



CABINET (SPECIAL)

***IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CABINET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY , 14 FEBRUARY 2024***

***MULTI-LOCATION MEETING – COUNCIL CHAMBER PORT TALBOT
AND MICROSOFT TEAMS***

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DURATION OF THE MEETING**

Webcasting/Hybrid Meetings:

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Part 1

1. Appointment of Chairperson
2. Chairpersons Announcement/s
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 8*)
5. Public Question Time
Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services, democratic.services@npt.gov.uk no later than noon two working days prior to the meeting. Questions must relate to items on the agenda. Questions will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.

Matter/s for Decision:

6. UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Approval of Projects (*Pages 9 - 20*)
7. Audit Wales – Springing Forward Strategic Workforce Management – Neath Port Talbot Council (*Pages 21 - 42*)

Matter/s for Information:

8. Local Bus Tendering (*Pages 43 - 54*)
9. Decisions Taken By Urgency Action (*Pages 55 - 58*)
10. Urgent Items
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Regulation 5(4)(b) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290 (as amended).
11. Access to Meetings - Exclusion of the Public (*Pages 59 - 64*)
To resolve to exclude the public for the following item pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290 and the relevant exempt paragraphs of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

PART 2

Matter/s for Decision:

12. Third Sector Grant Funding - Award of Grants for 2024-2025 (Exempt under Paragraph 14) (*Pages 65 - 88*)

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

Thursday, 8 February 2024

Cabinet Members:

Councillors. S.K.Hunt, S.A.Knoyle, N.Jenkins, J.Hurley, S.Harris,
J.Hale, A.Llewelyn, W.F.Griffiths, S.Jones and C.Phillips

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EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

CABINET

22 JANUARY 2024

Cabinet Members:

Councillors: S.K.Hunt (Chairperson), N.Jenkins, J.Hurley, J.Hale,
A.Llewelyn, W.F.Griffiths, S.Jones and C.Phillips

Officers in Attendance:

K.Jones, N.Pearce, A.Jarrett, N.Daniel, H.Jones, J.Stevens, C.Furlow-Harris,
R.Crowhurst, S.Rees, C.Owen, C.Howard, N.Blackmore, L.McAndrew,
A.Thomas and T.Davies

Scrutiny Chair: Councillor P.Rogers

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

Agreed that Councillor S.K.Hunt be appointed Chairperson for the meeting.

2. **CHAIRPERSONS ANNOUNCEMENT/S**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and explained that as he was declaring an interest for minute No 10, the Deputy Leader, Councillor A.Llewelyn would take over the Chair for this item.

3. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

The following Member made a declaration of interest at the start of the meeting:

Councillor S.K.Hunt	Minute No 10 – APSE Wales Chair – Housing, Homelessness and Community
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Support – as the report relates to his own appointment. He considered the interest as prejudicial, so left the meeting for the discussion and voting thereon.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

That the minutes of the previous meetings of Cabinet, held on the following dates, be agreed as an accurate record:

- 13 December 2023
- 20 December 2023 (Special)

5. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

6. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No public questions were received.

7. **SELF-ASSESSMENT 2022-2023**

Decision:

That the draft self-assessment, be approved, prior to publication and submission to the Welsh Government.

Reason for Decision:

To evidence how the council is meeting the duty set out in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, 'for each Council in Wales to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the 'performance requirements', that is the extent to which:

- it is exercising its functions effectively
- it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively
- its governance is effective for securing the above.'

Implementation of Decision:

The decision will be implemented after the three day call in period.

8. **UPDATE REPORT ON SETTLEMENT POSITION**

Cabinet Members raised significant concerns over cuts to specific funding, and encouraged all Members to continue to lobby for additional funding.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

9. **URGENT ITEMS**

Because of the need to deal now with the matter contained in Minute No 10 below, the Chairperson agreed that this could be raised at today's meeting as an urgent item pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reason:

Due to time element.

10. **APSE WALES CHAIR – HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

At this point in the meeting, Councillor S.K.Hunt reaffirmed his interest in the matter, and left the meeting and the discussion and voting thereon. Councillor A.Llewelyn took over the Chair for this item only.

Decisions:

1. That the Leader of Council act as Chair of the APSE Wales Housing, Homeless and Community Support group on an interim basis initially, and on a permanent basis should APSE Wales determine to make the Housing, Homeless and Community Support group permanent.
2. That an officer be identified by the Director of Social Services as the Lead Officer associated with this advisory group.

Reason for Decisions:

To provide authorisation for the Leader of Council to act as a representative to an outside body and to authorise officer participation in the same work.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decisions will be implemented after the three day call in period.

11. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Councillor S.K.Hunt rejoined the meeting and resumed the role of Chair.

Decision:

That pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No 2290, the public be excluded for the following item of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

12. **HOME OFFICE CONSULTATION ON SAFE AND LEGAL ROUTES**

Decisions:

1. Having had due regard to the integrated impact assessment, the Consultation response (as detailed at Appendix 1 to the private, circulated report) be approved, and that the Council propose to settle the amount of families, in 2025, as detailed in the private, circulated report. It is noted that a response was submitted to the Home Office pending Cabinet's decision, and a formal response will subsequently be submitted.
2. That the Council's response be shared with the Welsh Local Government Association/Welsh Strategic Migration Partnership and Welsh Government.

Reason for Decisions:

To enable the Council to respond to a Home Office Consultation document, and to set a cap on the number of people NPTC will endeavour to settle in 2025.

Implementation of Decisions:

The decision is for immediate implementation, following the agreement of the Cabinet Scrutiny Chair.

CHAIRPERSON



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

14th February 2024

Report of the Head of Education Development Chris Millis

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Gwaun Cae Gurwen & Lower Brynamman and Crynant, Onllwyn and Seven Sisters

UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Approval of Projects

Purpose of the Report:

To seek Members approval on the recommendation to approve projects for the purpose of openness and transparency. The projects are: 1) Amman Valley Dial-a-Ride Pilot, 2) Community Based Youth Work Training and Services, 3) Community Bicycle Project, which all have Member involvement and have been submitted under the Neath Port Talbot UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Third Party Grants Fund Sustainable Communities Growth Fund.

Executive Summary:

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda. The fund provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the

UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than a competition.

Background:

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda.

The UKSPF regional Investment Plan was approved by Cabinet on the 28th July 2022 and the UKSPF Implementation Plan was approved by Cabinet on the 19th October 2022.

The five Council led strategic 'anchor' projects were approved by Cabinet on the 19th January 2023.

Neath Port Talbot UKSPF Third Party Grant Funds:

The Neath Port Talbot UKSPF Third Party Grant Funds were launched from April 2023 as a rolling programme with a schedule of grants panel dates. The relevant Project Manager / Officer manages the application process, assessment, moderation and grant award process.

