



***REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE***

***10.00 AM FRIDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2021***

***REMOTELY VIA TEAMS***

**All mobile telephones to be switched to silent for the duration of the meeting**

1. PART 1
2. Welcome and Roll Call
3. Chairs Announcements
4. Declarations of interest
5. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 5 - 20*)
  - 4 December 2020
  - 23 December 2020
6. Tourism Update (*Pages 21 - 30*)
7. Consultation on 2021/22 Budget Proposals (*Pages 31 - 42*)
8. Pre-Decision Scrutiny  
To select appropriate items from the Cabinet Board agenda for pre-decision scrutiny (reports enclosed for Scrutiny Members)
9. Urgent items  
(whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972

**K.Jones**  
**Chief Executive**

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

**Friday, 29 January 2021**

**Committee Membership:**

**Chairperson:**       **Councillor S.K.Hunt**

**Vice**  
**Chairperson:**       **Councillor R.L.Taylor**

**Councillors:**       D.Cawsey, C.J.Jones, H.N.James, S.M.Penry,  
S.Purseley, S.Rahaman, N.T.Hunt, S.Bamsey,  
J.Evans and S.A.Knoyle

**Notes:**

- (1) If Committee Members or non-Committee Members wish to have relevant items put on the agenda for future meetings, then please notify the Chief Executive/Chair eight days before the meeting.*
- (2) If non-Committee Members wish to attend for an item of interest, then prior notification needs to be given (by 12.00 noon on the day before the meeting). Non-Committee Members may speak but not vote, or move or second any motion.*
- (3) For pre scrutiny arrangements, the Chair will normally recommend forthcoming executive items for discussion/challenge. It is also open to Committee Members to request items to be raised - though Members are asked to be selective here in regard to important issues.*
- (4) The relevant Cabinet Board Members will also be invited to be present at the meeting for Scrutiny/ Consultation purposes.*

(5) *Would the Scrutiny Committee Members please bring the Cabinet Board papers with them to the meeting.*

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## Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee

(Via Microsoft Teams)

**Members Present:**

**4 December 2020**

**Chairperson:** Councillor S.K.Hunt

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor R.L.Taylor

**Councillors:** D.Cawsey, H.N.James, S.Purseley, S.Rahaman, N.T.Hunt, S.Bamsey and S.A.Knoyle

**Officers In Attendance** S.Brennan, C.Plowman, N.Headon, C.Jones, B.Dennedy, M.Rafferty, E.Barrett and Williams

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors A.Wingrave and L.Jones

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1. **Anti-Social Behaviour Plan, Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime and Drug Abuse**

The Committee was presented with a presentation covering the topics Members requested an update on following their recent Regeneration and Sustainable Development Forward Work Programme Workshop; those topics included Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime and Drug Abuse.

**Anti-Social Behaviour**

Members were informed that the main focus of work this year for the Anti-Social Behaviour Team had been around the issues in town centres, in particular the Ambassador area in Neath town centre; the general complaints from residents were related to on-street drinking and drug issues, and there had been a slight increase in begging over the past few weeks which was noted to be expected at this time of year.

Officers explained that the work in Neath town centre had started in June once lockdown had been lifted; significant partnership work had been put in place and since then there had been a definite improvement in work. It was mentioned that there were still some issues in the Ambassador, however weekly meetings were taking

place and any issues were being dealt with efficiently as possible. It was noted that the next partnership meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 15 December and in this meeting Officers were hoping to resolve any outstanding issues of the work that had been concluded; any further issues would be referred into the Police led problem solving group from there-on.

It was mentioned that two operations were being put in place throughout December to target certain aspects of Anti-Social Behaviour; Operation Shoebill which will cover retail crime and Operation Kilmarnock which will cover street drinking.

In regards to partnership meetings, Officers had been meeting with Local Councillors in areas where there were highlighted issues, for example a meeting recently took place with Local Councillors, partners and the Business Improvement District (BID) Team in Port Talbot.

A mobile Police Station was stated to had been positioned in the town centre of Port Talbot until the end of November and following discussions with the Sargent who was based there, improvements had been made as individuals who had carried out acts of Anti-Social Behaviour had been identified and work was being undertaken in order to address these particular issues.

In the Briton ferry area, the issues were noted to have been mainly around poor landlords and issues around the properties; Environmental Health had taken on the majority of these issues as they were relating to fly tipping and poor condition of properties.

Members were informed that GW Logs was a big issue in the Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen area and in November there was a court case in which individuals were successfully prosecuted for the poor welfare of animals; there was still some work ongoing in this area as recently additional issues had arisen, therefore Officers will be working with the Local Councillor in the area to address those.

It was stated that a partnership meeting in regards to Wern Works in Briton Ferry was due to be convened to address the emerging issues on the site; Officers were in contact National Resource Wales (NRW) around this. It was mentioned that part of the notice that was served was to clear the internal building, which had been completed, however the entrances into the building were yet to be secured; this was something Officers were pushing to be completed as there were concerns around fly tipping and the use of the premises.

In regards to youth disengagement, it was noted that there was very little being reported to the team through the 101 contact number regarding behavioural issues with young people; next year a piece of work will be carried out with the Youth Justice Early Intervention Service, NPT Youth Service and South Wales Police to look at factors such as gaps in the service, where other pieces of work need to be carried out and what the teams can do in terms of support. Members were encouraged to report any concerns in their wards or provide any suggestions they may have to the Team.

A discussion took place around the Street Vulnerable Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). It was highlighted that the Street Vulnerable MARAC was started in November 2017 to address issues in the town centres; 58 people have come through the forum since then and currently 12 people were being addressed on the list. It was added that Officers had a really positive working relationship with the partners that attend these meetings.

To conclude the presentation, it was stated that the Community Safety Team take a problem solving approach throughout all aspects of work and join together as much as possible with agencies and partners in order to identify the causes of the issues in the community and deal specifically with those causes; the work that had been carried out recently highlighted the benefit of this type of approach.

Members asked if Officers were receiving co-operation from those involved in dealing with the Wern Works in Briton Ferry. It was noted that NRW had placed the notice on the organisation to clear and secure the site and that it should have been complete some time ago; there was a certain time limit provided to complete this, however as previously mentioned that was yet to be done. It was explained that NRW were attending court on Monday next week in relation to this notice; Officers confirmed that they would contact the Local Members with an update on the case following the outcome of court.

