



## ***POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD***

***Immediately Following Scrutiny Committee on  
THURSDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2014***

***COMMITTEE ROOM 1/2 - PTCC***

### **PART 1**

1. To agree the Chairman for this Meeting.
2. To receive any declarations of interest from Members.
3. To receive the Minutes of the previous Policy and Resources Cabinet Board held on 4th September 2014 (*Pages 1 - 4*)

### **To receive the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

4. Miscellaneous Grant Applications (*Pages 5 - 10*)
5. Community Councils Minor Projects Scheme (*Pages 11 - 12*)

### **To receive the report of the Head of Financial Services**

6. Insurance Arrangements 2014/2015 (*Pages 13 - 16*)
7. Treasury Management Monitoring 2014/2015 (*Pages 17 - 20*)

**To receive the Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services**

8. Timetable - Review of Policy concerning Grants to the Third Sector (Pages 21 - 24)
9. Pontardawe One Stop Shop/Advice Hub (Pages 25 - 38)

**To receive the Joint Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and the Head of Resources and Commissioning**

10. Welfare Reform - Low Income Families Project - Employment (Pages 39 - 50)
11. To receive the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board Forward Work Programme 2014/15. (Pages 51 - 56)
12. To receive the Minutes of the Joint Resilience Meetings: 2nd May 2014 and 1st August 2014 (Pages 57 - 68)
13. Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Statutory Instrument 2001 No 2290 (as amended).
14. Access to Meetings - to resolve to exclude the public for the following items 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**

**To receive the Private Report of the Head of Financial Services (Exempt under Paragraph(s) 14**

15. Council Tax Write Offs (Pages 69 - 78)

**S.Phillips**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre**  
**Port Talbot**

**Monday, 13 October 2014**

## **Cabinet Board Members:**

**Councillors:** A.H.Thomas and A.N.Woolcock

### ***Notes:***

- (1) *If any Cabinet Board Member is unable to attend, any other Cabinet Member may substitute as a voting Member on the Committee. Members are asked to make these arrangements direct and then to advise the committee Section.*
- (2) *The views of the earlier Scrutiny Committee are to be taken into account in arriving at decisions (pre decision scrutiny process).*

This page is intentionally left blank

**EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD**  
**POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**  
**4 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**Cabinet Members:**

Councillors: A.H.Thomas (Chairman) and A.N.Woolcock

**Officers in Attendance:**

H.Jenkins, Mrs. K. Jones and Miss G. Cirillo

---

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Agreed that Councillor A.H. Thomas be appointed Chairman for the meeting.

2. **MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD HELD ON THE 24TH JULY, 2014**

Noted by the Committee

**Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services**

3. **QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DATA - 2014/2015**

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

## **Report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

### **4. MONITORING REPORT ON EXISTING FORWARD FINANCIAL PLAN SAVINGS**

#### **Decision:**

That the report be noted.

### **5. MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS**

#### **Decisions:**

1. That the following applications for miscellaneous grants, as detailed within the circulated, report be approved:-
  - (a) Glyncorwg AFC, Lease of Playing Field, Glyncorwg - £700 per annum;
  - (b) Trustees of Glyncorwg RFC, Lease of Playing Field – Ynyscorwg Park, Glyncorwg - £1,100 per annum;
  - (c) Neath Pensioners Association, Neath – for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 grant of £2,650 and thereafter a sum of £2,400 until the next rent review period;
  - (d) Pontardawe Arena Partnership, Pontardawe re: Natural Play Area at Glantawe Riverside - £350.00 per annum.

2. That the following application be deferred:-

Pontardawe Arena Partnership, Pontardawe re: Glantawe Riverside Park.

#### **Reasons for Decisions:**

1. Items at 1 (a) – (d) above are in accordance with approved criteria;
2. The Application at item 2 above is deferred for further information to be provided prior to consideration.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

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

**Report of the Head of Financial Services**

6. **NON-DOMESTIC RATES - ENHANCED LOCAL NEEDS SCHEME**

**Decision:**

That Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council adopt the Enhanced Local Needs Scheme, as detailed in the circulated report, and provide the relevant rate relief where qualifying criteria were met.

**Reason for Decision:**

To allow the Enhanced Local Needs Grant to be paid to businesses that met the set criteria.

**Implementation of Decision:**

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

7. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING**

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

**Report of the Head of Legal Services**

8. **CORPORATE SERVICES COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE MONITORING REPORT**

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

9. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

**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 to the Local Government act 1972.

**Private Report of the Head of Financial Services**

10. **HOUSING BENEFIT WRITE OFFS**

**Decision:**

That the amount of Housing Benefit Write-Offs, as detailed in the private circulated report, be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

The accounts are irrecoverable for the reasons given.

**Implementation of Decision:**

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

**CHAIRMAN**



## **POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES – H. JENKINS**

**16 OCTOBER 2014**

#### **SECTION A – MATTERS FOR DECISION**

**WARD(S) AFFECTED: BRYN**

#### **ITEM 1**

#### **MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS**

##### **Existing Policy Statement**

- 1.1
- a) Each application will be considered on its merits.
  - b) The Committee will only approve applications for financial assistance from voluntary or charitable organisations which are manifestly committed to voluntary endeavours of a local nature. This will not preclude the consideration of applications where the disposal of funds is outside the area but still provides significant benefits for the people from the Neath Port Talbot area.
  - c) No applications will be considered from religious bodies except relating to church halls and other premises where there is significant community use of the property for non-religious activities.
  - d) No applications will be considered from other public funded bodies such as community councils, hospital trusts, etc. or where the benefit may be in lieu of their contributions such as appeals for hospital equipment.
  - e) Applications from individuals may be considered where both the person and the community derive a benefit.
  - f) No grants will be made to any individual or organisation whose prime purpose is to distribute their funds to other charitable bodies.

## **Budget for 2014/15**

1.2 The following grants are included and have been approved within this budget:-

	<b>Budget 2014/15 £</b>
Citizen Advice Bureau	82,680
Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service	45,494
Racial Equality Council	15,900
Maintenance of Mechanics Institute (in lieu of grant aid to Antiquarians & Archives)	14,037
West Glamorgan Association for the Blind	2,100
One-off grants	949
Total	<u>161,160</u>

## **New Grant Applications**

1.3 Please see Appendix 1.

## **Recommendation**

1.4 It is recommended that Members:

- Decide on the applications set out in Appendix 1.

## **Reason for proposed decision**

1.5 To decide on the funding application.

## **List of Background Papers**

Letters of application.

## **Appendix**

Appendix 1 –Miscellaneous Grant Applications.

### **Ward Affected**

Bryn.

### **Officer Contact**

Mr H J Jenkins – Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
(Tel. 01639 763251 - email: [h.jenkins@neath-porttalbot.gov.uk](mailto:h.jenkins@neath-porttalbot.gov.uk))

## **COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

### **MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS APPLICATIONS**

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in period.

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

Community Plan Impacts:

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	Positive
Better Health and Well Being	Positive
Environment and Transport	Positive
Crime and Disorder	No impact

Other Impacts:

Welsh Language	No impact
Sustainable Development	Neutral
Equalities	Positive
Social Inclusion	Positive

(c) **Consultation**

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

**APPENDIX 1**

**MISCELLANEOUS GRANT APPLICATIONS**

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount Request/ Cost of "Project"</b>	<b>Previous Support</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bryn Residents Action Group Bryn	Lease of a dis-used tennis court in Bryn for multi-use games and leisure facility	£300 p.a.	None	Grant of 90% p.a. requiring £30 to be paid by applicant. Grant to be awarded for a 5 year period.

This page is intentionally left blank

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD  
PORT TALBOT**

**POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

**16 OCTOBER 2014**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND  
CORPORATE SERVICES**

**SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION**

**WARD AFFECTED: RESOLVEN**

**ITEM 2**

**COMMUNITY COUNCILS MINOR PROJECTS SCHEME –  
APPLICATION**

**Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 We have received an application for grant aid under the above mentioned scheme from Resolven Community Council. This application is for a Skate Park to be built together with associated equipment with an estimated cost of £80,000 to be funded from external grants and Community Council reserves.

**Background**

- 2.2 A grants scheme has been introduced in order to assist Community Councils in undertaking minor capital projects which will alleviate to some degree the perceived unfairness about “double rating”.

**Recommendation**

- 2.3 The application from Resolven Community Council complies with the conditions of grant and I therefore recommend that support at 60% up to a maximum of £12,000 in accordance with the schedule be made on receipt of paid invoices together with a copy bank statement.

**Reason for Proposed Decision**

The decision is in compliance with the approved policy.

**List of Background Papers**

Application Form.

**Wards Affected**

Resolven.