The five UKSPF Third Party Grant Funds are:

- Heritage, Culture, Tourism & Events Fund
- Valleys & Villages Prosperity Fund
- Sustainable Communities Growth Fund
- Third Sector Growth Fund (managed by Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services)
- Business Investment & Start Up Grants

Neath Port Talbot UKSPF Third Party Grant Funds – approval process

Each Neath Port Talbot UKSPF Third Party Grant Fund has an assessment, moderation, and approval process.

All applications are assessed and prioritised in line with the following Fund criteria:

- Ability to meet one or more of the fund priorities
- Can demonstrate a clearly identified and articulated need
- Will deliver against a wide range of outputs and outcomes
- Can deliver within the timeframe (all projects must be completed by 31st December 2024 at the latest)
- Value for money
- All applications will be considered by a Funding Panel

Cabinet agreed at its 28th June 2023 meeting that following grant funding panel assessment and recommendation for approval the following delegated authority approval thresholds were agreed:

Grants of **up to £50,000** can be approved by the Anchor Lead (at accountable manager level).

Grants **between £50,001 and £100,000** to be approved by the relevant Head of Service.

Grants **between £100,001 and £250,000** to be approved by the relevant Head of Service, UKSPF Senior Responsible Owner, Chief Finance Officer, Leader and relevant Cabinet Member.

However, to ensure transparency and probity of decision making, all projects which have Member involvement will seek approval from Cabinet prior to formal approval.

Third Party Grant Funds – recommendations for approval:

Project 1: Amman Valley Dial-a-Ride Pilot, Canolfan Maerdy was assessed against the Fund criteria and the Funding Panel decision was:

That this was a worthwhile and much needed project with confirmed support from NPTCBC Transport Manager. If the vehicle was purchased it would be a lasting legacy for the community. Panel felt that as a pilot an evaluation of the project would demonstrate whether schemes like this actually work and if positive, the evidence would then be available as an opportunity to run schemes in other areas once known outcomes are available. The organisation works closely with the Local Authority and have a good reach and knowledge of their community. Panel Approved £97,411.

Cllr S Reynolds is involved in this project as a Trustee of Canolfan Maerdy.

It is recommended that the Amman Valley Dial-a-Ride Pilot, Canolfan Maerdy is approved by Cabinet.

Summary of Project:

To develop and pilot a new dial-a-ride bus scheme, taking residents from Upper Brynamman to Pontardawe and back, at times of the day not currently serviced by public transport. The intention is to link with existing bus services down the Swansea Valley but should need be identified, to seek to extend operations to Swansea. Passengers will have to book a seat to guarantee transport. This service will be affordable and help tackle transport poverty for those with mobility issues or those finding it hard to get to and from work. The grant will be used to purchase an 'accessible' vehicle and pay for a Driver/Development Worker for 12 months to undertake the pilot as an action research project with the aim of developing a sustainable service. Canolfan Maerdy have obtained a Section 19 Community Transport Licence, and NPTCBC Transport Section have given assurances that as long as their service is not considered a

scheduled bus service they can operate within the Section 19 Licence. The project seeks to overcome the challenges of lack of transport, limited access to services, employment, training and quality affordable food. Canolfan Maerdy currently collaborates with DANSA on a community car scheme and hopes to collaborate and complement DANSA's community bus service.

Outputs:

Number of Neighbourhood Improvements undertaken - 1

Number of local events or activities supported - 3

Number of volunteering opportunities supported - 10

Number of people attending training sessions - 25

Number of people reached - 1764

Number of facilities supported/created - 1

UKSPF Grant request: £97,411

Project 2: Community Based Youth Work Training and Services, Canolfan Maerdy was assessed against the Fund criteria and the Funding Panel decision was:

That this project supported an isolated area where this is nothing for the young people. Currently the Youth Service support the young people in Canolfan Maerdy with Welsh Language, should there be no youth provision available then there would be a danger that all youth services would be at risk. Panel Approved: £48,512.18

Cllr S Reynolds is involved in this project as a Trustee of Canolfan Maerdy.

It is recommended that the Community Based Youth Work Training and Service Project, Canolfan Maerdy is approved by Cabinet.

Summary of Project:

To sustain the employment of a Senior Youth Leader and extend the hours of the current Assistant Youth Worker to support ongoing provision of youth services and develop Maerdy Youth as a sustainable bilingual youth provision, improving accessibility and enhancing activities by developing the skills of those who support the young people and promoting life, leadership and practical skills of the young people themselves. The aims are to support the growth of Canolfan Maerdy's Social Enterprise, developing entrepreneurial skills within our workers and young people whilst exploring the feasibility of developing a dedicated youth facility to house the constantly growing youth provision and sustain the benefits for young people within our communities. Funding will also pay training costs for a further 4 volunteers to level 2 (qualified youth worker status) whilst enabling existing staff, trainees and other volunteers to gain greater awareness, skills and where available appropriate certification, in key areas of challenge for youth in our area, such as; substance abuse, mental health, dealing with conflict and aggressive behaviour and supporting those with neurodiverse conditions. There is a disused building in danger of dereliction sitting within a park area and there is little opportunity for other usage, sale or income generating tenants from this building. It is in the interest of the Authority to have the building occupied and maintained; hence the lease cost is very low. If needed further grants/fundraising could be available to support this facility should a lease be agreed. This project does not depend on establishing this dedicated facility but will contribute to feasibility considerations which will involve the young people themselves developing more entrepreneurial skills.

Outputs:

Number of Neighbourhood Improvements undertaken – 2

Number of local events or activities supported – 20

Number of volunteering opportunities supported – 100

Number of people attending training sessions – 19

Number of people reached – 180

Number of facilities supported/created – 1

UKSPF Grant request: £48,512.18

Project 3: Community Bicycle Project, Friends of Seven Sisters was assessed against the Fund criteria and the Funding Panel decision was:

That for a small amount, this project had a strong community cohesion with the involvement of local volunteers, the support of the PASS Team and for those local families struggling with the cost of living crisis. This also fits in with SCGF Equality theme through the health and wellbeing element. Panel Approved £5,000

Cllr S Hunt is involved in this project as a Vice Chair/Treasurer of The Friends of Seven Sisters.

It is recommended that the Community Bicycle Project, Friends of Seven Sisters is approved by Cabinet.

Summary of Project:

To provide a biking facility to the residents of Seven Sisters following a previous successful pilot delivered by the PASS team. The grant would purchase bikes and a groundhog for storage. Bikes can be loaned to those in the area that are struggling to purchase bikes for themselves and their families – there is a dedicated cycle track which cyclists can use. Bike maintenance sessions would be offered by volunteers.

Outputs:

Number of people attending training sessions – 60
Number of new or improved community facilities – 1
Number of people reached - 100

UKSPF Grant request: £5,000

Next steps

Following approval being granted, the Project Manager will issue Third Party Grant Agreements to successful applicants. The Project Manager will arrange project inception meetings and project monitoring meetings to ensure all projects deliver in line with approved application forms.