In terms of a long term solution, it was asked if Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) were a piece of legislation that would work for town centres, and if so, could both Neath and Port Talbot town centres look at introducing them. It was stated that discussions around town centres was still ongoing, however currently Officers were not looking at introducing PSPOs in the town centres for a number of reasons, including the point previously raised in relation to the approach of targeting the cause and using problem solving techniques; evidence had suggested, both locally and nationally, that

this approach works as it was more effective and a range more tools could be utilised. It was noted that PSPOs were a very blunt tool and would likely move the problem on to another area and cause different Anti-Social Behaviour activities to occur which could be even more harmful; they also require a lot of work to take place before, during and after they would be introduced and there were currently no resources to enforce them. Officers added that looking at the bigger picture and identifying the most effective course of action was most beneficial; identifying the individuals causing the issues, liaising with internal and external partners and dealing with individual cases. It was highlighted that if Members felt that there were particular areas not being covered or were aware of any ongoing issues, to contact the Officers in order for suitable approach to be arranged.

Officers were asked if there was a way to check that Anti-Social Behaviour issues were being resolved and if there was a way to measure the effectiveness of the approaches being used. It was stated that during the lockdown period Officers had seen a difference in Anti-Social Behaviour across the county; the multi-agency approach had been working as confirmed by residents and the improvements seen on the streets. It was highlighted that individuals, including the traders in the town centres, had particularly seen improvements when the mobile Police unit had been situated in the town centre; this unit could not be parked there all the time due to restrictions on Police Officers time and availability, however a mobile unit had now been placed in western command and would likely be seen in Neath and Port Talbot more frequently over the coming months. Issues were noted to be dealt with as and when they arise and would be monitored regularly; having a presence in the town centres and other conflict areas, for example the Police horses in Neath, was highlighted to be important.

It was raised that street artists were using locations, such as the Wern Works in Briton Ferry, as there were currently no legal walls or spaces for them to display their art in Neath Port Talbot; Officers noted this point as something that could potentially be raised in future discussions with the NPT Youth Service. It was added that it would be beneficial to identify a particular space for street artists to prevent them from using these types of locations.

Members asked for an update on the issues emerging at Taibach Workingmens Club; this location was raised at a recent Community Safety Partnership meeting, in which a lot of people expressed their concerns around this particular location. It was stated that there was

an action for NRW to convene a meeting to discuss the issues; Officers confirmed that they would update Members on this fully in due course, as they would need to find out the current position as colleagues in Environmental Health were in liaison with NRW. It was added that the landlord of the club had previously tried to reach out for help in relation to the Anti-Social Behaviour issues, therefore liaison with the landlord and providing additional help would be significant in trying to resolve the issues.

The Local Member for Aberavon thanked the Police for their efficiency and work during a recent County Lines incident in August 2020.

Members were encouraged to feed into the Anti-Social Behaviour Plan where necessary in order to help deliver change and report issues in order for them to be resolved; working in partnership was noted to be key in this area of work so liaising with the Cabinet Member, Officers and the Police was important.

### Domestic Abuse

Despite an increase in demand on the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) Service due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was noted the service had been able to maintain a high standard of service provision and adapt working arrangement and practices. Officers were pleased to have been provided with additional resources in the form of two new full time IDVA's; they will ease the pressure internally, caused as a result of an increase in demand due, and will create scope to further develop and enhance service provision going forward.

The Committee was informed that the service also held responsibility for the NPT MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) in respect of domestic abuse and had recently appointed a Coordinator role for this, which was pivotal to the effectiveness of the process; for example ensuring there is a proper flow of information, risks were shared and clear notes and action were recorded. It was added that training for the MARAC partners had been arranged and there was a Steering Group to oversee the work of the MARAC, which reflects on its effectiveness.

Members were presented with recent statistics from the NPT IDVA Service which included:

- 268 referrals for high-risk cases for the period April 2020 to Oct 2020

- For that period 64% engaged with the service – this was meaningful engagement where risk management and safety planning was implemented
- 13% were recorded where contact was made with the victim but IDVA input was declined
- 10% where the service was unable to establish direct contact despite robust attempts being made, in line with the services' intake policy
- 335 children were linked to cases referred to the service – this point had been picked up by the Leadership Group as specialist providers were reporting a decline in the number of children they support, whilst the service hadn't identified a decline; it was noted that work needed to be carried out around this matter which had been tasked within the Leadership Group

In relation to noticeable trends, it was highlighted that there had been an increase in cases where pregnancy had been identified (4%), an increase in male victims (up to 6%) and a reduction in referrals of repeat/complex cases; Offices mentioned that they were surprised to see the reduction in referrals of repeat/complex cases as during usual operations they would find that some cases had returned.

Previously, the work of the Domestic Abuse Team had been primarily victim focused, however they were now preparing to carry out more work with perpetrators with the opportunity to change their behaviour. It was noted that there was a Police and Crime Commissioner funded programme for perpetrators called DRIVE which had started to be rolled out across Western Bay; this programme was stated to be an intensive intervention, working with high-harm and serial perpetrators to challenge their behaviours and reduce abuse. Officers added that a DRIVE IDVA had been recruited to work within the DRIVE Team. Members asked if the DRIVE programme was undertaken voluntarily by perpetrators; Officers stated that they would find out this information and inform Members accordingly.

Officers were asked for the percentage increase in Domestic Abuse cases since the start of lockdown. It was stated that there was a dramatic increase in the IDVA service in particular, however the exact figures would need to be confirmed. Officers mentioned that the figures and trends for the specialist agencies may differ. It was suggested that the Committee could include Domestic Abuse trends and figures to the Forward Work Programme in order to obtain more information and detail from both the specialist providers and the IDVA service from the lockdown period.

Following the presentation, it was highlighted that the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) strategy set out clear priorities of work and included a range of information including the increase demand on services; one of the priorities listed was to ensure that messages were conveyed to the public, in a number of different ways, letting them know that services were still open and support was still available.

### Hate Crime

The Committee was provided with an overview of the work of the Community Cohesion Officer for NPT, which included links with the Communication Team and the NPT Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Association. It was highlighted that the weekly intentions monitoring meetings with Police colleagues and partners, for example Swansea University, were very useful to share information in relation to Hate Crime in the area.