**Officer Contact**

Mr. H. J. Jenkins – Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
(Tel. 01639 763251 - email: [h.jenkins@neath-porttalbot.gov.uk](mailto:h.jenkins@neath-porttalbot.gov.uk))



## **POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES – DAVE REES**

**16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

#### **SECTION B - MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

#### **INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2014/15**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of an urgency action taken to accept the results of the 2014 insurance renewal negotiations with underwriters which was carried out on our behalf by our insurance brokers, Marsh Limited.
- 1.2 Approval of the insurance renewals is required by the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, with the information in relation to the renewals becoming available on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2014. This is why this matter was the subject of an urgency action taken, in consultation with requisite Members, in September 2014, Urgency Action No: 0363).

##### **2. Background**

- 2.1 During 2010, the Council's insurance brokers, Marsh Limited, conducted an EU compliant procurement exercise to obtain a new long term agreement for five years from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010 for all but one of the Council's main insurance policies. The policy for material damage for buildings was re-tendered in October 2009 for five years and its term has now been extended so that it also falls due for retender in 2015.
- 2.2 The renewals accepted for 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 will include all the insurance policies of the Authority.

##### **3. Premiums 2014/15**

- 3.1 The total cost of Insurance premiums, fees etc for renewal from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 is £1,003,132 (inclusive of 6% insurance premium tax). Table 1 below summarises the total renewal cost by class of business and includes the 2013/14 figures for comparison.

**Table 1**

<b>Class of Business</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>2013/14</b> £	<b>2014/15</b> £
Material Damage (Buildings)	AIG	380,682	364,786
Fidelity Guarantee	AIG	12,000	12,000
Contractors All Risk / Hired in Plant	HSB	18,386	7,886
Combined Liabilities	AIG	210,404	210,404
Combined Liabilities-SWTRA	AIG	126,000	126,000
Motor Fleet-Minimum Deposit Policy	AIG	57,730	57,730
Personal Accident / Travel	AIG	17,120	16,743
Engineering Inspection	Royal Sun Alliance	12,832	13,153
Engineering Insurance	Royal Sun Alliance	1,533	1,533
Computer	HSB	4,497	5,774
Marine	Royal Sun Alliance	3,483	3,483
School Offsite Activities	ACE	14,178	14,178
Professional Indemnity	Travelers	30,000	30,000
Motor uninsured Loss Recovery	DAS Legal	1,755	1,755
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>890,600</b>	<b>865,425</b>
Insurance Premium Tax *		52,666	51,136
<b>Total Premium (including Tax)</b>		<b>943,266</b>	<b>916,561</b>
Claims Handling	Gallagher Bassett	71,970	64,950
Insurance Consultants Fees	Marsh	21,621	21,621
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,036,857</b>	<b>1,003,132</b>

\* IPT is at 6% for 2014/15 excluding Engineering Inspection which is charged at the prevailing VAT rate.

3.2 A claims handling deposit premium of £64,950 is payable to Gallagher Bassett International for handling liability claims on behalf of the Authority and our liability insurers. The actual claim handling cost is subject to variation based on the actual number of claims received per policy area.

3.3 The policy renewal conditions remain the same as in 2013/14. These are:

- For Combined Liability, that is, Employers and Public Liability insurance, each and every claim is subject to a £100,000 deductible (excess). The Aggregate Stop stands at £3.1m.
- For Material Damage, that is, building insurance, the self insurance elements amount to £100,000. This changes to £250,000 for schools. The Aggregate Stop remains at £1m.
- A terrorism exclusion applies.
- For the Motor Fleet Policy, each and every claim is subject to a £100,000 deductible. The Aggregate Stop remains at £350,000.


The Authority will aim to maintain reasonable internal budgets to fund the self-insured excesses.

### **List of Background Papers**

Insurance Renewal Report 2014 by Marsh Insurance Consultants.


### **Officer Contact**

Mr Dave Rees – Head of Financial Services

 01639 763634


E-mail: d.rees1@npt.gov.uk

Mrs Janet North - Chief Accountant-Technical and Exchequer

 01639 763635

E-mail: j.north@npt.gov.uk

Mrs Jayne Howells - Insurance Manager

 01639 763710

E-mail: j.howells@npt.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

## POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES – DAVE REES

16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014

### SECTION B – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

#### TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2014/15

##### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out treasury management action and information since the previous report.

##### 2. Rates of Interest

2.1 Bank base rates continue to be at an all time low of 0.5% (since 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009) and detailed below are the changes in the bank base rate since April 2008.

<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Bank Rate</b>
10 April 2008	5.00%
08 October 2008	4.50%
06 November 2008	3.50%
04 December 2008	2.00%
08 January 2009	1.50%
05 February 2009	1.00%
05 March 2009 to date	0.50%

2.2 The following table provides examples of external borrowing costs as provided by the Public Works Loans Board as at 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014:

	Equal Instalments of Principal		Annuity		Maturity	
	Previous 12 August 2014	Current 2 October 2014	Previous 2 August 2014	Current 2 October 2014	Previous 12 August 2014	Current 2 October 2014
	%	%	%	%	%	%
5-5.5 years	2.35	2.19	2.36	2.20	2.99	2.80
10-10.5 years	2.99	2.80	3.03	2.83	3.65	3.43
20-20.5 years	3.65	3.43	3.72	3.50	4.11	3.93
35-35.5 years	4.05	3.85	4.13	3.94	4.18	4.02
49.5-50 years	4.17	4.01	4.19	4.03	4.15	4.00

### 3. General Fund Treasury Management Budget

- 3.1 The following table sets out the treasury management budget for 2014/15 and consists of a gross budget for debt charges i.e. repayment of debt principal and interest, and interest returns on investment income.

<b>2013/14 Actual £'000</b>		<b>2014/15 Original Budget £'000</b>
15,017	Principal and Interest charges	16,890
2,176	Contribution to Treasury Management Equalisation Reserve to fund SSIP and other Capital Programme over the next 3 years.	
<b>17,193</b>	<b>Subtotal Expenditure</b>	<b>16,890</b>
	<b>Investment Income</b>	
(778)	- Total	(654)
189	- less allocated to other funds	200
<b>(589)</b>	<b>Subtotal Income</b>	<b>(454)</b>
<b>16,604</b>	<b>Net General Fund</b>	<b>16,436</b>

NB: Other funds include Trust Funds, Social Services Funds, Schools Reserves, Bonds etc.

### 4. Borrowing

- 4.1 No borrowing has been carried out since the last report.

#### 5.1 Investment Income

In line with the Council's Investment Strategy, the 2014/15 Original Budget for investment income is £654k; treasury management investment income generated on investments made to date is £488k

Members should note that the majority of investments are classified as 'specified' i.e. up to 12 months and are currently with the major banks including Barclays, Lloyds Group, Bank Santander, Clydesdale, RBS and Nationwide BS.

- 5.2 The Council policy will allow investments up to a maximum of £25m for periods of more than 1 year and up to 5 years, and this will be considered when decisions on investing surplus funds are made.
- 5.3 No additional long term investments have been carried out since the last report. The Council currently has £10m invested for periods in excess of 12 months:

<b>Counterparty</b>	<b>Value £'000</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Maturity</b>	<b>Rate %</b>
Eastbourne Borough Council	4,000	4.5 Years	June 18	2.2%
Peterborough City Council	6,000	5 Years	Dec 18	2.1%

#### Icelandic Bank Update

- 5.4 Members should note the following position in relation to the recovery of monies from investments in Icelandic related banks.
- 5.5 There have been no further dividends received since the last report. The tables below show the amounts outstanding.

**Table 1 – Original Investments**

<b>Bank</b>	<b>Original Investment</b>	<b>Amount of Principal Repaid</b>	<b>Current Outstanding Investment</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Heritable	9,000	8,597	403
KSF	3,000	2,516	484
	<b>14,000</b>	<b>13,113</b>	<b>887</b>

**Table 2 – Investments Held in Escrow Accounts – Icelandic Kroner**

<b>Bank</b>	<b>Investment (Sterling Equivalent) £'000</b>	<b>Amount Repaid £'000</b>	<b>Outstanding Investment £'000</b>
New Glitnir	387	0	387

- 5.6 Some of the investments matured by the old Glitnir have resulted in cash being held in the form of Icelandic Kroner. In line with Icelandic law, the Kroner is not tradable and can only be spent within Iceland. The Local Government Association is pursuing ways of transferring these investments to realise repayments into Sterling. These new investments with the new bank are held in an Escrow Account in the name of the local authority and generating interest in excess of 4%.

### **List of Background Papers**

Treasury Management Files

PWLB Notice Number 381/14

### **Officer Contact**

For further information on this report item, please contact:

Mr Dave Rees – Head of Financial Services

Tel. No. 01639 763634

E-mail: d.rees1@npt.gov.uk

Mr Huw Jones – Chief Accountant - Capital, Treasury, FIS and Projects

Tel. No: 01639 763575

E-mail: h.jones@npt.gov.uk

Mr Chris Rees – Senior Accountant

Tel. No: 01639 763590

E-mail: c.rees@npt.gov.uk



## **POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

#### **SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

#### **ITEM 1**

#### **1. REVISED TIMETABLE FOR COMPLETING THE REVIEW OF POLICY CONCERNING GRANTS TO THE THIRD SECTOR.**

##### **Purpose of Report**

To propose a revised timetable for completing the review of policy concerning grants to the third sector.