Financial Impacts:

Funding for the UKSPF programmes is via the overall grant provided to the Council.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme (included in 19th January 2023 Cabinet papers) to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

The nature of the UKSPF Investment Plan will have a positive impact on the valley communities and is aligned to the Neath Port Talbot Corporate Plan, Neath Port Talbot Economic Recovery Plan and the Wellbeing Assessments.

Workforce Impacts:

Project Manager and Officers have been recruited and appointed to manage the UKSPF Third Party Grant Funds at the local level.

Legal Impacts:

Grant awards will be assessed to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Any procurement activities will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Swansea Council, as Lead Local Authority (LLA) for the South West Wales region has entered in to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UK government regarding the administration and delivery of the UKSPF including the release of annual funding allocations for the region. Each partner local authority has entered into a Service Level Agreement with Swansea Council to ensure compliance with the MoU and to receive their annual funding allocation.

Standard Third Party Grant Agreements have been developed to be issued to successful organisations.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

The UKSPF application form requires applicants to develop a risk register which will be managed as part of the project plan.

Due diligence checks including Subsidy Control assessments will be carried out prior to formal approval.

The Project Managers and Officers will ensure compliant and effective delivery.

Consultation:

This item has not been subject to external consultation.

A UKSPF engagement plan is in development to ensure regular engagement with local, regional and national stakeholders.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- Members agree the recommendation to approve the following projects which have Member involvement submitted under the Neath Port Talbot UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Third Party Grants Fund Sustainable Communities Growth Fund:
 - 1) Canolfan Maerdy - Amman Valley Dial-a-Ride Pilot
 - 2) Canolfan Maerdy - Community Based Youth Work Training and Services
 - 3) Friends of Seven Sisters – Community Bicycle Project

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To enable Neath Port Talbot Council to implement the UKSPF Implementation Plan and advise applicants of the funding decision.

Implementation of Decision:

The decisions will be implemented after the three day call in process.

Appendices:

None

List of Background Papers:

Applications and supporting documents submitted.

Officer Contact:

Chris Millis
Head of Education Development
c.d.millis@npt.gov.uk

Angeline Spooner -Cleverly
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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 February 2024

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – S.REES

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Audit Wales – Springing Forward: Strategic Workforce Management – Neath Port Talbot Council

Purpose of Report

1. To present Members with the council response to the above review undertaken by Audit Wales.

Executive Summary

2. Audit Wales examined Neath Port Talbot Council's overall arrangements and approach in relation to the strategic management of our workforce. Asking the question 'Is the Council's strategic approach strengthening its ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of its services in the short and longer term?' Audit Wales' focus has been on the challenges highlighted during the pandemic that have exacerbated some long-standing workforce issues.
3. When Audit Wales began their work under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, they recognised that it would take time for public bodies to embed the sustainable development principle, but also set out expectations that over the medium term we would expect public bodies to be able to demonstrate how the Act is shaping what we do. Audit Wales now expect public bodies to be able to demonstrate that the Act is integral to our thinking and genuinely shaping what we do.
4. The aim of the review was to:
 - to gain assurance that councils are putting in place arrangements in relation to its workforce to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services;

- to explain the actions that councils are taking both individually and collectively to strengthen their arrangements; and
- to inspire councils and other organisations to further strengthen their arrangements through capturing and sharing notable practice examples and learning and making appropriate recommendations.

Summary of Findings

5. The review found:

‘The Council has a clear vision for its workforce, strengthened by its work with partners’.

Audit Wales reached this conclusion because:

- the Council has a clear vision for its workforce which continues to be a strategic priority for delivering its Well-being Objectives;
- the Council has a clear workforce planning approach, strengthened by its work with partners. However, it does not have succession plans or identified business-critical roles for all service areas;
- the Council has proactively learnt from others and is developing a broader range of workforce measures

A copy of the Audit Wales report is attached at Appendix 1

6. The examination concluded with the following recommendation:

R1 Workforce planning and delivery:

- to ensure there are progression pathways for staff and there is resilience around its business-critical roles, the Council should ensure all services have succession plans and have identified their business-critical roles.

R2 Workforce governance and monitoring:

- to have a better understanding of the impact of its workforce strategy the Council should develop measures that focus on outcomes and impacts in addition to inputs.
- the Council should build on its benchmarking with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and consider where there may be opportunities to benchmark its measures and metrics with its peers to ensure it can identify areas of good practice and potential areas for improvement.

- to enable the Council to have a clearer understanding of the progress it is making towards meeting its workforce ambitions the Council should assure itself that the Organisational Delivery Board is providing effective oversight and driving integration across related programmes of work.

7. The council's response to the above recommendation is attached at Appendix 2.

Financial Appraisal

8. The programme of audit work undertaken by Audit Wales has been delivered within the budget allocated for audit and inspection work.

Integrated Impact Assessment

9. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment.

Valleys Communities Impact

10. No impacts.

Workforce Impact

11. Strategic workforce planning ensures that the workforce is aligned to the council's priorities, aims and objectives.

Legal Impact

12. Section 15(1) (a) of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Auditor General to carry out examinations to assess the extent to which public bodies have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when setting their well-being objectives.

Risk Management

13. The findings of Audit Wales examinations are a key input into the council's corporate governance and self-assessment arrangements.

Consultation

14. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

15. For Cabinet to approve the council response attached at Appendix 2.

Reason for Proposed Decision

16. To enable the council to put in place the necessary arrangements to support the effective delivery of the Strategic Workforce Plan.

Implementation of Decision

17. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

18. Appendix 1 – Audit Wales Report – Springing Forward: Strategic Workforce Management – Neath Port Talbot Council
Appendix 2 – Council Response Form

List of Background Papers

19. [The Future of Work Strategy - Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2027](#)

Officer Contact

20. Sheenagh Rees, Head of People & Organisational Development
Email: s.rees5@npt.gov.uk

Springing Forward – Strategic Workforce Management – Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Audit year: 2021-22

Date issued: November 2023

Document reference: 3944A2023

This document has been prepared for the internal use of Neath Port Talbot Council as part of work performed/to be performed in accordance with Section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004, and Section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English. Corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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The Council has a clear vision for its workforce which continues to be a strategic priority for delivering its Well-being Objectives	7
The Council has a clear workforce planning approach, strengthened by its work with partners. However, it does not have succession plans or identified business-critical roles for all service areas	9
The Council has proactively learnt from others and is developing a broader range of workforce measures	11