The presentation included graphs provided by victim support, who send out monthly updates to the Local Authorities listed, on the breakdown of hate crimes that have been reported in that area each month. It was noted that at the beginning of the pandemic, there were serious concerns within the Chinese community, as there were reports that individuals in shops and university were receiving abuse due to the origins of the outbreak; although there was an increase in Hate Crime in that particular area, the figures had stayed quite consistent and did not rise dramatically through the months. One of the graphs displayed a breakdown of the different types of Hate Crime that had been reported which included disability, gender identity, race, religion and sexual orientation; in Neath Port Talbot, the following number of incidents were reported for November 2020:

- Disability – 2
- Race – 9
- Sexual Orientation – 1
- Unknown – 1

Members were informed that the Community Cohesion Officer was working in close partnership with the Hate Crime Officer in Neath Police Station and received weekly reports from the Western BCU. It was noted that the recent report received highlighted a few incidents in the area; Officers mentioned that they could circulate this report and the statistics to Members if they would like more information on the incidents.

It was highlighted that Hate Crime Awareness Week this year was on 10 October 2020 through to 17 October 2020 and during this week a number of events were held online:

- Online Launch Event – worked with Race Council Cymru, Victim Support and South Wales Police on this event; the Rt Hon Commissioner for South Wales Police also joined the event and it was noted to be very well received.
- Webinar with Arti Shah – the 4ft actress gave a webinar around the topic of Hate Crime and talked about personal experience in relation to the impact of Hate Crime; Officers received excellent feedback from those who were involved.
- Community Champion Hate Crime Training – worked with Race Council Cymru and the Hate Crime Officer to provide online training to try and enable people in the community to share information about Hate Crime and how to report it. It was added that staff training was scheduled, however this had to be postponed; Officers will be looking to re arrange this training for the future.
- Monthly Trans Drop-in Online – worked with the Hate Crime Officer to provide a safe space for those in the Trans community to get together and talk; these sessions currently take place in the evenings and if they continue to be successful, there were plans to bring in experts to provide help and advice for those who attend. It was mentioned that these sessions weren't currently being advertised on social media due to the sensitivity of the topic; instead they were promoted through word of mouth within the Trans community.

Members asked if there was any capacity available to carry out work on prevention locally; working with social media platforms specifically, such as Facebook, to push out messages and advertisements. It was stated that Officers could look into paid advertisement on social media platforms and could also look into funding in relation to paid campaigns; there were opportunities to use the Community Safety social media channels as well as the Councils corporate communications and the BME Associations platforms. Some examples of existing prevention exercises was provided including the fake news infographics and videos that BBC Bitesize use. It was added Officers had no control over what posts social media platforms, such as Facebook, allowed onto the platform; however, working together locally on this issue could make a difference in tackling Hate Crime online.

It was asked if anyone in Neath Port Talbot had ever been prosecuted for carrying out a Hate Crime online or promoting hate speech online, and if Police had any powers in relation to the posts on social media platforms, for example would they have the authority to request that posts be taken down if they were promoting Hate Crime. It was agreed that these questions would be emailed to Inspector Claire Morgan.

Members expressed the need to carry out preventative work with young people, especially in schools, as previously the work was more aimed at raising awareness of Hate Crime. It was mentioned that schools did have schemes in place such as Crucial Crew, and were looking to introduce more including training for staff and 'Show Racism the Red Card' which was aimed at children. Members were encouraged to speak with Police colleagues to express the need for more preventative work in schools and provide any ideas.

### Drug Abuse

The Committee was informed that NPT Council holds the Area Planning Board (APB) Substance Misuse Commissioning and Delivery Team, and hosts in terms of receiving the funding for across the Region. It was recognised that the way in which Substance Misuse services were delivered across the Region needed to improve, therefore a key piece of work needed to be carried out.

Previously, consultants had been commissioned to undertake a review of the Substance Misuse services; that review resulted in a report looking at a revised model. However further work following a national drug summit, led to the concept of a new fully integrated Public Health Model.

It was confirmed that the APB and the Joint Public Services Board had agreed to start work to develop a new Public Health integrated model with a real focus on aspects such as prevention, treatment and enforcement; this project was going to be a massive transformation project which will be delivered by a team who will be led by the Police and Crime Commissioners office.

Officers were also going to be looking at a different way of commissioning the service in terms of having a more collaborative/combined approach which will include the pooling of budgets across Public Health, APB, and Police and Crime Commissioners office to develop a much more effective and accessible service. It was noted that the project was not a quick fix

and would take some time to be established, however there were plans to progress this work even further in the New Year.

It was stated that the service had continued to operate in different ways during the pandemic; a lot of the face to face work, on a 1-1 basis and group basis, had stopped and were replaced with virtual groups which people could attend online. It was noted that appointments, where possible, were provided over the phone or on a form of virtual media; there were still some face to face work being carried out for people who were at risk and needed that type of support, however it was ensured that social distancing measures were in place and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was used where necessary.

In regards to information sharing, it was explained that third sector colleagues had developed quite a lot of resources that they had been publishing on their websites for people, including self-help guides.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, it was stated that organisations had been inspired to improve the way in which they work together and offer a flexible approach by helping out in other service areas where there were particular pressures; for example there was a joint working agreement across all the services to help ensure that individuals, who need to self-isolate and didn't have anyone around to help them, could still access their medication.

It was noted that Officers had seen an increase in the number of people being referred to structured treatment services in quarter 2 (July through to September) compared to quarter 1 (April through to June); a piece of work was carried out with providers to try and identify why this had happened. Detailed in the report, providers had stated that some of the reasons for this could be that:

- People were not asking for help during the early days of the pandemic, as they wanted to wait until the pandemic had passed
- More people not having to go to work (a lot more people were drinking because of this, as well linked with the summer weather)

Officers highlighted that there were concerns in relation to the increase in the number of referrals to the young people services, however this had been identified to be as a result of improved promotion and awareness raising during lockdown. It was added that drug use amongst young people had reduced due to the lockdown.

Members were updated on some of the developments within the Substance Misuse service, which included the establishment of robust contract monitoring systems and processes; these processes helped the service to understand and identify any issues related to the effectiveness and efficiency of services. For example, it became evident that the Counselling service wasn't providing value for money, therefore a re-cost was undertaken which had reduced the level of funding but kept the same amount of provision. It was mentioned that this enabled funding to be released for the service to invest in additional units of low threshold prescribing; increasing the number of units of low threshold prescribing would then free up resources, within the prescribing service, who work with people with more complex needs. In addition to this, it was noted that the service had purchased a number of spaces for a rapid access prescribing service so that people who were most at risk of harm could access a prescribing service quite quickly. Officers added that the service had adopted an assertive outreach approach which meant that if people didn't turn up to their appointment, the staff would go out into the community to find them.