##### **Background**

In December 2013, a review of funding to third sector organisations was completed and a number of recommendations were approved by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board. Included in the recommendations were a number of actions to review the existing policy and procedures that provide the framework within which grant funding and performance management of the use of funds operates.

Initially, it was proposed that the policy review would be completed by the end of March 2014 to inform grant allocations in 2015/16. At the last meeting of Policy and Resources Cabinet Board it was reported that this timetable was no longer feasible. This report sets out a revised timetable for consideration.

##### **Revised Timetable**

It is proposed that the review be completed in the following stages and within the following timetable. The revised timetable still provides a long lead in time prior to the introduction of any changes:

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Scope Review	As detailed in the recommendations of December 2013
Further research and production of draft policy and procedures	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2015
Formal consultation with stakeholders	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2015
Consideration of final policy and procedures proposals	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2015

### **Consultation**

It has already been agreed that the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee will be consulted throughout the process, with further consultation with wider stakeholders to be developed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

### **Recommended**

That the revised timetable set out in this report for completing the review of policy and procedures that govern the allocation of funding to the third sector be agreed.

### **Reason for the Proposed Decision**

To implement the recommendations arising from the review of funding to third sector organisations agreed by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board in December 2013.

### **Officer Reporting:**

Contact: Mrs K Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

E-mail: [k.jones3@npt.gov.uk](mailto:k.jones3@npt.gov.uk) or telephone 01639 763284

## **COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

### **BUSINESS PLAN 2014/15 – CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

#### **(a) Implementation of Decision**

The decision are proposed for implementation following the three day call in period.

#### **(b) Sustainability Appraisal**

Economic Prosperity	-	Positive
Education & Lifelong Learning	-	Positive
Better Health & Wellbeing	-	Positive
Environment & Transport	-	Positive
Crime & Disorder	-	Positive

#### **Other Impacts**

Welsh Language	-	Positive
Sustainable Development	-	Neutral
Equalities	-	Positive
Social Inclusion	-	Positive

#### **(c) Consultation**

This item is not subject to external consultation.

This page is intentionally left blank

## **POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

#### **SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION**

**WARDS AFFECTED:** Godre'rgraig, Pontardawe, Alltwen, Trebanos, Rhos, Cwmllynfell, Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Lower Brynamman, Ystalyfera.

#### **PONTARDAWE ONE STOP SHOP / ADVICE HUB**

##### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To report an assessment of changes introduced at Pontardawe One Stop Shop agreed as part of the FFP in 2013/14 together with the evaluation of European Social Fund (ESF) funded services developed at the same location to benefit families on low incomes.

##### **BACKGROUND:**

On 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013, the Policy & Resources Cabinet Board considered a report recommending alternative service delivery arrangements at the Pontardawe One Stop Shop in order to achieve an identified savings target of £40,000 against the customer facing services at Pontardawe One Stop Shop.

The options available to secure the £40,000 savings identified included:

- Closing the service at the One Stop Shop – this was not preferred as remodelling the service is a viable option and would not deliver savings additional to remodelling the service;
- Remodelling the services – this was the preferred option.

The recommendations on alternative service delivery arrangements included:

- All of the services currently provided by Customer Services to be delivered by the Library staff within existing Library budgets (exception to this – Council Tax enquiries to be dealt with by Housing Benefit officers at the location and complex Blue Badges enquiries to continue to be dealt with by Customer Services officers but by appointment).
- Alternative means of payment be offered to customers and the cashiers facility is then closed. Support is provided to all existing customers to help them select an alternative that best suits their circumstances
- The Housing Benefits service provided operates from the location on two days per week, rather than the existing three and on the same days as NPT Homes operates.

This review of the services provided at the Pontardawe One Stop Shop was conducted at the same time as work being undertaken with wider partners to examine how joint working arrangements could mitigate the impact of welfare benefit changes. That work identified a potential benefit of bringing services that provide benefit advice, job search support and money / debt management into one location. The space freed up at Pontardawe by the above changes in service delivery arrangements, provided an opportunity for such an integrated service model to be piloted for a six month period and evaluated. During December 2013 an extensive consultation exercise was undertaken on the above proposed changes and 84% of responders (106 out of 122) supported the plans for an “Advice Hub”.

The Council, on behalf of the Local Service Board, has drawn down European Social Fund Grant in the sum of £590, 948 which has been used for funding new ways of working in collaboration. Part of this funding was utilised to support costs deemed eligible as part of the development of the above joint working arrangements. (A condition of the Grant is the completion of an evaluation of the impact of the use of the Grant money which has to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014).

During early 2013, work was undertaken with services to establish the alternative service delivery arrangements outlined above and work was initiated with partner agencies to come together in a joint working arrangement. The culmination of this work was the launch of the Pontardawe Hub on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

## **Summary of Progress:**

### **1. Changes to services introduced as part of the FFP**

Following the vacation of Customer Services during March 2014, most of the services that were originally provided by Customer Services staff are now provided by the Library Service. Prior to the closure of the Cashier Service at the end of March 2014, alternative arrangements were put in place for council departments who banked money at the location, council customers who previously accessed encashment facilities and the processing of payments for council services. The Customer Services staff and Cashiers staff provided help and support to existing customers in selecting alternative methods of payment that best suited their circumstances. Customers still wishing to make payments by cash are able to do so at the Post Office. Since the closure of the cashiers facility, Housing Benefits and Library staff have continued to provide advice and support on alternative methods of payment. The Library Service staff have also provided help to customers to request / pay for a variety of online council services.

Members' attention is drawn to the table overleaf which summarises services delivered prior to the change and services provided after the changes were introduced.

Summary of alternative service delivery arrangements:

Original Services provided at Pontardawe	Provider before Changes	Hours of Opening	Provider after Changes	Hours of Opening
Blue Badge Applications	Customer Services	Mon 8.45am – 5pm Wed 8.45am – 5pm Fri 8.45am – 4.30pm	Library Services	Mon 9.30am - 6pm Tues 9.30am - 5pm Wed 9.30am - 6pm Thurs 9.30am - 5pm Fri 9.30am - 7pm Sat - 9.30am - 1pm
Bus Pass Applications				
Verification of CRB information				
Issue stocks of recycling and dog bags				
Bulk Collection bookings				
Reception services for building				
Council Tax Enquiries				
NPT Homes Signposting enquiries	No longer necessary due to co-location	-		
Process payments for council services	Cashiers	Mon 8.45am - 4.30pm Wed 8.45am - 4.30pm Fri 8.45am - 4.00pm	Library Services provide support to those wishing to set up alternative methods of payment / signposted to Post Office	as above Library times
Bank money for some council departments			Ceased - Alternative arrangements put in place	-
Encashment facilities for some Council customers			Ceased - Alternative arrangements put in place	-
Housing Benefits enquiries	Housing Benefits		Housing Benefits**	Tues & Thurs 9am - 1pm / 1.45pm - 5pm
Library Services	Library Services	Mon 9.30am - 6pm Tues 9.30am - 5pm Wed 9.30am - 6pm Thurs 9.30am - 5pm Fri 9.30am - 7pm Sat - 9.30am - 1pm	Library Services	No change
Range of enquiries including tenancy / rent enquiries	Neath Port Talbot Homes	Tues - 9am – 4pm Thurs - 9am - 4pm	No change **	Tues - 9am - 4pm Thurs - 9am - 4pm

\*\* these services are located within the Hub.



The information provided in the table demonstrates the wider availability of those services that were previously delivered by Customers Services (5 ½ days instead of three).

During the period of changes, different solutions have been put in place. For example, during the first few months citizens could only access general advice regarding the application for a Blue Badge. To address this, technology is being utilised to enable a full application service to be delivered. Library staff will check the applicant’s documentation before setting up the technology to enable the applicant to be interviewed by Customer Services staff (based at Port Talbot / Neath) remotely. This service will commence on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014 when the Library re-opens following a refurbishment.

## 2. Development of the ESF funded Advice Hub

In addition to the above changes in service delivery, the table below summarises the agencies that were involved during the 6 month pilot of the Hub. The evaluation report attached at Appendix 1 contains an analysis of the demand which has informed the proposed involvement of agencies going forward, which also includes the Council’s Housing Benefits service and NPT Homes who are located within the Hub.

