted to Scrutiny in February but was held back to see if additional capital would be made available by the end of the financial year; and the COVID pandemic resulted in a further delay of the report.

The previous programme of works was approved by Members in 2017, and following on from the previous prudential borrowing scheme 2012-2016, a capital sum of £2.115m was generated from a 20 year prudential borrow.

The Officer confirmed that Welsh Government Highways Refurbishment funding had been obtained as outlined in Table 1 at section 2.9 of the report, and details of works completed to date was outlined within the appendices attached to the report.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Six Bells signalised junction works associated with the new Six Bells Primary school where the Head of Community Services confirmed that Members had previously agreed that funding for these works would be allocated from the Highways Capital Improvements budget with the funding previously allocated for this within the Six Bells school project being reallocated towards the cost of the essential trunk sewer diversion works.

In response to a question raised by a Member regarding Civil Parking Enforcement, the Head of Community Services explained that this was capital works associated with implementing CPE i.e. one-off expenditure relating to signage etc. In terms of revenue costs moving forward, a review of traffic orders was agreed following implementation of CPE. However, due to the COVID pandemic no revenue had been generated for 5 months. The full impact of CPE in terms of revenue would be recognised following implementation of the scheme for a full 12 month period.

A Member referred to the Winter Maintenance Plan documentation, and asked why this was not included within the Council's winter maintenance budget.

In response the Head of Community Services explained that this was one-off capital expenditure in relation to consultancy fees for the development of a new highway

maintenance plan, based on the Welsh Government approach, to enable us to identify our requirements for the highway network, to include a winter maintenance plan. This documentation would be the basis for securing Welsh Government funding moving forward.

The Senior Engineer then referred to the proposed programme of works for 2020/21 which would continue to focus on improving the residential/unclassified network. In addition to the resurfacing of highest priority roads, it was intended to undertake other works e.g safety barriers, illuminated traffic signs and speed restriction measures.

He said section 2.16 of the report listed the proposed key priorities for 2020/21. Following on from the previous works programme it was proposed that a priority of ranking of residential streets be determined, utilising the assessment matrix criteria that was developed in line with the specific features associated with residential highways.

He concluded that should further WG Capital Funding for highways be made available over the next few months, then this would be allocated in line with the criteria outlined in section 2.16.

A Member referred to the Highway Assessment Matrix and said there were roads within his ward that in his opinion were in worse condition than those prioritised. The Officer undertook to discuss with the Member.

A further brief discussion ensued when the Head of Community Services confirmed that traffic orders and yellow lines would form part of the CPE review.

A Member referred to the Options for Recommendation and proposed that Option A be supported, subject to specific variations as requested by Members.

The proposed amendment was supported by Members.

The Committee AGREED that the report be accepted and the Highways Capital Works Programme 2020/21 Priorities be supported, subject to specific variations as requested by Members.