It was explained that staff had identified an issue with the way in which people were accessing services; previously this process has been through an assessment service, however these services did not have the capacity to be able to assess the number of people that needed to come through the service. Members were informed that a new proposal had been developed to change the way in which the route into service was operated; staff were currently working with partners across services to ensure that the new proposed process will work without having any negative impact.

As part of the development of the new contract monitoring framework, it was mentioned that Officers had been looking at the information they were asking services to record and report on, to make sure that the information is useful and provided the APB the information they needed to be able to make decisions about the future commissioning of services and to identify any issues with performance; a series of dashboards were being developed which could be used by contract monitoring and the APB, to alert staff of any issues relating to the services and enables staff to then take action.

A discussion took place in relation to the Take Home Naloxone Programme; Naloxone would be given out to people who take opiates, to reverse the effects of an opiate overdose. It was noted that when a comparison was completed between quarter one and

quarter two, it showed that there were 48 less kits given out in quarter two, however when this was looked into further, information showed that there was a 40% increase of kits given out in quarter one which was in the early stages of the pandemic. Officers highlighted that for the first time recently, nasal and injectable Naloxone could be offered; the nasal Naloxone provided the opportunity to get the kit out to the wider community and wider partners, families and carers who typically wouldn't be able to carry an injectable kit. It was stated that the Police Federation had declined the request to carry nasal Naloxone kits, however South Wales Police had agreed to this and their Police Officers were volunteering to carry the kit; there were hopes that once the Police Officers start to carry the nasal Naloxone, it would be agreed by the Police Federation and the whole of South Wales Police Force will be carrying the kits. It was noted that outreach workers were delivering kits and there were also postal kits available on request; staff were identifying those most at risk, who weren't able to physically walk into services due to needing to self-isolate etc. so that they could post the kits to them. Officers added that staff and security in the Ambassador in Neath had also been trained in Naloxone; recent visits to the premises highlighted the exceptional work being carried out by staff and all staff and they were very much open for services to connect with them and deliver services within the hotel.

In regards to needle exchange, it was stated that there was a 40-50% decrease across the region in exchange activity; the data showed that the reduction in activity was mainly in steroid users, which was more than likely due to the restrictions on travel and gyms closing, so the motivation for use wasn't there for these particular users. The fall in transactions was noted to be mainly seen in pharmacies.

Members were informed that within the harm reduction work that was being carried out, a Drug Poisoning Task Force had been established in which reviews were carried out on all drug poisoning, and staff provided intervention and support to those that have had a non-fatal drug overdose; there had been a greater growth within the group which enabled staff to strengthen the governance and develop policies and procedures which allowed the Task Force to deliver better outcomes for example monitoring drug poisoning in more depth. It was mentioned that identifying the person behind the data had been pivotal and it enabled staff to understand the person holistically rather than just reviewing a data set.

Officers confirmed there had been a big push in increasing the notifications of non-fatal overdoses and being the only APB in Wales that had notifications from the emergency department on overdoses, there had been a new protocol established; a 72 hour rapid review protocol which meant that services needed to intervene with 72 hours with face to face contact and provide interventions, harm reduction and Naloxone as a minimum. It was added that the APB had been seen as the innovators across Wales for doing this and there was a lot of interest in the work that was being carried out.

It was highlighted that there had been a decrease in drug related deaths for 2019; the recent ONS report showed a 30% reduction in cases within the Swansea area and a 77% decrease of cases within the NPT area. Officers mentioned that NPT had the biggest reduction in Wales within the ONS data.

Members asked if the waiting list had improved for certain medication that individuals needed to help with their substance misuse; further services had been commissioned to obtain rapid access to prescriptions, especially for the vulnerable clients. It was noted that the Community of Drug and Alcohol Team who provide prescribing to people in Neath Port Talbot was very accessible as it currently did not have a waiting list for medication. However, it was mentioned that the process that people need to go through for prescribing does take time and some people who would benefit from a prescribing intervention may not stick with it by the time it takes to receive the medication.

Officers were asked to provide an update on the working relationship with the Health Board over the course of the pandemic; The Health Board was a member of the APB and recognised that services do need to be improved, as mentioned earlier, therefore the APB would be embarking on the transformation project discussed during the presentation. It was added that during the pandemic, partnership working had gone from strength to strength.

Members thanked the Officers from the Community Safety Team for their hard work especially during the pandemic, and for taking the time to present to the Committee.

## 2. **Forward Work Programme 2020/21**

Members noted the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for 2020/21, which was populated by the Committee at their recent Forward Work Programme Workshop.

As previously mentioned, it was agreed that Domestic Abuse trends and figures be added to the Forward Work Programme in order to obtain more information and detail from both the specialist providers and the IDVA service from the lockdown period.

3. **Forward Work Programme - Cabinet**

The Cabinet Forward Work Programme was provided to Members information purposes; the Forward Work Programme was noted.

**CHAIRPERSON**

**Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee**

**(Remotely via Teams)**

**Members Present:**

**23 December 2020**

**Chairperson:** Councillor S.K.Hunt

**Councillors:** D.Cawsey, C.J.Jones, S.M.Penry, S.Pursey,  
S.Rahaman and S.A.Knoyle

**Officers In Attendance** S.Curran, C.Griffiths and K.Jones

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors A.Wingrave and L.Jones

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1. **To appoint the membership of the Community Safety and Public Protection Scrutiny Sub Committee**

**RESOLVED:** that the Sub Committee Membership be affirmed as set out in Annex C to the Report of the Annual Meeting of Council of 23 December, 2020

**CHAIRPERSON**

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee**

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

### **Report of Simon Brennan Head of Property & Regeneration**

### **Matter for Information**

**Wards Affected:** All

### **Tourism Update**

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

1. To update members on the impact of Covid-19 on the Tourism sector within Neath Port Talbot.
2. To update members on the current and forthcoming activities of the Council's Tourism Team.

#### **Executive Summary**

3. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been particularly hard on the tourism sector. The necessary widespread closures of accommodation, attractions, hospitality and events; coupled with restrictions on the movement of citizens during local and national lockdowns, has resulted in an inevitable loss of revenue for tourism operators in the area.
4. The Tourism Team has prioritised delivering support to the tourism sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes providing advice on funding eligibility and working alongside the Environmental Health Team to ensure industry compliance with the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020.
5. Although the Tourism Team's focus has been on Covid-19 support, the Team has continued to deliver existing capital projects and

prepare for the launch of the new Neath Port Talbot place brand. A comprehensive marketing campaign is ready to launch as soon as Covid-19 restrictions allow.