<b>Agencies involved in 6 month pilot</b> <b>(April 14 – September 14)</b>	<b>Proposed involvement for next 12 months</b> <b>(October 14 – September 15)</b>
Job Centre Plus	None
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	Core Agency
Calan DVS	Available on a referral / appointment basis
NPT CVS	
Dewis	
NPT Lifelong Learning Service	

The key findings of the evaluation of the Hub were:

- There is a steady footfall with an average of almost 45 clients visiting the Hub each day that it has been open (Apr-July). 71% had their issue resolved one stop
- Housing Benefits are the agency most in demand as they saw 42.5% of clients coming to the Hub, NPT Homes 36.2% and CAB 9.9%
- Clients were referred to 29 different agencies
- 90% of clients saw the agency that they intended to see when they came to the Hub
- Signposting has been a beneficial aspect of the service as clients are regularly referred to other agencies within the Hub and take advantage of this opportunity, with 30% of clients seeing another agency in addition to the one that they had intended to
- Clients are seeing the benefits of the Hub with all of those interviewed saying that they found the advice given very helpful or somewhat helpful and that they would visit the Hub again

On 4<sup>th</sup> September the Council's Welfare Rights Unit joined the Hub and provides a pre-arranged appointment service every Thursday morning and a drop in service during the afternoon (Hub opening hours). On 29<sup>th</sup> September the NPT Credit Union joined the Hub and is operating on a 5 day basis Monday – Friday (10am – 3pm).

### **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been reviewed and there are no amendments required to the one that was originally considered.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

To extend the project for 12 months during which the following actions are undertaken:

#### **Council Services:**

1. A further report is brought back to Members' following the six months trial of the remote access arrangements.
2. To investigate the number of Council Tax enquiries not dealt with "one stop" and to report back to Members on the outcome of that investigation.

## **The Hub:**

3. Those agencies that were most visited become the core agencies within the Hub working 2 days (Tuesday and Thursday) – Housing Benefits / Council Tax; NPT Homes and Citizens Advice Bureau.
4. A referral / appointment process is formalised for those agencies who had fewer visitors.
5. To undertake a review of the impact of the following services and bring a report back in 6 months time:
  - a. Credit Union
  - b. Welfare Rights Unit

## **REASON FOR PROPOSED DECISION:**

To formalise the delivery of Council services at the Pontardawe One Stop Shop location and to formalise the basis upon which agencies engage with the Hub on an ongoing basis.

## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1 –Executive Summary – Pontardawe Hub

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Policy & Resources Cabinet Board – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013 – Pontardawe One Stop Shop.

Pontardawe Hub – Low Income Families Project Full Evaluation Report

## **OFFICER CONTACT:**

Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy & Democratic Services,  
Telephone 01639 763284, email: [k.jones3@npt.gov.uk](mailto:k.jones3@npt.gov.uk)

Caryn Furlow, Organisational Development Consultant,  
Telephone 01639 763242, email: [c.furlow@npt.gov.uk](mailto:c.furlow@npt.gov.uk)

## COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

### PONTARDAWE ONE STOP SHOP / ADVICE HUB

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

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

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

**Community Plan Impacts:**

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	Positive
Better Health and Well Being	Positive
Environment and Transport	Positive
Crime and Disorder	Positive

**Other Impacts:**

Welsh Language	Neutral
Sustainable Development	Positive
Equalities	Positive
Social Inclusion	Positive

(c) **Consultation**

This item is not subject to external consultation.

.

**Building Capacity and Capability to accelerate  
service transformation from the citizens'  
perspectives**

**EVALUATION**

**Low Income Families Project**

**Pontardawe Hub**

October 2014



## **Executive Summary**

### **Pilot Project No.1 – A One Stop Shop for citizens to access, maximise and manage their finances**

#### **Aim**

A one stop approach (advice hub) delivered by partners, to support people to access and maximise new and existing benefit entitlements, council tax assistance, debt and money management issues as well as helping people find work and training. Helping people to get online is key to this project and will give people the opportunity to transact in a number of areas such as paying bills online, accessing jobs and applying for courses.

#### **Context**

Due to the national context for the Low Income Families Project showing the likely increase in demand for advice services due to welfare reform and the impact that this would have locally, it was felt that clients would benefit from being able to access a range of agencies one stop.

The space freed up at Pontardawe One Stop Shop as part of the Council's wider plans for changes in service delivery at that location, provided an opportunity for such an integrated service to be piloted and evaluated. During December an extensive public consultation exercise was undertaken on the above proposed changes and 84% of responders (106 out of 122) supported the plans for the advice hub.

#### **The Pilot Project**

The Hub is open on a Tuesday and Thursday from 9-5 and commenced on the 8<sup>th</sup> April for a 6 month period. It brought together a number of agencies providing citizens with the opportunity to access welfare benefits advice, money management advice, housing advice, digital inclusion support, CV writing and job search services alongside housing benefits advice and the publicly accessible computers supported by the library. Partners involved are JobCentre Plus (JCP) Citizens Advice Bureau, Calan DVS (Welsh Women's Aid) NPT Homes, NPT Council for Voluntary Service and Dewis as well as the Council's Housing Benefits service and the Lifelong Learning Service.

Some agencies attend both days, some only attend a morning or afternoon session. The Hub operates on a drop in basis with clients seeing whichever agencies they need to.

#### **Findings**

Data from 8<sup>th</sup> April- 7<sup>th</sup> July inclusive informed the evaluation.

During those 3 months, 1,167 people attended the Hub for support. The numbers increased month by month with 337 attending in the first month,

rising to 417 in the third month. The average number of clients visiting the Hub each day that it was open was 44.9. Of those who attended, 826 (70.8%) were dealt with one stop.

The agencies most visited by clients were housing benefit and NPT Homes who saw 496 (42.5%) and 423 (36.2%) of the total clients respectively with the Citizens Advice Bureau seeing 116 (9.9%) of clients.

29 clients who visited the Hub spoke to CAB specifically for debt advice. This represents 25% of the clients that CAB have seen since the Hub opened. Of those, 21 were given advice on debt management plans. It would be hoped that this would have a positive impact on getting their debts under control and over time, reducing them.

Aside from the range of agencies available to clients in the Hub, clients have presented to the Hub with a huge range of needs which demonstrates the range of issues that the Hub is able to deal with, or, if not able to deal directly with, can refer the client onto another agency who will be able to help. The two types of need that presented most frequently were; handing in information for housing benefit (156) and amending a housing benefit claim (109). The third largest type of need presented was to pay a council tax bill (100)

Clients who attended the Hub were referred to 29 different agencies during the first three months of it being open. Council tax were the most referred to agency (98 referrals) followed by the library (75 referrals) and housing benefit (47 referrals).

Aside from being referred on to another agency (255 clients) which includes those referred to another agency within the Hub, the action most likely to be undertaken within the Hub was housing benefit documents or evidence being taken (153) followed by a housing benefit amendment being completed (112).

### **IT Support**

Due to a restructure within the organisation that were going to offer support with IT skills, they were unable to deliver on this. Dedicated IT support from a Get NPT Online volunteer started in July and is offered for 2 hours on a Thursday afternoon. It is hoped that another organisation will be able to offer support on a Tuesday. However, library staff assist clients with a range of IT support on a daily basis. This can be basic assistance such as showing them how to print a document or more complicated such as setting up an email address or developing and typing their CV. The library staff have received training on Universal Jobmatch (UJ) and have used this to assist clients looking for employment. Library staff have also been assisting clients to make payments online such as Council Tax, setting up direct payments and accessing NPT Council services online.

### **Client Feedback**

Client feedback was sought to understand whether clients found the Hub beneficial.

The 20 clients interviewed further to their visit to the Hub were asked if their query had been resolved by the end of their visit (and therefore were dealt with one stop). 9 (45%) of those interviewed said that their query had been resolved by the end of their visit to the Hub.

12 (60%) of those interviewed said that they contacted other agencies based on the advice that they had been given. 18 (90%) of the clients interviewed said that they saw the agency or agencies that they had intended to see. 6 (30%) of those interviewed had also seen other agencies which included, NPT College, Housing Benefits, CAB, Workways and JCP therefore, certainly in some cases, clients who visit the Hub for one issue are taking advantage of the other agencies available.

Of those contacted, 14 (70%) found the advice they received very helpful and 6 (30%) found it somewhat helpful. 19 (95%) of those interviewed said that the help they received made them feel more confident in dealing with their situation. Only in 34% of cases did clients feel more confident because their situation had been resolved. In 66% of cases they felt more confident because they had received support, had become aware of their options or had acquired an understanding of what to do. Therefore, whilst resolving the situation is clearly an important factor in empowering clients, just acquiring a better knowledge and understanding can be sufficient to make them feel more confident in dealing with their situation.

All 20 interviewed said that they would be likely to return to the Hub for other issues or concerns. Those that gave reasons for this said that it is convenient and to access other agencies.

16 clients who had received finance related advice were asked if their financial situation had improved further to receiving support. This gave a range of answers that demonstrated that in some cases their financial situation had improved as a result of receiving advice. Four of those interviewed (20%) did report that their financial situation had improved with two more (a further 10%) stating that they had agreed or nearly agreed payments to lenders. It would be hoped that agreeing payments with lenders would have a positive effect on a client's financial situation. Six clients (30%) were still awaiting the outcome of a benefit application or other changes.

### **Agency Feedback**

The agencies who attend the Hub were also interviewed to gather their feedback on it. All of those interviewed felt that clients have benefited from the Hub. The main reasons cited for this were;

- (i) Clients are able to access services that they previously would have had to travel a distance to.