Summary report

Summary

What we reviewed and why

- 1 As the world moves forward, learning from the global pandemic, our review looked at how councils are strengthening their ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services, including those delivered in partnership with key stakeholders and communities.
- 2 We examined Neath Port Talbot Council's (the Council) overall arrangements and approach in relation to its strategic management of its workforce. We sought to answer the question 'Is the Council's strategic approach strengthening its ability to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of its services in the short and longer term?' Our focus has been on the challenges highlighted during the pandemic that have exacerbated some long-standing workforce issues.
- 3 When we began our audit work under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, we recognised that it would take time for public bodies to embed the sustainable development principle, but we did also set out our expectation that over the medium term we would expect public bodies to be able to demonstrate how the Act is shaping what they do. It is now approaching seven years since the Well-being of Future Generations Act was passed and we are now into the second reporting period for the Act. Therefore, we would now expect public bodies to be able to demonstrate that the Act is integral to their thinking and genuinely shaping what they do.
- 4 This project had had three main aims:
 - to gain assurance that councils are putting in place arrangements in relation to its workforce to transform, adapt and maintain the delivery of services;
 - to explain the actions that councils are taking both individually and collectively to strengthen their arrangements; and
 - to inspire councils and other organisations to further strengthen their arrangements through capturing and sharing notable practice examples and learning and making appropriate recommendations.
- 5 This is important because the Council workforce has the following profile:
 - the Council has nearly 6,400 employees, of which 70% are female;
 - over 40% of its staff work in schools;
 - over 95% of those employed on the lowest band grade 1 are female;
 - only 0.5% of the workforce are under 24, over 50% of its workforce are over 45; and 24% of its workforce are 55 and over;
 - only 1.5% of the workforce identify as Black and/or Minority Ethnic Origin; and
 - number of working days lost to sickness per FTE for 2022-23 was 12.78.

- 6 During 2021 we undertook a local review into the Council's approach to workforce management. Overall, our feedback was positive. Where this work identified strengths and areas of improvement, and these are pertinent to the current context they have also been reflected within this report.
- 7 The project, which forms part of the work contained in the 2021 Audit Plan, will help discharge the duties under section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It may also inform a study for improving value for money under section 41 of the 2004 Act.
- 8 The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the way staff work. This report examines some of these impacts and the way that the Council benefits from the positives and mitigates risks from the negatives when planning future service delivery.
- 9 The project was undertaken through a combination of document reviews, focus groups and interviews with officers and Members. We undertook the review during the period February 2022 to October 2023.

What we found

- 10 Our review sought to answer the question: Is the Council's strategic approach to workforce strengthening its ability to transform adapt and maintain the delivery of its services in the short and longer term?
- 11 Overall, we found that: The Council has a clear vision for its workforce, strengthened by its work with partners.
- 12 We reached this conclusion because:
 - the Council has a clear vision for its workforce which continues to be a strategic priority for delivering its Well-being Objectives;
 - the Council has a clear workforce planning approach, strengthened by its work with partners. However, it does not have succession plans or identified business-critical roles for all service areas;
 - the Council has proactively learnt from others and is developing a broader range of workforce measures

Recommendations

Exhibit 1: recommendations

The table below sets out the recommendations that we have identified following this review.

Recommendations

R1 – Workforce planning and delivery

- to ensure there are progression pathways for staff and there is resilience around its business-critical roles, the Council should ensure all services have succession plans and have identified their business-critical roles.

R2 – Workforce governance and monitoring

- to have a better understanding of the impact of its workforce strategy the Council should develop measures that focus on outcomes and impacts in addition to inputs.
- the Council should build on its benchmarking with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and consider where there may be opportunities to benchmark its measures and metrics with its peers to ensure it can identify areas of good practice and potential areas for improvement.
- to enable the Council to have a clearer understanding of the progress it is making towards meeting its workforce ambitions the Council should assure itself that the Organisational Delivery Board is providing effective oversight and driving integration across related programmes of work.

Detailed report

The Council has a clear vision for its workforce, strengthened by its work with partners

The Council has a clear vision for its workforce which continues to be a strategic priority for delivering its Well-being Objectives

Strategic workforce vision and strategy

- 13 **The Council was able to effectively mobilise its workforce in response to the pandemic.** Large numbers of its staff moved quickly to working remotely and others were effectively redeployed to other roles to support the Council's response to the pandemic. Whilst it had always been part of the Council's long-term ambition to have a more hybrid way of working, the pandemic accelerated this aspect of its plans for how and where its staff should work.
- 14 **The Council's workforce was a strategic priority during the pandemic.** In November 2021, the Council introduced its Short-Term Resilience Framework to make effective use of its workforce and to minimise the risk of service disruption during the pandemic. The Council also put workforce at the centre of its strategic ambitions, reflecting this focus in one of its three main priorities, which in November 2021 was to 'Protect the workforce'.
- 15 **The Council's workforce continues to be a strategic priority.** Workforce development (People) is one of the key enabling programmes within the Council's Strategic Change Programme (SCP) that forms part of its current Corporate Plan and supports the delivery of its four Well-being objectives. Having this strategic focus on workforce as part of a wider change programme should ensure that its workforce ambitions have sufficient strategic profile.
- 16 **The Council has a clear vision for its workforce.** The Council's Future of Work Strategy 2022-27 (FOWS) (also known as its Strategic Workforce Plan) provides a clear vision for its workforce which is to 'ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills and attitudes, in the right place and at the right level'. The Council developed the FOW Strategy through engagement with a wide range of staff, Trades Unions and Members and it is well integrated with the wider Corporate Strategy. Having a clear vision should ensure that workforce remains a key enabler to delivering the Council's Well-being Objectives.
- 17 **The Council has a good understanding of how the workforce will operate in the future.** Key to this way of working is the Council's Hybrid Working Framework (HWF). The HWF has evolved since it the Council approved it in 2021 and now forms now a key part of the Council's longer-term FOWS. A key focus for the HWF is to empower council managers to make decisions about how work is organised, how services are delivered and to develop hybrid working arrangements to suit the

needs of the services and employees they manage. This approach is a key enabler for shaping the way in which the Council operates, and how services are accessed by its residents. Continuing to evaluate and assess the most effective way that hybrid working is supporting the delivery of its objectives will ensure this evolving approach remains fit for purpose.

- 18 **The Council has a good understanding of workforce needs and how these might be impacted by future trends.** In developing its FOWS, the Council undertook SWOT and PESTEL¹ analysis to consider the key challenges and opportunities around its workforce. This analysis and discussion stretched beyond the 5-year life span of the current FOWS and should help the Council to ensure decisions around its workforce are set in a longer-term context.
- 19 **The Council's FOWS planning horizons do not reflect the longer-term time horizons from its Corporate Plan.** Whilst the current FOWS covers a five-year time horizon, we recognise that many of its areas of change, such as its focus on building leadership capacity and capability, will have a longer-term impact. However, in our view the Council could apply the positive work it has undertaken to establish a twenty-year ambition for its Well-being Objectives within its Corporate Plan to its FOWS. Having a longer-term time horizon for the strategic planning of its workforce will enable the Council to ensure its decision-making delivers value for money over both the short, medium, and longer term and fully support the longer-term time horizons within its Corporate Plan.
- 20 **The Council's approach to strategic workforce management does not clearly define how it is integrated with its other strategic change programmes.** The Council's vision for its workforce is in part dependent on the delivery of its other key Strategic Change Programmes such as 'Accommodation' and 'Digital'. Its plans for how it will organise and manage its office accommodation and how its digital aspirations use technology to support service change will have a significant impact on its current and future workforce. In our view, the Council should clearly describe how these respective programmes are integrated. However, having all three programmes overseen by a single Organisational Development Board (ODB) provides an opportunity for the Council to ensure interdependencies and shared opportunities between these programmes are understood and maximised.