### **The Impact of Covid-19 on the Tourism Industry in Neath Port Talbot**

6. The impact of Covid-19 on the tourism industry throughout Wales (and the UK) has been well publicised. This is acknowledged by Welsh Government which has put in place a range of specific financial measures to support the tourism and hospitality sectors throughout the pandemic.
7. Each year the Tourism Team collects data relating to visitor numbers and overnight stays in the area to feed into the STEAM model which measures the volume and value of the tourism sector to the local economy.
8. The STEAM results for the period **January 2020 to October 2020**, when compared to the same period of 2019, show that;
  - The number of visitors overall to Neath Port Talbot **decreased by 63.5%** to 450,000 visitors. This represents a decrease of 790,000 visitors in total. Staying visitors decreased by a higher percentage of 70.7%.\*
  - The economic impact of tourism within the Neath Port Talbot economy **decreased by 66.4%** to £37.93 million (this represents a decrease of £74.94 million)\*

*\* A note of caution: This data does not represent the full 12 months of 2020, further lockdowns were announced in November and December which will impact further on this data. These findings may change as more data inputs become available for 2020.*

### **Covid-19 Tourism Sector Recovery**

9. As we emerge from Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions begin to be lifted there is likely to be huge demand from UK domestic visitors looking to take holidays and short breaks within the UK.
10. Due to uncertainties surrounding quarantine requirements and fluctuating Covid-19 rates overseas (and the UK) there is likely to be

an ongoing hesitation for travelling abroad over the next 12-18 months, possibly longer.

11. If restrictions are lifted, the peak season of 2021 is likely to see similar levels of high occupancy that were seen in the summer of 2020. Whilst this is hugely positive for the tourism sector, it is going to take some years of stability and year round bookings for the sector to fully recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.
12. The Tourism Team has continued to prepare the forthcoming destination marketing campaign to launch the new Neath Port Talbot place brand and destination website. Although the launch has been delayed twice due to rising Covid-19 rates, the high profile campaign is ready to launch as soon as Covid-19 rates allow. This campaign will be key to the recovery of the tourism sector in NPT and feedback from tourism operators on campaign preparations to date has been extremely positive.
13. The Tourism Team continues to offer tailored advice and guidance to the NPT Tourism sector. The level of support delivered during the Covid-19 pandemic (as summarised below) will continue to be in place during the recovery phase and beyond.

### **Tourism Team Covid-19 Workload**

14. Since the end of March 2020 the focus of the Tourism Team has been on supporting the NPT tourism industry through the Covid-19 pandemic. Delivering this support continues to account for approximately 90% of the team's workload, this support is summarised as follows.

#### **Supporting the tourism sector to access financial support.**

15. This includes informing the sector on criteria and eligibility of Welsh Government funding and supporting those businesses who have been unable to access funds. The Tourism Team has been available to talk via email, Microsoft Teams and telephone to offer advice and guidance during this particularly worrying time for the sector.
16. Since April 2020 the overall mood of the sector has been very low, reflecting the uncertainties that the sector has faced during the pandemic. Although the summer season offered some relief to the sector from the coronavirus restrictions, the general feeling is that any gains made as a result of higher than average occupancy during

summer 2020 were not enough to offset the revenues lost during the rest of 2020 when varying restrictions were in place.

### **Managing the Accommodation Approval Process (for Key workers etc.)**

17. Since April 2020 the Tourism Team has worked alongside the Environmental Health Team to deliver a process for granting approval for accommodation providers to accommodate key workers, displaced persons and other eligible individuals as set out within the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020.
18. Between April 2020 and July 2020 a total of 1,968 bookings were approved for eligible individuals across 15 accommodation establishments.
19. During the local lockdown which was in place in September/ October 2020 the Team provided intensive support to the sector by advising on eligible bookings during this period. Accommodation providers were not ordered to close during the local lockdown but there were a range of restrictions placed upon the sector.
20. During the firebreak lockdown in October 2020 NPTCBC's approach to accommodation approvals changed in order to simplify the process for accommodation providers. Rather than requiring approvals for individual bookings, permission was granted to each establishment and comprehensive guidance was issued to accommodation providers on how to ensure compliance with the Regulations. During this period a total of 21 properties were approved to accommodate key workers and eligible individuals. The Team continued to be available to manage a wide range of queries from accommodation providers on eligible stays.
21. During the current national lockdown (from 19<sup>th</sup> December 2020 onwards) a total of 32 properties have been approved for key workers, displaced persons and other eligible individuals within the County. The team continues to deal with significant levels of queries relating to the eligibility of specific bookings in line with the Regulations.
22. The Tourism Team has also worked alongside the Environmental Health Department in managing complaints relating to non-

compliance with the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020.

### **Collaboration with Public Sector Partners**

23. Throughout the pandemic the Tourism Team has attended virtual Visit Wales Regional Forum meetings and specific Welsh Government meetings with Local Authority Tourism Officers to feed into emerging support packages and raise queries on behalf of the sector.
24. The Team has also met regularly with Tourism colleagues from neighbouring local authorities in order to understand the wider impact of Covid-19 and discuss good practice.
25. Our partnerships with Brecon Beacons National Park in Waterfall Country and Natural Resources Wales in Afan Forest Park have aided communication throughout the pandemic in attempting to manage visitor flows.
26. When restrictions are lifted, we are likely to see further challenges during 2021 whereby popular destinations reach over capacity due to a higher number of domestic (UK) visitors staying in Wales rather than travelling abroad. We will continue to work with partners to inform visitors on visiting responsibly during 2021.

### **Tourism Team Ongoing Projects**

27. Although the Team is currently limited in its capacity to take on new projects due to Covid-19 workloads; work has continued on the delivery of existing projects throughout the pandemic. This includes the following.
28. **Vale of Neath Hub at Resolven Canal Car Park**  
As reported previously the Tourism Team were successful in securing funding of £128,000 to deliver a visitor hub via the Visit Wales Tourism Amenity Infrastructure Scheme. The project is now nearing completion to refurbish the existing public toilet provision, create a permanent café, reconfigure the public toilet provision, deliver a digital information point and undertake landscaping of the existing car park.