- (ii) Agencies are able to quickly refer clients to each other, some of the clients whom they may not have had referred to them at all otherwise. This has meant that clients receive prompt and impartial information. Some of the agencies interviewed raised that referring between themselves was an unexpected outcome and benefit from the Hub.
- (iii) All agencies that were interviewed felt that the Hub is able to meet the needs of the clients who are attending as it is offering a service that wasn't available previously.

One potential issue that agencies commented on that may affect clients' ability to access a range of support in one place was that it could be difficult for people who work to attend the Hub and the times or days may not suit everyone. No other specific barriers to clients accessing the service were raised and it was felt by all agencies that resources are being used in the most suitable way for the Hub and that opening 2 days per week was sufficient for the footfall coming in, enabling them to meet the demand that is presenting. It was acknowledged that demand fluctuates though.

One of the agencies interviewed also commented that since being part of the Hub they have noticed that people seem to be keeping to their pre-arranged appointments and they have very few, 'no shows.' Whilst this comment wasn't explored further, it is hoped that this is reflective of the fact that clients found the advice given helpful and that all of those interviewed would return to the Hub for other advice and that they like the Hub environment and feel comfortable in attending it to seek advice or support.

Apart from the benefits reported by clients themselves, the feedback from the agencies who attend the Hub has also provided a valuable insight into it. All of the agencies interviewed said that the Hub was what they expected it to be and there wasn't anything that hasn't been done that they thought would be although there were a couple of comments that due to the change in the nature of the use of the building (customer service staff used to be present there) people do still drop in asking about general enquiries and expecting staff there to be able to help them. In other cases people need to be redirected to the library in the same building for assistance with certain enquiries such as Blue Badges. Agencies' perceived that there was a lack of knowledge in the community about the Hub, with people still referring to it as the, 'One Stop Shop.' Greater promotion of the Hub and the services on offer there was suggested by one agency and another commented that it felt that other agencies (external to the Hub) should be signposting people to the Hub.

A large number of promotional activities took place when the Hub was launched. Staff from agencies that are present at the Hub were interviewed a relatively short time after the Hub was launched, therefore, at that point, knowledge of it within the local community may have still been limited. It is hoped that if staff were interviewed again at a later date, they may feel that this situation has improved as a lot of promotion has taken place and hopefully it has had a positive impact.

A few comments were made on things that could be done differently which included a receptionist to direct clients to the relevant agency and that footfall needed to be increased for some agencies. One agency in particular commented that their footfall is too low, although since JCP started attending, they hope that this will improve. It was also suggested that if JCP clients could sign on there to receive their benefits, this might help to increase footfall for some of the other agencies too. It was felt that getting clients to come in can be a struggle for some of the agencies present. On the other hand, one agency has had to turn clients away on occasion and operates an appointment system throughout the day (clients are given an appointment time when they come in). They said it would be beneficial for them to have an additional advisor present but resources did not allow it and as demand fluctuates, there could be some weeks when that person wasn't busy.

The only addition to the Hub that any of the agencies would like to see would be a phone that they could use to make external calls. One agency had concerns that the set up didn't allow for enough confidentiality as people were sharing personal information in an open environment and that this could be a barrier to people accessing their service although private interview rooms are available at the Hub.

## **Conclusion**

- There is a steady footfall with an average of almost 45 clients visiting the Hub each day that it has been open (Apr-July). 71% had their issue resolved one stop
- Housing Benefit are the agency most in demand as they saw 42.5% of clients coming to the Hub, NPT Homes 36.2% and CAB 9.9%
- Clients were referred to 29 different agencies
- 90% of clients saw the agency that they intended to see when they came to the Hub
- Signposting has been a beneficial aspect of the service as clients are regularly referred to other agencies within the Hub and take advantage of this opportunity, with 30% of clients seeing another agency in addition to the one that they had intended to
- Clients are seeing the benefits of the Hub with all of those interviewed saying that they found the advice given very helpful or somewhat helpful and that they would visit the Hub again

## **POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET BOARD**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND THE HEAD OF RESOURCES AND COMMISSIONING**

**16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

#### **SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION**

#### **WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

#### **WELFARE REFORM – LOW INCOME FAMILIES PROJECT - EMPLOYMENT**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

1. To report the outcomes of the evaluation of one of the three pilot projects that have been undertaken as part of the Local Service Board's - Low Income Families Project.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Council, on behalf of the Local Service Board, has drawn down European Social Fund Grant in the sum of £590, 948 which has been used for funding new ways of working in collaboration. A condition of the Grant is the completion of an evaluation of the impact of the use of the Grant money which has to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

The monies drawn down have funded the following three Projects:

1. Low Income Families Project (three pilot projects)
2. Promoting the Independence & Wellbeing of Vulnerable Adults – Intermediate Care (AFIC)
3. Vulnerable Families

The purpose of today's report is to provide Members with the outcomes of the evaluation (full evaluation report is attached at Appendix 1) of one of the pilot projects initiated under the Low Income Families Project:

## **One stop help and support for people to improve their employment prospects.**

### **Context:**

Demand collected from partners during an exercise carried out in April 2013 identified that there was a significant informal referral system from the Job Centre to the Library in Port Talbot for supporting clients to complete CVs, on line application forms and job searches as well as assistance with basic IT skills. This resulted in an unsustainable level of demand and a lack of resources to assist clients. The numbers of job seekers asking for assistance in the library increased when Universal Jobmatch (UJ) started as people were then obliged to do a certain number of hours job seeking each week or could risk the non payment of benefits.

### **The Pilot Project:**

From 11<sup>th</sup> December 2013, staff from the Job Centre attended Port Talbot library on a Wednesday for a 6 month period. As of the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014, sessions began to run on a Friday as well. Get NPT Online attended the sessions initially to offer basic IT support but due to staff changes, were unable to continue. However, they had recruited a volunteer to offer this support and he has remained with the pilot project, attending every session. Cyrenians attend to offer 1-2-1 support with CVs and this has been done by the Employment Coach who has attended the Wednesday sessions since February.

The Learner Support Officer from Lifelong Learning has also been attending the sessions since April to offer support to job seekers wishing to find out about training.

The sessions take place in the training room at the library. Job Centre Plus advisors refer their clients to attend the library on either a Wednesday or Friday if they need support to access a UJ account or sign up to it for the first time, assistance with writing or updating their CV, help with basic IT skills such as uploading their CV onto a USB stick or attaching it to an email or setting up an email account.

Clients who attend a session are welcome to return again for further support or to job seek and anyone who drops in for support without having been referred is also welcome.

The key findings of the evaluation of this pilot were:

- 99 of the 191 clients referred to the Library for support attended
- On average, 5.6 clients attended each session (includes both referrals and returners)
- As part of the evaluation 44 clients were interviewed and almost half of clients felt more confident in using UJ and writing their CV having received support. 93% of those interviewed said they had got what they wanted from attending
- Clients and the agencies involved in the project like the location and environment the library offers for this work and commented that it provides a more relaxed atmosphere for clients

Due to the success of these sessions, the arrangements have continued after the end of the pilot period (Dec 13 – May 14) and have been extended to Neath Library (starting on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October). Discussions are underway between the Library Service and Job Centre Plus to extend the availability of this service to other libraries across the County Borough.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

To endorse the continuation of these arrangements.

**REASON FOR PROPOSED DECISION:**

To formalise the partnership between the Library Service and Job Centre Plus.

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1 – Executive Summary of the Evaluation of the Low Income Families Project.

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Low Income Families Project Evaluation – Full Report

**OFFICER CONTACT:**

Karen Jones, Head of Corporate Strategy & Democratic Services,  
Telephone 01639 763284, email: [k.jones3@npt.gov.uk](mailto:k.jones3@npt.gov.uk)

Wayne John, County Librarian,  
Telephone 01639 860006, email: [w.john@npt.gov.uk](mailto:w.john@npt.gov.uk)

Caryn Furlow, Organisational Development Consultant,  
Telephone 01639 763242, email: [c.furlow@npt.gov.uk](mailto:c.furlow@npt.gov.uk)

## COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

### WELFARE REFORM – LOW INCOME FAMILIES PROJECT (EMPLOYMENT)

(a) **Implementation of Decision**

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

(b) **Sustainability Appraisal**

**Community Plan Impacts:**

Economic Prosperity	Positive
Education and Lifelong Learning	Positive
Better Health and Well Being	Positive
Environment and Transport	Positive
Crime and Disorder	Positive

**Other Impacts:**

Welsh Language	Neutral
Sustainable Development	Positive
Equalities	Positive
Social Inclusion	Positive

(c) **Consultation**

This item is not subject to external consultation.

**Building Capacity and Capability to accelerate  
service transformation from the citizens'  
perspectives**

**EVALUATION**

**Low Income Families Project**

**One stop help and support for people to  
improve their employment prospects**

October 2014



## **Executive Summary**

### **Pilot Project No.3 – One Stop help and support for people to improve their employment prospects**

#### **Aim**

To help local job seekers and citizens improve their employment prospects by developing skills, particularly in relation to online CVs, application forms and job searches.