¹ Analysis tools – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) – Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal (PESTEL)

The Council has a clear workforce planning approach, strengthened by its work with partners. However, it does not have succession plans or identified business-critical roles for all service areas

Strategic workforce planning and delivery

21 The Council has a clear annual plan for delivering its workforce ambitions.

The Council's FOWS, which is set over a five-year time horizon, is underpinned by a detailed annual delivery plan containing discreet actions with outcomes and measures of progress. However, the Council should refresh the delivery plan to ensure it reflects any additional actions for the coming year. The FOWS and its associated delivery plan form a key part of the Council's Strategic Change programme and is clearly aligned to identifying workforce actions in relations to each of its four Well-being Objectives and its other workforce priorities. In our view defining how its workforce contributes to deliver its WBOs demonstrates the importance the Council places on the role that its workforce has in delivering its ambitions.

22 The Council's workforce delivery plan is supported by a specific central team.

Managing the day-to-day delivery of the FOWS delivery plan is a FOW team. We are aware that this team has been without a senior post for some time, which has recently been appointed to. In our view having sufficient dedicated capacity to facilitate the delivery of the FOWS, enhanced by the recent appointment, should enable the Council to increase the momentum with which it has been able to deliver its ambitions for its workforce.

23 Despite the challenging financial climate, the Council has allocated

resources to develop its workforce capability and capacity. This resource has largely been drawn from a Council reserve formally earmarked to support voluntary redundancies. However, there is a risk that future financial challenges may mean that it becomes more difficult for the Council to protect the monies allocated to this area against other competing priorities. The Council should ensure that any changes to resources to continue to develop its workforce capacity and capability considers the long-term impacts on service standards and delivery.

24 The Council does not have succession plans for all its services, and its understanding of its business-critical roles is still developing.

One of the key risks for the Council, which is reflected in its Strategic Risk Register, relates to recruitment and retention. A key action within its strategic risk register to enable the Council to better understand and manage its workforce risks was the requirement for all services to have succession plans in place by March 2023. As of October 2023, the Council has not achieved this milestone, with approximately 50% of services still to complete this work. It is our view that the Council's current strategic risk rating of medium for recruitment and retention does not adequately reflect the residual risk it faces due to its delays in developing succession plans across all

services and identifying business critical roles. It is also our view that a more complete set of service succession plans and business critical roles should provide both a clearer progression pathway for Council staff and mitigate the risk of it failing to meet service standards due to vacancies in business-critical posts.

- 25 **The Council is putting in place mitigations to respond to key workforce risks around recruitment and retention.** In 2021, the Council set up a Recruitment Taskforce comprising internal and external stakeholders to start to address this risk. Whilst the taskforce has made a positive impact on overall recruitment and retention numbers, recruitment and retention in specific areas such as social care and other specialist roles such as architects remain an ongoing challenge. Until recently its taskforce had an external focus. The Council has now broadened the scope of the taskforce to also consider internal workforce capability/talent development. Having this broader scope to address recruitment and retention challenges by also focusing on developing skills and careers within the Council should help it to further mitigate the risks around recruitment and retention.
- 26 **The Council has been proactively self-reflective in identifying areas for improvement in its approach to workforce management.** The Council is currently using the CIPD People Development Partner scheme to assess its effectiveness across a broad spectrum of workforce related areas. The partnering with CIPD has enabled the Council to benchmark itself against other public sector organisations and to assess and enhance and measure progress on the Council's capability to develop its workforce. This use of external best practice, independent professional assessment and benchmarking has enabled the Council to specifically target areas for improvement within its approach to workforce in areas such as, employee experience, talent management and reward, and it is currently implementing plans to make improvements across these areas.
- 27 **The Council has some good examples of collaborating with partners in managing its workforce.** Examples of this include working with the Regional Partnership Board to run joint recruitment campaigns to increase its pool of paid carers and other social care workers. The Council is also undertaking further regional working in relation to the social care workforce with Swansea Council and Swansea Bay Health Board. This collaborative work remains key to ensure service resilience and succession planning in social services. The work to develop a Recruitment Taskforce Partners Group (repurposed in June 2023) which includes partners such as Department for Work and Pensions, Swansea University, Neath Port Talbot College, Swansea Council, Neath Port Talbot Employability, and managers from across the Council services, further demonstrates the Council's desire to work in a collaborative way. In our view these ways of working are a strength, and the Council should continue to seek opportunities to work with others to develop a more joined up approach to workforce development within the region.
- 28 **The Council has a well-developed approach to working with Trades Unions (TUs).** The Council has established a negotiating framework with the TUs which includes a Staff Council, the Local Government Services Forum, and Directorate Joint Consultative Groups. It uses these forums to discuss, develop and implement

workforce initiatives and has implemented changes to these arrangements in response to TU suggestions. The relationship with TUs has been further strengthened by having a TU officer seconded into the Council's Future of Work team. This approach supports the Council's commitment to working in social partnership with recognised TUs and ensures that the TUs have a clearer understanding of how the Council is seeking to deliver its workforce ambitions.

The Council has proactively learnt from others and is developing a broader range of workforce measures

Strategic workforce governance and monitoring

- 29 **The Council has clearly defined workforce governance and accountability structures, however it could improve its workforce progress monitoring.** The Council has several key layers of governance to oversee its workforce ambitions including the Organisational Development Board (ODB) currently chaired by the Chief Executive, a recently re-established Future of Work Project team – to monitor progress on the FOWS delivery plan, and the Corporate Directors Group which provides strategic oversight. This governance is also underpinned by the various Member focused governance groups which provide both strategic direction/decision making and oversight and scrutiny, such as Cabinet, Cabinet Boards, scrutiny and Governance and Audit Committee and the Personnel Committee.
- 30 **Whilst these various group will have considered aspects of workforce monitoring, the routine monitoring of progress against the Council's FOW Delivery plan has not been as frequent as the Council would have wished.** In part this has been impacted by the fact that, at the time of our review, the ODB has not met for several months. The Council has confirmed that routine monitoring of workforce performance will return to expected levels, supported by the recent appointed a new Director for Strategy and Corporate Services, who has responsibility for HR and Organisational Development and will chair the ODB going forward. Having this additional strategic capacity within the Corporate Directors Group should facilitate a greater focus on monitoring progress and the direction of travel for its workforce ambitions.
- 31 **The Council needs to expand the range of measures it uses to monitor the progress it is making on its workforce ambitions.** Whilst progress on its FOWS delivery plan is monitored through its governance framework describe above, the Council's current suite of measures and milestones do not sufficiently enable the Council to determine if its trajectory towards delivering its workforce ambitions is on track. The current suite of HR metrics is largely traditional and based on activity rather than impact or outcomes. The Council has told us that it has recently appointed to a new post in its HR team which is focused on improving data and monitoring. Its Future of Work Team has also been specifically tasked with

developing a more robust set of measures and criteria for measuring success and progress against the FOWS. This development work should also be strengthened by the Council's proposed use of data visualisation packages, such as Power BI to enhance workforce performance reporting. Building on the positive benchmarking and learning it has already undertaken with CIPD, the Council should explore opportunities to benchmark its measures to determine how it performs against its peers. This will enable it to both identify where there is best practice and where it needs to improve. Our view is that whilst these steps are still at an early stage of development, progressing these quickly will ensure the Council is better placed to determine the speed of its progress towards its workforce ambitions.