29. **Afan Forest Park Visitor Centre Valleys Regional Park Gateway**  
As reported recently to Cabinet Board the Tourism Team were successful in securing £268,000 from Welsh Government's Valleys Regional Park to establish Afan Forest Park Visitor Centre as a Gateway site.
30. The project will deliver the refurbishment of the existing public toilet and shower facilities, additional car parking, 3 electric hook up points for campervans, a digital information point, low key lighting of pathways and a children's adventure playground. The playground element of the project is due to start on site soon and specifications are being finalised for the remaining works.
31. **Gnoll Country Park Masterplan**  
As recently reported, over the last 12 months the Tourism Team has worked in partnership with the Gnoll Country Park Team to compile a development plan for the park with the aim of identifying opportunities to enhance the visitor experience and establish the feasibility of creating accommodation provision within the park.
32. The priority projects and proposed way forward for scoping out the accommodation opportunity have been agreed with Members and the Tourism Team will work alongside colleagues at Gnoll Country Park to deliver the proposals.
33. **Bed Stock Survey**  
A 'bed stock' survey is currently being undertaken to develop an accurate database of the nature and amount of visitor accommodation in the Neath Port Talbot area.
34. All local authorities in Wales are required to undertake bed stock survey's periodically in order to understand accommodation demand, assess trends in the accommodation market and provide a baseline for the calculation of economic data on the value of the tourism industry to the area.
35. The survey; which is being conducted via telephone with accommodation providers, was originally planned to be carried out in early 2020, however due to Covid-19 the roll out of the survey was delayed. The unprecedented situation over the last year means it is more important than ever that the Council has an accurate picture of the accommodation provision within the county.
36. **Aberavon Seafront Signage**

The Tourism Team has worked with colleagues in the Streetcare Services Team to deliver visitor orientation signage for Aberavon Seafront. The signage was funded by Knights Brown, the construction company which carried out the recent coastal defence works at the seafront, as part of the company's community benefits commitments. The six new signs are due to be installed soon.

37. **Destination Marketing**

As reported previously the Tourism Team is continuing to prepare a high profile destination marketing campaign to launch the new Neath Port Talbot place brand. The campaign has received funding from Visit Wales' Regional Tourism Engagement Fund and close contact has been maintained with Visit Wales throughout the pandemic in relation to the delivery of the campaign as soon as Covid-19 rates allow.

38. Although the launch of the campaign has been delayed due to Covid-19 the Team has continued to engage with campaign stakeholders and has conducted two online training sessions in October 2020 and November 2020 for businesses who were successful in bidding to form 'cluster' experiences for the campaign.

39. To recap, the campaign will deliver;

- 6 experiences which have been compiled in response to an 'open call' exercise which asked tourism businesses to cluster together to deliver experiences which reflect NPT's strengths as a visitor destination.
- A public relations campaign which includes attracting journalists and travel bloggers to the area.
- A digital/ online campaign which includes utilising the power of social media and digital media (such as video) to appeal to key target markets.
- A group travel campaign to engage with group travel organisers such as coach operators and tour operators in the UK.
- Videography for each product cluster.
- Photography for use within the campaign.

40. The Team has also continued to complete works on the new Neath Port Talbot destination website. This website showcases the area through high quality content such as videos, blogs, photography and interactive mapping. The website will launch at the same time as the marketing campaign and place brand.

41. Feedback from tourism stakeholders has been extremely positive on the new place brand, marketing campaign and destination website. These destination marketing activities will be key to the post Covid recovery of the tourism sector in NPT.
42. Although it was disappointing to delay the launch of the campaign due to Covid-19, we are now in an excellent position to deliver a high profile marketing campaign at a time when the industry will need it most.

### **Post Pandemic**

43. Due to the prioritisation of the Tourism Team's work in delivering Covid-19 support to the tourism sector since March 2020, it has not been possible to draft and consult on the new Neath Port Talbot Destination Management Plan as previously planned in spring 2020.
44. As we move into the recovery phase of the pandemic this work will recommence and will reflect the actions and projects needed to continue to increase the contribution that tourism makes to the local economy and aid recovery from the impacts of Covid-19 on the sector.
45. The external funding landscape is currently unclear due to the redirection of Welsh Government funding schemes into Covid-19 financial support. This makes it difficult to plan new tourism projects, in particular capital projects. The Tourism Team will continue to submit funding applications for tourism development projects as funds become available.

### **Financial Impacts**

- 46 None. The financial impacts of the projects listed within this report have been addressed in separate reports to Members.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

- 47 An IIA is not required to accompany this report as the purpose of the report is for the information of Members rather than for decision. The projects listed within this report have been the subject of individual board reports whereby IIAs have been completed.

### **Valleys Communities Impacts**

- 48 There will be a positive impact on valleys communities as the recovery and future growth of the tourism sector in the area will support the local economy.

### **Workforce Impacts**

- 49 None.

### **Legal Impacts**

- 50 None

### **Risk Management Impacts**

- 51 None.

### **Consultation**

- 52 There is no requirement for external consultation on this matter.

### **Recommendations**

- 53 That Members note the requested updates on the activities of the NPT Tourism Team.

### **Appendices**

- 54 None.

### **List of Background Papers**

- 55 Gnoll Estate Country Park Masterplan, Cabinet Board, 25/11/20
- 56 Afan Forest Park Visitor Centre Valleys Regional Park Gateway Project, Cabinet Board, 11/11/20
- 57 Neath Port Talbot Discovery Clusters Marketing Campaign, Regeneration and Sustainable Development Cabinet Board, 07/06/19

### **Officer Contact**

Simon Brennan – Head of Property and Regeneration, Tel: 01639 686370

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**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY**  
**COMMITTEE**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND**  
**REGENERATION**

**5<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**SECTION A – MATTER FOR SCRUTINY**

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

**CONSULTATION ON 2021/22 BUDGET PROPOSALS**

**1. Purpose of Report**

To provide Members of the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee with supplementary information regarding the 2021/22 draft budget proposals as set out in the Cabinet Report of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021, with a view to aiding the scrutiny of those proposals. Consultation on the Draft Budget proposals is ongoing until 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 prior to final budget decisions taking place on the 8-9<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

**2. Executive Summary**

The draft budget proposals for consultation approved by Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 shows a funding gap of £3.235m for the 2021/22 financial year.

The proposals included a small number of savings strategies which have already been scrutinised, consulted on and were approved by Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

The Cabinet report also detailed that a draft contribution of £3.1m from general reserves is required to balance the 2021/22 budget position.

This report sets out relevant areas for this Scrutiny Committee to consider as part of the consultation process.

### 3. Background

Neath Port Talbot Council's net revenue budget for the current year of 2020/21 amounts to £304.082m and together with grants and income from services results in a gross budget of £445m which is invested in services across the County Borough.