#### **Context**

Demand collected from partners during an exercise carried out in April 2013 identified that there was a significant informal referral system from the Job Centre to the library for supporting clients to complete CVs, on line application forms and job searches as well as assistance with basic IT skills. This resulted in an unsustainable level of demand and a lack of resources to assist clients. Library staff were assisting where possible as they were aware that job seekers were unable to access this type of support elsewhere. The numbers of job seekers asking for assistance in the library increased when Universal Jobmatch (UJ) started as people were then obliged to do a certain number of hours job seeking each week. The library were only able to help clients to a certain level but support with job seeking and UJ wasn't available elsewhere.

#### **The Pilot Project**

This is a partnership approach between the library, JobCentre Plus (JCP) Get NPT Online, Cyrenians, Lifelong Learning and the Low Income Families Project.

Staff from JCP attended Port Talbot library on a Wednesday from 1.30-3 commencing on the 11<sup>th</sup> December for a 6 month period. As of the 24<sup>th</sup> January, sessions began to run on a Friday as well. Get NPT Online attended the sessions initially to offer basic IT support but due to staff changes, were unable to continue. However, they had recruited a volunteer to offer this support and he has remained with the pilot project, attending every session. Cyrenians attend to offer 1-2-1 support with CVs and this has been done by the Employment Coach who has attended the Wednesday sessions since February.

The Learner Support Officer from Lifelong Learning has also been attending the sessions since April to offer support to job seekers wishing to find out about training. This support could assist clients in later moving into work.



The sessions take place in the training room at the library. JCP advisors refer their clients to attend the library on either a Wednesday or Friday if they need support to access a UJ account or sign up to it for the first time, assistance with writing or updating their CV, help with basic IT skills such as uploading their CV onto a USB stick or attaching it to an email or setting up an email account.

Clients who attend a session are welcome to return again for further support or to job seek and anyone who drops in for support without having been referred is also welcome.

### **Findings**

Over the course of the 6 month pilot project, 191 JCP clients were referred to the library for support. Of these, 99 (51.8%) attended. JCP referred a maximum of 7 clients per session.

Over the same period, 104 returners were logged, this included anyone who had previously attended but also includes some of the same clients returning on many occasions. Including the number of returners, an average of 5.6 clients attended each session.

The most likely reason for referral was for support with using UJ, followed by help with CVs.

The library feel that the introduction of UJ has led to an increase in the use of their computers and estimate that 50% of computer use in the library is by job seekers using UJ. Fortunately, the sessions run by JCP have given people more confidence to use computers by themselves and has led to less pressure on library staff to help people with their job seeking requirements. People do ask library staff for assistance on days when the sessions aren't running and library staff will help them as much as they can to get them started but then suggest that they return on a Wednesday or Friday, to one of the designated JCP sessions.

A Learning Support Officer from the Councils' Lifelong Learning Service began attending the sessions in the library on a Wednesday afternoon at the beginning of April to offer advice to clients on training and volunteering opportunities and how this can contribute to finding employment. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> April to the 4<sup>th</sup> June (the part of the pilot project she attended) she saw 13 clients who attended for a range of reasons. Having the Learning Support Officer present in the library was an asset to the pilot as although this was not the reason that clients are referred from JCP, some wish to speak to her once they know she is there as they may be interested in acquiring new skills to assist with their job search or in changing direction in their career.

### **Client Feedback**

44 people were interviewed in the library of which, 29 were spoken to both before and after receiving support. 31 were only spoken to before receiving

support and 2 were only spoken to after receiving support. The type of support clients who were interviewed had attended the library for was predominantly help with CVs (16 clients) help with using UJ (14 clients) help with IT (9 clients) and help with online job seeking (4 clients). Some clients had attended for more than one reason.

Of the 42 clients interviewed prior to receiving support, 31 (73.8%) had been referred to the library by JCP, 10 had previously visited the library to receive support (the reason for their original visit was not asked) and 1 was referred by the Shaw Trust.

All clients were asked how confident they felt regarding a range of issues regardless of what they had come in for support with. The area that clients were most likely to report feeling extremely confident in was in doing their CV, followed by using UJ.

Further to receiving support, clients were only asked if they felt any more or less confident about a particular issue if they had received support for that issue (regardless of what support they stated they had come in for initially). All clients were asked if they felt more confident in looking for employment or in finding a job as any of the support received may have had an impact on this.

Of the 31 clients interviewed after receiving support in the library, almost half (14) felt more confident in using UJ and doing their CV (13). The majority of those interviewed felt neither more nor less confident after receiving support about looking for employment or in finding a job. Given that most clients only attended the library for a relatively short period of time (between half an hour and an hour) it would be unlikely for there to be a big change in their levels of confidence on these issues. That said, 11 (35.5%) of those interviewed did say they felt more confident about looking for employment having received support. 10 of those 11 also felt more confident in either using UJ or doing their CV, therefore the support they received in those areas may have been what in turn, made them feel more confident in looking for employment if those were the skills that they felt they had previously been lacking.

Clients who had given their consent at the time of being interviewed in the library, were contacted some time after having received support (between 2 and 3 months) to find out if they had secured employment and if so, whether they felt that the support they had received had been beneficial to them. Of the seven people who responded, three had found employment, two on a permanent basis and one was unsure whether it was temporary or permanent as it was through an agency. One stated that the support they had received in the library (using UJ) had definitely helped them to find a job as they had found the job through the UJ website and applied for it there as well as becoming more computer literate through receiving support in the library. One said that although the support had not helped him to find a job (he had found the job through Workways) he still felt that the support may help other people be successful in their job search.

Of the 31 clients interviewed after they received support, 29 (93.5%) reported that they had got what they wanted from attending. Clients had on the whole, received the support they had come in for, with many receiving support over and above what they had stated they had come for on arrival at the library. This is positive as it demonstrates that clients were generally clear on what support they had come to the library for and went away feeling that had been achieved. This view was supported by staff in the pilot project who felt that the pilot is meeting the needs of their clients and that clients seem to be going away happy with the support that they have received.

27 of the 31 (87.1%) clients interviewed before leaving the library reported that there wasn't anything that they thought should be done differently, with the same number reporting that there wasn't any other support they felt it would have been helpful to receive in the library. All of the above indicators demonstrate that the majority of clients were happy with the support that they received and the environment in which they received it and that it was helpful to them. The number of repeat visitors further backs up this conclusion.

### **Agency Feedback**

Staff involved in the pilot from the participating agencies were interviewed and felt that clients are benefiting from the pilot as they are getting support that they wouldn't get elsewhere and the pilot project is moving people on towards employment and helping to remove a barrier to that happening. Staff members also spoke of clients returning on several occasions which was not something they had anticipated would happen.

The environment that the pilot project is carried out in has proved to be an important factor in the success of it. One member of staff commented that the casual approach works well and being away from the Job Centre is positive as clients speak more freely. There can be a stigma attached to going into the Job Centre whereas away from that environment there is a different atmosphere. Another also commented on it being a nicer environment than the Job Centre and that clients are more relaxed and don't feel the pressure that they feel in the Job Centre. One spoke of the facilities being good, with the library staff being really helpful and the library being a good central venue. Another commented that there is no pressure on clients and they can leave when they want to. The library are also aware of the benefits of the pilot taking place there and recognise that clients are more willing to come to the library.

The timing of the pilot was raised as a possible barrier to clients attending, as although it runs on two different days, a different time of day was suggested so as not to interfere with the school run. Two sessions is seen as good although the library and JCP would like to offer a morning session but the room isn't currently available. Some staff acknowledged that Friday afternoon isn't the best time to run this type of session. The sessions haven't been advertised outside of the library as it was felt that this could cause capacity to be exceeded. For the Learner Support Officer, the length of the sessions can be restrictive depending on how many clients need support each time as she can spend up to an hour with one client.

Staff from the agencies participating in the pilot, felt that they are able to meet the demand for the service although some would like to refer more clients but recognise the limitations in terms of capacity and space in the library to assist more people. It is being considered whether to stagger arrival times for clients as currently anyone referred is asked to arrive at 1.30 when the sessions begin.

The pilot has evolved since it started. Whilst staff said that it is what they expected it would be, there have been developments over the course of the 6 months. At the start of the pilot, the planned support with writing CVs was not able to be offered as the organisation who were going to offer this support were unable to due to capacity issues. Cyrenians were brought into the pilot in February to offer this support. This has been in high demand and after support with UJ, has been the most requested form of assistance with 59 attending for support in writing or updating their CV in the 4 months since that type of support commenced being offered.

The other development in the pilot has been that Lifelong Learning (Learner Support Officer) now attend the Wednesday session. The Low Income Families Project Manager brought that service into the pilot in April and the benefits of this have been clear with the Learning Support Officer being busy with clients most weeks, seeing clients from across a range of levels of educational attainment, some of whom have low literacy skills, others who are highly skilled. Staff involved in the pilot project suggested other support organisations who it would be beneficial to also have at the library sessions such as the Money Advisory Service or running specific courses in the library. Currently the space available to the pilot however, may limit the option for other agencies to attend.