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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.
Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

Organisational response

Report title: Neath Port-Talbot County Borough Council – Strategic Workforce Management

Completion date: TBC

Document reference: TBC

Ref	Recommendation	Organisational response Please set out here relevant commentary on the planned actions in response to the recommendations	Completion date Please set out by when the planned actions will be complete	Responsible officer (title)
R1	<p>Workforce planning and delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure there are progression pathways for staff and there is resilience around its business-critical roles, the Council should ensure all services have succession plans and have identified their business-critical roles. 	<p>The council accepts this recommendation, as good practice in workforce planning. The Strategic Workforce Plan Delivery Plan for 24 / 25 will include actions to further embed succession planning and the identification of business critical roles across the council. The approval of funding to support the establishment of a Talent Management Resource in the HR Team will support these actions.</p>	31 st March 2025	Head of People & Organisational Development
R2	<p>Workforce governance and monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a better understanding of the impact of its workforce strategy the Council should develop measures that focus on outcomes and impacts in addition to inputs. The Council should build on its benchmarking with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and consider where there may be opportunities to benchmark its measures and metrics with its peers to ensure it can identify areas of good practice and potential areas for improvement. To enable the Council to have a clearer understanding of the progress it is making towards meeting its workforce ambitions the Council should assure itself that the 	<p>The Council accepts these recommendations. The Strategic Workforce Plan Delivery Plan for 24 / 25 will include actions in relation to the development of measures and metrics and further opportunities to benchmark these measures and metrics. The recent establishment of a HR Data and People Analytics Team within the HR service and the development of data analytics capacity within the team will support this.</p>	31 st March 2025	Head of People & Organisational Development

Organisational Delivery Board is providing effective oversight and driving integration across related programmes of work

The Director of Strategy and Corporate Services will re-establish the Organisational Development Delivery Board and ensure effective oversight and integration across the enabling change programmes.

31st March 2024

Director of Strategy and Corporate Services

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

14th February 2024

Report of Head of Engineering and Transport – David W Griffiths,

Matter for Information

Wards Affected: All Wards

1. Report Title

Local Bus Tendering – Award of local bus contracts.

2. Purpose of Report

- I. To inform Members of the funding available for supporting Local bus services in financial year 2024-2025.
- II. To inform Members of the tendering outcome, in relation to the services maintained.
- III. To inform Member of the bus services reinstated as a result of the tendering process.

3. Executive Summary

Members will be aware that Local Bus Services have been supported financially by Welsh Government since the pandemic via the Bus Emergency Scheme and more recently the Bus Transition Fund.

The Bus Transition Fund will cease on 31st March 2024. The intention thereafter is that all Local Services which operate in Wales shall either be

operated as a Commercial Service; or operated pursuant to a new Supported Services Contract by the Local Authorities.

The funding allocation across Wales has reduced by £3M from £42Million in 2023/24 to £39Million in 2024/25 and the terminology has changed from Bus Transition Fund (BTF) to Bus Network Grant (BNG). The funding remains as a regional scheme and the South West Region have received £10.06M. A reduction of £733,700 from the £10.8M allocated in 2023/24. Despite the reduction, as a result of the recent tendering exercise, the funding is sufficient to support the local bus network.

Due to the expiry of the Bus Transition Fund, the Council has awarded 42 contracts. All Contracts received at least one bidder and all contracts offered have now been accepted. The contract prices returned were very competitive which allowed all contracts to be offered within the budget available.

As a result of the tendering process Officers were in a position to offer contracts to reinstate bus services that had been rationalised in October 2023 based on requests from Members and the public. Not all routes that were rationalised have been reinstated because not all changes generated requests and therefore in some cases these services may have been unnecessary, but all the requests have been accommodated.

The reinstated Network will include the following additions:

- Service X6 (Morning) Ystradgynlais to Swansea Bus Station
- Service 256 (Morning) Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontardawe
- Service 256 (Evening) Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontardawe
- Service 38 (Sunday) Swansea Bus Station to Neath Victoria Gardens
- Service 81 (Hourly) Port Talbot Bus Station to Brynbryddan
- Service 82 (Hourly) Port Talbot Bus Station to Sandfields Estate (Golden Avenue)

4. Background

The travelling public have not returned to the Local Bus service and passenger numbers remain nearly 50% down on pre covid levels throughout Wales. Therefore, bus services that were previously commercially viable are no longer commercially viable to the bus operators but are socially and economically necessary for many

passengers who don't have access to a car, enabling them to access health, school or work opportunities for example.

Welsh Government have supported the bus operators by supplying grants, namely the Bus Emergency Scheme (BES) during and immediately after the pandemic and from the 28th July 2023 the BES has been replaced by the Bus Transition Fund (BTF).

Unfortunately, the BTF was less in monetary value than its predecessor and bus operators throughout the Council and the Country have cancelled or reduced services to meet the reduced funding available. As a result, many services have been affected in NPTCBC and across Wales.

Further, BTF will cease on 31st March 2024 to be replaced by an alternative grant to support bus services from April 2024 namely the Bus Network Grant (BNG). The intention thereafter is that all the Local Services which operate in Wales shall either be operated as a Commercial Service; or operated pursuant to a new Supported Services Contract by the Local Authorities.

The Council has surveyed the bus operators to identify which routes they perceive to be commercially viable from April 24. To date from 33 routes (42 contracts) surveyed only 3 will be commercially viable from April next year and this depends upon passenger numbers being stable. As a result, the Council has tendered all the remaining routes.

The tendering was undertaken via the Council's Passenger Transport Unit's Dynamic Purchasing System and following the positive outcome of the tendering process, Officers have awarded contracts to the value of £3,086,883 per year as set out in Appendix 1. The Contracts awarded via the Passenger Transport Unit's Dynamic Purchasing System state in their terms that the Council shall have the right to terminate the Contract, or any part thereof by giving the Contractor thirty calendar days' notice in writing. This may be relied upon and notice served on Operators in the event that Welsh Government funding does not materialise.

Passenger Transport existing resources.