The following table summarises the Council's Funding and Net Budget for 2020/21.

<b>Funding 2020/21</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>%</b>
Revenue Support Grant	£177.353	58.32%
National Non Domestic Rates	£49.409	16.25%
Discretionary Rates Relief	-£0.387	-0.13%
Council Tax	£77.707	25.56%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£304.082</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Net Budget 2020/21</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>%</b>
Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning (including Schools at £90.137m)	£116.019	38.15%
Social Services, Health & Housing	£83.281	27.39%
Environment	£39.525	13.00%
Finance & Corporate Services	£18.208	5.99%
Fire Authority	£7.891	2.60%
Capital Financing	£19.282	6.34%
Council Tax Support	£18.748	6.16%
Other including Contingency	£2.778	0.91%
Use of Reserves	-£1.650	-0.54%
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>£304.082</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### 4. 2021/22 Budget Proposals

On 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 the Welsh Government (WG) published details of the 2021/22 Provisional Local Government Settlement. This shows that WG will increase its funding to Local Government by £4.651bn, a 3.8% increase on the adjusted base for 2020/21.

Neath Port Talbot Council's share is £236.680m which is 6<sup>th</sup> best in Wales and an increase of £9.9m or 4.2%.

For 2021/22 the total draft funds available to run Council Services is £317m but this remains short of what is required to meet inflation, pay awards and other demand pressures which total £320.2m. Therefore there is a funding shortfall next year of £3.235m.

The Cabinet report of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 sets out the draft proposals to close that gap by implementing the already approved cuts/income generation of £135k, use of £3.1m of general reserves and increase council tax by 3.75% to balance the budget. Details are set out in the tables below:

### Estimated increase in Budget required 2021/22

	£'000
<b>Net Budget 2020/21</b>	<b>304,082</b>
Pay Awards and inflation	6,602
Pressures	7,739
Transfers into 2021/22 settlement	186
Reverse use of General Reserves 20/21	1,650
<b>Draft Budget Required 2021/22</b>	<b>320,259</b>

### Estimated total funding available 2021/22

	£'000
<b>Net Budget 2020/21</b>	<b>304,082</b>
Increase in WG Funding	9,918
Increase in Council Tax proceeds @ 3.75%	3,024
<b>Draft Funds Available 2021/22</b>	<b>317,024</b>

### Draft Budget Gap 2021/22

	£'000
Total Budget Required 2021/22	320,259
Estimated Funds Available	317,024

<b>Total Budget Gap 2021/22</b>	<b>3,235</b>
<b>Budget Gap to be funded by</b>	
Use of General Reserves 2021/22	-3,100
Savings/Income Generation Proposals already approved	-135

## 5. Service Pressures

Of the £7.739m pressures outlined above £579k relate to the services overviewed by this Scrutiny Committee.

Details of these pressures are outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.

## 6. Savings / Income Generation Proposals

The budget proposals for 2021/22 include savings / income generation strategies totalling £135k. These have already been the subject of consultation and scrutiny as part of the 2020/21 budget setting proposal and are included in this report for information only, but will, as appropriate, be updated for timing or changes in value.

Details of proposals relevant to this Scrutiny Committee are included in Appendix 2.

## 7. Financial Outlook

The latest Medium Term Financial Plan position is outlined in the table below:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Budget Gap before Directorate Savings	3,235	15,981	17,318
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>3,235</b>	<b>19,216</b>	<b>36,534</b>
FFP Reductions	-135	-176	-50
Funded from General Reserves	-3,100		

Budget Gap (gross of use of reserves) @ Jan 2021	0	18,905	17,268
<b>Cumulative Gap @ Jan 2021</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18,905</b>	<b>36,173</b>

Members should however be aware that there are a number of factors which could impact on the Council's financial position going forward.

Due to the impact of Covid19 the Chancellor of the Exchequer has delayed his Budget Statement until 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021, with a further multi-year UK Government Spending Review announcement due later in 2021, which will inform public spending plans for the next few years. The outcome of that review will allow the Welsh Government to develop plans and hopefully multi-year funding settlements for 2022/23 and onwards.

WG also confirmed that the current settlement and specific grants exclude Covid related funding. Members will note that for 2021/22 the UK Government is providing WG with an additional £770m for Covid related costs.

Given the adverse impact that Covid19 is having on the whole of the UK economy and on Government taxes we should expect that there will be ongoing budget challenges for the next few years.

Members should note though that work is ongoing to verify whether additional budgets are required for the following items. If so they will need to be built into the final budget decisions due in March 2021:

- Legislation
- Any reduction in specific grants affecting service need
- Any changes identified as part of the final Local Government Settlement or UK Government announcements.

Continuous monitoring and appropriate changes will be made re Brexit, other economic, public spending and taxation matters including those mentioned by the Chancellor in his Budget announcement due on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021.

## 8. Opportunities and Threats for the Service

The good news is there are no proposed cuts in budget for the Planning and Public Protection and Property and Regeneration services respectively.

### Commentary on identified Service Pressures

Planning and Public Protection – a cost pressure of £30k is identified for the following reasons:

- **Local Development Plan (LDP)** – in terms of the wider costs associated with completing the LDP Review, it is estimated that such costs will amount to circa £500k. These potential costs have been highlighted for some time and a reserve has therefore been established for LDP preparation. The funds held within this reserve are currently insufficient and it has been recognised that regular payments to this reserve will be required in line with the proposed trajectory of spend to ensure delivery of the Replacement LDP. There is currently £224k available in the reserve which will be sufficient to cover the projected spend through 2021/22. The £100k pressure identified in 2022/23 however provides for the ongoing commitment to cover the costs of LDP preparation.
- **Asset Sponsorship Management Service** – this income generation scheme has been in place for some time and provides the opportunity for local companies to sponsor Council assets and promote their businesses. It is anticipated that the income generated from this service will be significantly affected given the financial impact of the pandemic on businesses and their ability to sponsor assets. The identified pressure of £15k in 2021/22 reflects the anticipated gap in income generation below the target threshold.
- **Enabling Natural Resources and Well-being Grant (ENRaW)** – given that the Welsh Government is continuing to assess funding commitments and priorities, the Countryside and Wildlife team has yet to receive confirmation of whether they have been successful in a significant grant award associated with the South West Wales 'Connecting Green

Infrastructure' Project – the initial grant application amounted to a budget of £2.42 million over 3 years, of which £981k is direct spend for the Council. A number of posts within the Countryside & Wildlife team structure are reliant on grant funding generally and the identified pressure of £15k in 2021/22 reflects the fixed staff costs to be funded from the unconfirmed ENRaW Grant.

Property and Regeneration – a cost pressure of £549k is identified for the following reasons:

- **Decarbonisation Measures including staffing and maintenance of recharging points for electric vehicles** – in line with the Council's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint as part of its Decarbonisation and Renewable Energy (DARE) Strategy, it has installed a number of EV (Electric vehicle) charging points to service our EV fleet that is increasing in size, year on year. As the number of EV charging points increases it is proposed that, where possible, these will be opened up for use by the general public. An initial budget of £50k in 2021/22 will increase to £100k for 2022/23 and 2023/24 to deal with the strategic expansion of EV across the County Borough and the ongoing maintenance of the EV infrastructure
- **Reduction in Rental income base budget due to ongoing impact of Covid** – the ongoing issue of Covid has had a detrimental impact on businesses in Council owned industrial units, offices and retail premises and, hence, a negative impact on income. The £250k pressure for 2021/22 and the £100k for 2022/23 will cover the reduction in income as a consequence of both the rent free periods that have been granted and the number of likely rental 'voids' as businesses are unable to continue in occupation and new tenants are more difficult to find.
- **NNDR increase re Former Crown Building** – the refurbishment works to the former Metalbox offices will be complete in February and the power supply to the remaining industrial space will be available soon after. It is likely, given the current market conditions, that securing an occupier(s) will be challenging and provision (of £79k) is required to pay NNDR (rates) on the premises in the interim

- **Additional Town Centre Officers** – it is clear that an enhanced management presence is required to meet the challenges facing our town centres. There is currently only one town centre manager covering all our town centres and it is therefore proposed that an additional 2 officers (at an annual cost of £70k) be appointed to help provide a coordinated approach to dealing with these issues, including those that have been accentuated by Covid. The new posts will work with other services in the council, and our external partner organisations, to provide a visible town centre presence.
- **Regeneration, Economic Development and Business Support additional capacity** – whilst capacity was reduced in these services a number of years ago, the volume and complexity of work has increased significantly. Additional staff resources (£100k pa) are required to deliver the existing programmes (including the City Deal), to continue to successfully bid for future funding, and to enable NPT to seek to lead on regional programmes (as current capacity means that this is not possible).

#### Commentary on risks to be carried forward

Planning and Public Protection – in respect of risks to be carried forward that are not currently reflected in the pressures:

- **Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) and Covid Enforcement Officer Workforce** – in respect of the current position, the TTP workforce is fully funded by Welsh Government until 31<sup>st</sup> March and partially funded for the duration of the first quarter of 2021/22 (i.e. to end of June'21), whereas the Covid Enforcement workforce is fully funded until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Whilst discussions are underway with Welsh Government as to what expectations there are on Local Authorities to continue to deliver the necessary TTP/Covid Enforcement work, there is a great deal of uncertainty as to what extent the workforce is to be funded in 2021/22.
- **Environmental Health and Trading Standards Backlog of 'Business as Usual' Work** – given that officers from across

the service have been deployed as an integral part of the Council's wider response to the pandemic, there is now a backlog of 'business as usual' work that has built up over time. This includes, but not limited to, food hygiene inspections; health and safety inspections; proactive HMO inspections; statutory nuisance complaints (e.g. noise); house condition complaints within the private rented sector; feed hygiene and food standards inspections; and the non-food trading standards inspection programme. Moving forward, resources will therefore need to be redirected to address the backlog which may involve the temporary recruitment of staff.

Property & Regeneration – in respect of risks to be carried forward that are not currently reflected in the pressures:

- **Business Support & Economic Development**

Whilst the additional £100k outlined above will provide additional capacity in the service it is unlikely that it will be sufficient to deal with the complex challenges presented by Brexit and repairing our post-Covid economy. Scrutiny will be updated as further information becomes available.

- **Decarbonisation**

The Council has outlined its ambition to reduce its carbon footprint in the DARE strategy and is likely to have to produce a plan to be 'Carbon neutral by 2030' in the near future. To meet this target will require additional staff capacity in both strategy and delivery together with a major capital investment in buildings and fleet. Scrutiny will be updated as further information becomes available.

## 9. **Crime and Disorder Impact**

The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with "due regard to the need to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area".

Individual proposals are being assessed as to their impact on crime and disorder and should any specific impact be identified these will be identified against individual proposals and summarised in final proposals.

## **10. Integrated Impact Assessment**

The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to “pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it.”

This report refers to the need to make budget savings, cuts or generate extra income of £135k in 2021/22 together with the use of £3.1m from General Reserves with a further budget gap of £36m over the following 2 years, assuming that WG don't provide any increased funding in both years. Individual Impact Assessments for specific service reduction and income generating proposals have previously been undertaken and hence not included in this report as there are no new proposals for next year.

## **11. Workforce Impacts**

Any impacts on the workforce are set out in this report.

## **12. Consultation**

A public consultation will run from 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The savings / income generation proposals will not be included in this consultation as they have already been consulted on and approved by Council.

## **13. Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members review and scrutinise the proposals included in this report.

## **14. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Revenue Service Pressures 2021 to 2024 & Budget Pressures funded from Specific Reserves

## **15. Background Papers**

Budget working papers.

## **16. Officer Contact**

For further information on this report item, please contact:

Ms Nicola Pearce – Director of Environment and Regeneration  
Email: [n.pearce@npt.gov.uk](mailto:n.pearce@npt.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Revenue Service Pressures & Investment 2021 to 2024

Ref	Board	Service area	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
			£'000	£'000	£'000
ENVT26	R&SD	Additional funds for LDP review for the period to 2024 - £224k available in LDP reserve	0	100	0
ENVT29	R&SD	Asset Sponsorship Management Service - income below target threshold	15	0	0
ENVT30	R&SD	Fixed costs funded out of Enabling Natural Resources and Wellbeing Grant	15	0	0
ENVT31	R&SD	Decarbonisation Measures including staffing and maintenance of recharging points for electric vehicles	50	100	100
ENVT33	R&SD	Reduction in Rental income base budget due to ongoing impact of Covid	250	-150	-100
ENVT35	R&SD	NNDR increase re Former Crown Building	79	0	0
ENVT36	R&SD	Additional Town Centre Officers	70	0	0
ENVT37	R&SD	Regeneration, Economic Development and Business Support additional capacity	100	100	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>0</b>