One of the less obvious beneficial outcomes from the pilot project has been the networking between agencies and their learning about the work of each other. The Learner Support Officer will soon work out of the Job Centre on a regular basis in order to offer support at that location to clients wishing to access training opportunities. The pilot has enabled her to understand more about the work of JCP and for them to increase their awareness of how she can help their clients.

It was felt by staff that for the moment most skills are covered by the pilot project in that clients can access support with CVs, UJ, courses and email/ IT skills which covers all of the skills needed to job seek and to meet the requirements of JSA. One staff member saw the library pilot project as a place to refer the, 'quick wins,' to so the clients whose queries can be resolved fairly quickly. They also acknowledged that there is other, more in depth support available elsewhere if required and clients can be referred onto this.

### **Conclusion**

- 191 clients were referred to the library from JCP for support during the 6 months of the pilot project running.
- 99 (51.8%) of those referred attended the sessions.

- An average of 5.6 clients attended each session (including those referred and returners)
- Main reason for referrals from JCP to the library was for support with UJ, followed by help with writing CVs and then job searching advice
- 93% of those clients interviewed said that they had got what they wanted from attending
- Added benefit of having the Learning Support Officer present who can offer advice on training, courses and volunteering – advice often over and above what the client had come in for
- Almost half of clients interviewed felt more confident in using UJ and writing their CV having received support
- A large number of clients returned to the library for further support, some on many occasions
- 87% of clients interviewed reported that there wasn't anything that they thought should be done differently
- Clients and the agencies involved in the project like the location and environment that the library has offered for this work and commented that it provides a more relaxed atmosphere for clients
- The agencies involved have found the project to be beneficial in terms of networking and learning about each other's work

This page is intentionally left blank

## 2014/2015 FORWARD WORK PLAN

### POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD

	Meeting  Date  and Time	Agenda Items	Type  (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Date to:					Rotation  (Topical, ,Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly, Topical)
				CDG	CMB	Cabinet Board	Cabinet	Council	
1) Page 51	24/07/14  10.30am	1) I-procurement System Implementation	Info/Decision						Topical
		2) ICT Strategy	Decision						Annual
		3) ICT Business Plan	Decision						Annual
		4) Housing Benefit Write Offs	Decision						Quarterly
		5) Council Tax Write Offs	Decision						Quarterly
		6) Treasury Mgt Monitoring Reports	Info						Quarterly
2)	4/09/14  10.30am	1) Quarterly Performance Monitoring	Info						Quarterly
		2) Draft Annual Report 2013/14 ( <b>now *Special 29<sup>th</sup> September</b> )*Also DR/HJ Outturn Report	Decision						Annual
		3) FFP Proposals 14/15 Delivery of Saving Strategies	Decision						
		4) Business Rates – New Scheme							
		5) Misc grants/Treasury Mgt/Write offs	Decision						Ad hoc

Agenda Item 11

**CONFIDENTIAL - FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY**

	Meeting  Date  and Time	Agenda Items	Type  (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Date to:					Rotation  (Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly, Topical)
				CDG	CMB	Cabinet Board	Cabinet	Council	
		6) Treasury Management Monitoring Reports (every P&R)	Decision/info						
		7)							
3) Page 52	16/10/14  10.30am	1) Corporate Assessment (Provisional) Will go later Nov/Dec Meeting?	Decision/Monitor						Topical
		2) Corporate Performance Management Framework-post review – Move to Nov/Dec Meeting?	Monitor						Annual
		3) Third Sector Grant-Policy Review Terms of Reference and Project Plan	Decision						Topical
		4) Welfare Reform (Low Income Families Report)	Info						Topical
		5) Misc grants/Treasury Management and write offs	Decision						Each Meeting
		6) Draft Procurement Strategy (SJ) – To Nov.Mtg	Decision						
		7) Insurance Renewal Report	Decision						
			Decision						
4)	27/11/14	1) Better, Simpler, Cheaper-Update	Monitor						
		2) Access to Services Strategy	Decision						



**CONFIDENTIAL - FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY**

	Meeting Date and Time	Agenda Items	Type <small>(Decision, Monitoring or Information)</small>	Date to:					Rotation <small>(Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly, Topical)</small>
				CDG	CMB	Cabinet Board	Cabinet	Council	
Page 53	10.30am	3) Charter – Town and Community Councils	Decision						
		4) Community Boundary Review	Decision						
		5) Welsh Language Standard Consultation (Provisional)	Decision						
		6) Annual Governance Statement- Progress Report	Info						
		7) Misc grants /Treasury Management /write offs	Decision						Each Meeting
		8) Council Tax and Business Rates Charges	Decision						Topical
		9) Corporate Assessment (Provisional) C/fwd from 16/10							
		10) Corporate Performance Management Framework-post review –C/fwd from 16/10							
		11) Council Tax Reduction Scheme moved back from P & R							
5)	15/1/15	1) Misc grants/Treasury Management/Write Offs	Decision						Each Meeting
	10.30am	2)							

**CONFIDENTIAL - FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY**

	Meeting Date and Time	Agenda Items	Type  (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Date to:					Rotation  (Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly, Topical)
				CDG	CMB	Cabinet Board	Cabinet	Council	
		3)							
		4)							
		5)							
		6)							
6) Page 54	19/2/15 10.30am	1) Strategic Equality Plan-Annual Report and Updated Plan	Monitor						Annual
		2) Polling District Review	Info						
		3) Community Cohesion LIP	Info						
		4) Misc grants /Treasury Mgt/Write offs	Decision						Each Meeting
		5)							
		6)							
		7)							
		8)							
		9)							
7)	9/04/15	1) Misc grants/Treasury Management/ Write Offs	Decision						Each Meeting
		2) Business Plan 2014/15 - Outcomes	Info						

	Meeting Date and Time	Agenda Items	Type <small>(Decision, Monitoring or Information)</small>	Date to:					Rotation <small>(Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly, Topical)</small>
				CDG	CMB	Cabinet Board	Cabinet	Council	
		3)							
		4)							
		5)							
		6)							
		7)							
		8)							
8) Page 5	28/05/15 continued	1) Misc grants/Treasury Mgt/. Write offs	Decision						Each Meeting
		2) FCS and CEX complaints	Info						
		3) FOI monitoring	Info						
		4) Ombudsman and Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report	Info						
		5)							
		6)							
		1)							
		2)							
		3)							
		4)							
		5)							

Meeting Date and Time	Agenda Items	Type  (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Date to:					Rotation  (Topical, ,Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly, Topical)
			CDG	CMB	Cabinet Board	Cabinet	Council	
	6)							

**Business for Decision where dates to Cabinet Board to be confirmed by HOS S. John**

- **Mobile Phones Contract**
- **Programme on Procurement**
- **Member IT**

## **JOINT RESILIENCE COMMITTEE**

(Civic Centre, Swansea)

**Members Present:**

**2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014**

**Neath Port Talbot  
County Borough  
Council**

**Councillors:** J.R.Bryant, R.G.Jones,  
Mrs. S. M. Penry and A.N. Woolcock

**City and County  
Of Swansea**

**Councillors:** D.W.Cole, T.Hennegan,  
Mrs.M.H.Jones and Mrs.C.Richards

**Officers in Attendance:**

**Neath Port Talbot  
County Borough  
Council:**

S.Burgess, G.Jones and Miss G.Cirillo

**Apologies for Absence:** D.Williams

---

1. **MEMBER'S DECLARATIONS**

The following Members made a declaration at the commencement of the meeting:

Councillor D.W.Cole - Member of Mid and West Wales Fire Authority.

Councillor T.J. Hennegan - Member of Mid and West Wales Fire Authority.

2. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2014**

The Minutes of the Joint Resilience Committee held on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014 were received and noted. It was noted that Cllr. Mrs. C. Richards had also submitted her apologies for this meeting.

3. **GUIDE TO THE ROLE OF AN ELECTED MEMBER DURING AN EMERGENCY**

The Joint Resilience Manager, Mr.S.Burgess illustrated to Members a new Member Guide which was now available, copies of which were circulated at the meeting. The Joint Resilience Manager reminded Members that many people, including JRU team members, rely on the skills, resources and knowledge of an Elected Member, as they provide an invaluable resource and communication channel to the community prior, during and after an incident. It is, therefore, essential that Elected Members' awareness of civil protection and emergency preparedness arrangements contribute to the successful outcome of an emergency incident. Members commended the new Guide but also asked that they be informed as soon as possible when incidents occur. In response to this, the JRU Manager stated that all Elected Members would receive communication via e-mail or by phone.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the revised Elected Members Guide be approved.

4. **PUBLIC FACING RESILIENCE WEBSITE**

The JRU Manager updated Members about progress to date regarding the shared public facing website. A meeting had taken place with the North Wales Local Resilience Forum (NW LRF) to discuss promoting a shared public facing website between the South Wales and North Wales LRFs as an additional method of engaging with the public. It was also noted that this would also be an ideal forum to publish the Community Risk Register.