To administer and manage these contracts it is noted that additional staffing resource will be required from 1st April 2024 as all bus services in Neath Port Talbot will now be contracted by the Council with the exception of service 87 between Neath and Port Talbot, the X1 between Swansea

and Bridgend via Port Talbot and the Traws Cymru Service T6 from Ystradgynlais via Neath to Swansea which will remain commercially viable and managed by the bus company and Transport for Wales respectively. The additional administrative and operational duties placed upon the Passenger Transport section as a result of these changes will necessitate a review of the current staffing arrangements that are already at capacity and a business case will need to be developed to ensure the services are sustainable and future proofed to manage the implementation of Welsh Government's proposed Franchising arrangements and the design of the longer-term bus network, both locally and regionally.

By way of further background:

Bus service franchising means that decisions about routes, frequencies, hours and days of operation, and fares are no longer at the whim of operators, but are taken by a Transport Authority which is democratically answerable to the public.

This would also allow the Council, Transport for Wales and Welsh Government to introduce a franchise with the following benefits:

1. To negotiate deals with selected operators who could share increased revenue from improving ridership
2. allow for penalties to be imposed on bus operators who fail to fulfil contract specifications
3. purchase or lease operating centres (garages and out-stations) and lease these to new operators
4. require operators to issue standard tickets valid across the whole network
5. prohibit operators from on-street competition (e.g. offering competing travel deals valid only on their own services)
6. specify a minimum quality of vehicle
7. require all operators to install RTPi (real-time passenger information)-compatible and smart traffic signal-compatible ticket machines.

5. Financial Impacts

There is no financial risk in awarding the contracts. A letter of comfort has been received from the Deputy Minister for Climate Change requesting that Local Authorities secure and award contracts within the

regional budget envelope of £10,058,100 for the South West Wales Region. Appendix 2.

6. Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for information purposes’.

7. Valleys Communities Impacts

Awarding the contracts will maintain socially necessary bus services in valley communities.

8. Workforce Impacts

There is no negative workforce impact by introducing the new contracts however resource will be required to manage the additional contracts which will now be managed and administered by the Council.

9. Legal Impacts

The Local Bus Contracts were advertised and awarded via the Passenger Transport Dynamic Purchasing System in line with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules of purchasing and in accordance with the Council’s terms and conditions.

10. Risk Management Impacts

There is a potential risk of Bus Operators challenging the decision to award contracts if they have not been successful in the tendering process. The contracts are awarded via the Passenger Transport Dynamic Purchasing System which is open and transparent. The award details are published quarterly to mitigate any challenge.

Council Officers waited for a letter of comfort from Welsh Government regarding the funding allocation before awarding tenders.

The Contracts awarded via the Passenger Transport Unit’s Dynamic Purchasing System state in their terms that the Council shall have the right to terminate the Contract, or any part thereof by giving the Contractor thirty calendar days’ notice in writing. This may be relied upon and notice

served on Operators in the event that Welsh Government funding does not materialise.

11. Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

12. Recommendations

That Members note the report.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Schedule of Local Bus tenders awarded.

Appendix 2. Bus Network Grant Letter of comfort from WG.

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Name: Brendan Griffiths

Designation: Passenger Transport Manager

Email: b.griffiths@npt.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Local Bus Services tender awards.

Code	Description	Operator
NPT 001 / Service 83	Morrisons Port Talbot to Blaengwynfi / Glyncorrwg (via Abercregan)	First
NPT 002 / Service 256	Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontardawe	SWT
NPT 005 / Service 59 (Daytime)	Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontrhydyfen	First
NPT 007 / Service 59 (Evening)	Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontrhydyfen	First
NPT 008 / Service X8	Neath Victoria Gardens to Banwen	First
NPT 009 / Service 55 & 58	Service 55 - Neath Victoria Gardens to Min yr Awel / Service 58 - Neath Victoria Gardens to Banwen	First
NPT 010 / Service 56 & 59	Service 56 – Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontardawe (Jubilee) / Service 59 – Neath Victoria Gardens to Neath Victoria Gardens	First
NPT 012 / Service 38	Swansea Bus Station to Neath Victoria Gardens	First
NPT 015 / Service 84	Swansea Bus Station to Port Talbot Bus Station	First
NPT 016 / Service 900	Port Talbot Bus Station to Neath College	Wilkins
NPT 017 / Service 901	Margam to Neath Victoria Gardens	First
NPT 018 / Service 902	Pontrhydyfen to Neath Victoria Gardens	First

NPT 019 / Service 903	Abercraf to Neath College	First
NPT 020 / Service 905	Cwmtwrch to Neath College	First
NPT 021 / Service 906	Min yr Awel to Neath College	First
NPT 022 / Service 907	Coelbren to Neath Victoria Gardens	First
NPT 023 / Service 908	Croeserw to Neath College	Wilkins
NPT 024 / Service 909	Neath College Margam College Campus	Wilkins
NPT 025 / Service X1	Swansea Bus Station to Bridgend Bus Station	First
NPT 026 / Service X3	Port Talbot Bus Station to Maesteg Bus Station	First
NPT 027 / Service X7	Swansea Bus Station to Glynneath Pontwalby Bridge	First
NPT 028 / Service X5	Swansea Bus Station to Neath Victoria Gardens	First
NPT 029 / Service 202	Port Talbot Bus Station to Neath Victoria Gardens	Forge
NPT 030 / Service 251 and S1	Neath Victoria Gardens to Cimla Ridgeway Gardens	SWT

NPT 031 / Service 252 and S2	Neath Victoria Gardens to Westernmoor	SWT
NPT 032 / Service 4	Neath Victoria Gardens to Neath Victoria Gardens	Select
NPT 033 / Service 204	Neath Victoria Gardens to Caewathan	Select
NPT 034 / Service 161	Neath Victoria Gardens to Min yr Awel	DANSA
NPT 035 / Service 162	Glynneath to Min yr Awel	DANSA
NPT 036 / Service 168	Crynant to Neath Victoria Gardens	DANSA
NPT 037 / Service 164	Crynant to Neath Victoria Gardens	DANSA
NPT 038 / Service X5	Neath Victoria Gardens to Glynneath	DANSA
NPT 039 / Service 165	Glynneath to Glynneath	DANSA
NPT 040 / Service X6	Pontardawe to Ystradgynlais	First
NPT 043 / Service X6 (Evening)	Swansea Bus Station to Pontardawe	First
NPT 048 / Service X6 (Evening)	Pontardawe to Ystradgynlais	First
NPT 044 / Service X6 (Morning)	Ystradgynlais to Swansea Bus Station	First
NPT 041 / Service 256 (Morning)	Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontardawe	SWT

NPT 042 / Service 256 (Evening)	Neath Victoria Gardens to Pontardawe	SWT
NPT 045 / Service 38 (Sunday)	Swansea Bus Station to Neath Victoria Gardens	First
NPT 046 / Service 81 (Hourly)	Port Talbot Bus Station to Brynbryddan	First
NPT 047 / Service 82 (Hourly)	Port Talbot Bus Station to Sandfields Estate (Golden Avenue)	First

Appendix 2

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA/JJ/0159/24

Cynghorydd Rob Stewart
Arweinydd y Cyngor
Cyngor Abertawe

cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk

Ionawr 2024

Annwyl Rob,

Yn dilyn cyfarfod a gefais gyda'r Cynghorydd Andrew Morgan ddydd Mercher, 24 Ionawr, hoffwn roi sicrwydd i chi, pan ddaw cynllun y Gronfa Bontio ar gyfer Bysiau (Bus Transition Fund) i ben ddiwedd mis Mawrth eleni, y bydd cynllun y Grant Rhwydwaith Bysiau (Bus Network Grant) yn dechrau o 1 Ebrill 2024 ymlaen.

Y rhaniad cyllid i'ch rhanbarth ar gyfer blwyddyn ariannol 2024-2025 fydd £10,058,100 fel y cytunwyd yng nghyfarfod Bwrdd Gweithredol CLILC a gynhaliwyd ar 19 Ionawr 2024. Ar hyn o bryd mae fy swyddogion yn rhoi trefniadau terfynol ar waith ar gyfer y cynllun a byddant yn cyhoeddi llythyrau dyfarnu grant maes o law.

Yn y cyfamser a allwch barhau â'ch trefniadau i sicrhau a dyfarnu gwasanaethau sy'n angenrheidiol yn gymdeithasol o fewn y gyllideb sydd ar gael ar gyfer gwasanaethau bysiau yn eich rhanbarth na fydd yn hyfyw yn economaidd pan ddaw'r Gronfa Bontio ar gyfer Bysiau i ben.

Yn gywir,

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

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Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lee.Waters@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA/JJ/0159/24

Councillor Rob Stewart
Leader of the Council
Swansea Council

cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk

January 2024

Dear Rob

Following a meeting I have had with Councillor Andrew Morgan on Wednesday, 24 January, I would like to give you assurance that when the Bus Transition Fund (BTF) scheme finishes at the end of March this year, the Bus Network Grant (BNG) scheme will commence from 1 April 2024.

The funding split to your region for FY2024-2025 will be £10,058,100 as agreed at the WLGA Executive Board meeting held on 19 January 2024. My officials are presently putting in place final arrangements for the scheme and will issue grant award letters in due course.

In the meantime can you please continue with your arrangements to secure and award socially necessary services within the budget envelope available for bus services in your region that will be non-economically viable when BTF comes to an end.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee'.

Lee Waters AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Deputy Minister for Climate Change

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

14 February 2024

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services- C.Griffiths

Matter for Information

Ward Affected: All

Officer Urgency Actions

Details of the Urgency Actions taken by the relevant Heads of Service in consultation with the requisite Members, for immediate implementation, can be seen Appendix A.

Financial Impacts

There is no financial impact associated with this report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

Not Required.

Valleys Communities Impacts

There are no valleys communities impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

Ensuring adherence to the Council's constitutional requirements.

Risk Management Impacts

No impact.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

That Members note the schedule of Urgency Actions taken.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure the Council adheres to the rules set out in the Constitution.

Implementation of Decision:

The report is for noting.

Officer Contact

Craig Griffiths, Head of Legal and Democratic Services. Tel: 01639 763767, email c.griffiths2@npt.gov.uk

Stacy Curran, Democratic Services Manager Tel: 01639 763194, email s.curran@npt.gov.uk

Completed Executive Urgency Actions:
14 February 2024

- Cabinet Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in Wales Scheme 2023/24	115NJ	10 February 2023

- Cabinet (Policy and Resources) Sub Committee Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Welsh Government's discretionary rates relief scheme	118TD	19 January 2024

- Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Cabinet Board Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Acceptance of Welsh Government Bus Transition Fund	116TD	23 June 2023
Replacement Community Services Transport Vehicle	1PC	13 October 2023
Action under the Building Act 1984- 11 Gurnos Road, Ystalyfera	1TR	27 October 2023
Commercial Property Grant: 41 Commercial Road, Taibach	01CLP	27 November 2023
Private - Provision of Economic Analysis by KPMG LLP	01NSJ	5 December 2023

- Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board Urgency Actions

Title:	UA Number:	Date:
Private - The Cross Community Enterprise Centre, Pontardawe Swansea	117TD	4 December 2023

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Cabinet –
Wednesday, 14 February 2024

ACCESS TO MEETINGS/EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Purpose:	To consider whether the Public should be excluded from the following items of business.
Item (s):	Item 12 – Third Sector Grant Funding – Award of Grants for 2024-25
Recommendation(s):	That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Paragraphs listed below of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 subject to the Public Interest Test (where appropriate) being applied.
Relevant Paragraph(s):	14

1. Purpose of Report

To enable Members to consider whether the public should be excluded from the meeting in relation to the item(s) listed above.

Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007, allows a Principal Council to pass a resolution excluding the public from a meeting during an item of business.

Such a resolution is dependent on whether it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as defined in section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.

2. Exclusion of the Public/Public Interest Test

In order to comply with the above mentioned legislation, Members will be requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendation(s) to the report on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the Exclusion Paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007.

Information which falls within paragraphs 12 to 15, 17 and 18 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended is exempt information if and so long as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The specific Exclusion Paragraphs and the Public Interest Tests to be applied are listed in Appendix A.

Where paragraph 16 of the Schedule 12A applies there is no public interest test. Members are able to consider whether they wish to waive their legal privilege in the information, however, given that this

may place the Council in a position of risk, it is not something that should be done as a matter of routine.

3. Financial Implications

Not applicable

4. Integrated Impact Assessment

Not applicable

5. Valleys Communities Impact

Not applicable

6. Workforce Impact

Not applicable.

7. Legal Implications

The legislative provisions are set out in the report.

Members must consider with regard to each item of business the following matters.

- (a) Whether in relation to that item of business the information is capable of being exempt information, because it falls into one of the paragraphs set out in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended and reproduced in Appendix A to this report.

and either

- (b) If the information does fall within one or more of paragraphs 12 to 15, 17 and 18 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the public interest test in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information; or
- (c) if the information falls within the paragraph 16 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in considering whether to exclude the public members are not required to apply the public interest test by must consider whether they wish to waive their privilege in relation to that item for any reason.

8. Risk Management

To allow Members to consider risk associated with exempt information.

9. Recommendation(s)

As detailed at the start of the report.

10. Reason for Proposed Decision(s):

To ensure that all items are considered in the appropriate manner.

11. Implementation of Decision(s):

The decision(s) will be implemented immediately.

12. List of Background Papers:

Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

13. Appendices:

Appendix A – List of Exemptions

Appendix A

NO	Relevant Paragraphs in Schedule 12A
12	Information relating to a particular individual
13	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
14	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
15	Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority
16	Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
17	Information which reveals that the authority proposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person, or• To make an order or direction under any enactment.
18	Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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