Within the context of the website development work which has been progressed by the NPT and Swansea JRU, this is increasingly being used to support collaborative working regionally and nationally.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the work being progressed by Neath Port Talbot and Swansea JRU regarding

collaborative working for the public facing resilience website, be approved.

5. **MULTI AGENCY CROSS BORDER CHEMICAL INCIDENT EXERCISE**

Members were given information about “Exercise Bridge” which is a cross border exercise with Dyfed Powys Local Resilience Forum to take place on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014. This exercise will test the multi-agency response to a road tanker carrying chemicals crashing on the M4 near to junction 48. The City and County of Swansea will be tasked with setting up a rest centre assisted by staff from Neath Port Talbot Council utilising mutual aid arrangements. Members were encouraged to attend where possible.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the collaborative working approach regarding cross-border exercises be approved.

6. **COMAH EXERCISES**

Members were updated regarding the current preparations for multi-agency COMAH exercises at Calor Gas (Aberdulais) and Tata Steel (Port Talbot), scheduled to take place in Autumn 2014.

The aim of the exercises will be to test the off-site plan for these sites as a result of their top tier status under the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) regulations 1999.

Participating agencies will include representatives from Neath Port Talbot CBC, South Wales Police, Welsh Ambulance Service, Mid and West Wales Fire Service, Natural Resources Wales, Public Health Wales and ABMU Health Board. The JRU Manager stated that in organising these exercises the aim is to get as close as possible to “real-life” scenarios and encouraged Members to attend these exercises, if possible. Members commended the report and suggested that Town and Community Councils should also be made aware of these exercises as well as the public facing website, discussed earlier in the meeting.

**RECOMMENDED:** (a) that the Committee notes the arrangements for the COMAH Exercises as detailed in the circulated report;

- (b) that the links to the JRU website be e-mailed to all Town and Community Councils in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea

7. **SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS**

Members received a summary of incidents between the 31<sup>st</sup> January and 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014 as detailed in the circulated report.

With regard to the tyre materials incident of 4<sup>th</sup> April, Members noted that details about the storage of a quantity of tyre shred and other materials were recently reported to the JRU via the Arson Reduction Team of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MWWFRS). Concern was expressed by MWWFRS about the tyre shred which was stored mainly within an enclosed building.

MWWFRS considered that this material potentially presented a fire risk. A multi-agency team meeting comprising MWWFRS, local authority officers, South Wales Police, Public Health Wales and chaired by National Resources Wales (NRW) was immediately established. Members noted the detailed verbal and visual update given by the JRU Manager given the concerns emerging from this particular incident which included finds of hazardous substances.

Members commended the partnership working efforts of all concerned and ongoing work to remedy the complex issues which have emerged from this incident.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

8. **JOINT RESILIENCE UNIT 2014/2015 WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received details of the proposed key activities for inclusion in work programme for the Joint Resilience Unit (JRU) for 2014/2015 are set out in **Appendix 1** to the circulated report.

The aim of the work programme is to ensure that the JRU and other key players in both local authorities focus on agreed priorities, leading to both local authorities and their constituent communities becoming more resilient.



**RECOMMENDATION:** that the Joint Resilience Unit Work Programme 2014/2015 be approved.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Fire Strike Update

The JRU Manager gave Members an overview of the current situation concerning the planned industrial action by the Fire Brigade Union and potential impacts to the activities of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and the City and County of Swansea.

Members noted that the fire fighters' dispute is a national dispute about pensions and the issue is currently with UK Ministers who determine pension scheme matters. In the meantime, the Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service (MWWFRS) will keep local businesses and the community up to date with the progress of its dispute, and have contingency plans in place to ensure operational emergency response services can be maintained.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that the report be noted

10. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014 – Port Talbot Civic Centre

Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2014 – City & County of Swansea

**CHAIRMAN**

This page is intentionally left blank

# JOINT RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

(Civic Centre, Swansea)

**Members Present:**

**1<sup>st</sup> August 2014**

**Neath Port Talbot  
County Borough  
Council**

**Councillors:** Mrs.D.Jones, R.G.Jones,  
Mrs. S. M. Penry and A.N. Woolcock

**City and County  
Of Swansea**

**Councillors:** D.W.Cole and T.Hennegan,

**Officers in Attendance:**

**Neath Port Talbot  
County Borough  
Council:**

S.Burgess, Mrs.S.Rees and Miss C.Davies

**Apologies for Absence:** Mrs.M.H.Jones, Mrs.C.Richards and D.G.Sullivan

---

Members introduced Mrs.S.Rees to the Joint Resilience Committee

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2014/15**

**RESOLVED:** that the appointment of Chairman of the Joint Resilience Committee for the ensuing municipal year 2014/15, be Councillor Arwyn Woolcock of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR 2014/15**

**RESOLVED:** that the appointment of Vice Chairman be deferred to the next Joint Resilience committee

3. **MEMBER'S DECLARATIONS**

The following Members made a declaration at the commencement of the meeting:

Councillor D.W.Cole - Member of Mid and West Wales Fire Authority.

Councillor T.J. Hennegan - Member of Mid and West Wales Fire Authority.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2014**

The Minutes of the Joint Resilience Committee held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014 were received and noted. It was noted that Cllr. Mrs. D. Jones had also submitted her apologies for this meeting.

5. **FIRE SERVICE STRIKE**

The Joint Resilience Manager, Mr.S.Burgess, informed Members that the Fire and Rescue Services across England and Wales had held several strikes since the last meeting of the Joint Resilience Committee.

Members were informed that effective communication channels were put in place for everyone, for example, information, advice and guidance were made available to the community and internally across the local authority Directorates.

Members noted that the fire strike would be on going and the committee were satisfied that there were enough arrangements in place if there were to be any incidents.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

6. **PUBLIC PARTISIPATION IN EMERGENCY PLANNING (NEW COMAH REGULATIONS 2015)**

The Joint Resilience Manager updated members about the introduction of new regulations controlling some of our industry that have major accident hazard potential (COMAH Regulations). The regulations for 2015 will require greater public participation in the planning process.

Members noted that the current regulations are in draft form and the authority is yet to publish exact requirements and that the JRU are on track to meet them.

Members were informed that Mr.S.Burgess would bring an updated report back to committee in November.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted

5. **COMMAH EXERCISE**

Members were informed about JRU is currently arranging and facilitating two exercises. The two exercises scheduled to take place this year were with two top tier COMAH Sites; Tata Steel, Port Talbot and Calor Gas, Aberdulais. The planning processes for both are underway and both are scheduled to take place in autumn.

Members commended the report and suggested that it would be beneficial to extend the invitation to border Ward Members. It was emphasised that Border Ward Members need to know the importance of these exercises.

It was noted that Members of the Joint Resilience Committee would be interested in receiving members training. The Joint Resilience Manager informed members that due to the financial constraints there would need to be at least a 40% to 50% interest rate from members in order to arrange training.

Members agreed that the Members Exercise should be held at the Liberty Stadium, there was concern about the travel for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Members. It was noted that transport would be arranged for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Members subject to the Members exercise being a day time exercise.

- RECOMMENDED:** (a) that the Committee notes the arrangements for the COMAH Exercises as detailed in the circulated report;
- (b) that the Committee notes the arrangements for the Members Exercise as discussed in the Committee.

6. **BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

Members noted that the Business Continuity continues to be progressed across the two authorities. A new Pan-Wales template has been written and is being used for all new plans; the template has already been used in other Welsh authorities and has passed audits by the Welsh Audit Offices and Business Continuity Institute. It was also mentioned that all other plans will be transferred to the new template on next review dates.

**RECOMMENDED:** Member's note the report.

7. **EXERCISE BRIDGE**

Members noted that planning is well underway for the cross border multi agency live/tabletop exercise. Members were informed of the scenario that revolves around a chemical tanker crash on the M4 and the multi-agency response. Primarily a Dyfed Powys LRF exercise and the JRU were approached to play a part, it was agreed that there is an opportunity to exercise the setting up of a rest centre guidance document and registration process has been written and the exercise will be used to validate these.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the report be noted.

8. **Annual Resilience Report – 2013/2014**

Members received details of the Annual resilience report for 2012/2013 as detailed in appendix 1 to this report.

The report summarised the key activities of the JRU during 2013/2014.

The Annual Report was presented to the Committee as a Power Point presentation.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that the Annual Resilience Report for 2012-2013 be noted.

9. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED:** that pursuant to Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

**Private Verbal Report of the Head of Children and Young People Services**

9. **WASTE MATERIALS**

Members were provided with a private verbal update at the meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that the private verbal update be noted.

10. **ANIMAL HEALTH ISSUES**

Members were provided with a private verbal update at the meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that the private verbal report be noted.

10. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2014 – City & County of Swansea

Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014 – Port Talbot Civic Centre

Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2014 – City & County of Swansea

**CHAIRMAN**

This page is intentionally left blank



NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank