EXECUTIVE BOARD

1 JULY 2019

CARMARTHENSHIRE RURAL AFFAIRS TASK GROUP: REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. To consider and approve the Task Group's final report and recommendations.
2. To establish a Rural Affairs Advisory Panel to follow on from the work of the Task Group.
3. To prepare an action plan to ensure progress on all of the recommendations with progress to be monitored through the Advisory Panel.

Reasons:
The Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group was established as a cross-party group to consider the issues effecting the rural communities in Carmarthenshire and to identify actions the Council, in partnership with other public bodies and organisations, can take in addressing those issues to ensure and support rural regeneration in future years.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted: N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD / COUNCIL / COMMITTEE:
Scrutiny Committee recommendations / comments:

Exec Board Decision Required	YES
Council Decision Required	YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Cefin Campbell

Directorate: Chief Executive's	Designations:	
Noelwyn Daniel	Head of ICT & Corporate Policy	Tel Nos.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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1 JULY 2019

CARMARTHENSHIRE RURAL AFFAIRS TASK GROUP: REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cross-party Task Group, chaired by Cllr Cefin Campbell, was established in September 2017 and has been meeting regularly since then to consider the key issues facing Carmarthenshire's rural communities going forward. In addition to the chair, membership of the Task Group consists of three representatives from each political group (Plaid Cymru: Gareth Thomas; Jean Lewis; Ken Howell. Labour: Dot Jones; Shirley Matthews; Colin Evans. Independent: Joseph Davies; Sue Allen; Irfon Jones.)

The recommendations and report focus on eleven areas of influence that the Council can affect in terms of the county's rural communities:

- Economic development
- Planning and housing
- Education and skills
- Broadband and digital skills
- Tourism
- Transport and highways
- Agriculture and food
- Community resilience, access to services and third sector
- Renewable energy
- Environment and waste
- The Way Forward.

Evidence was given by a number of organisations and individuals with regard to these areas of influence and the Task Group have suggested 55 recommendations for implementation.

It is suggested that once approved in principle the Council works to develop an action plan to ensure progress on each of the recommendations and that the recommendations are then in time embedded into the business plans for the respective Council services to take forward.

For any recommendations that require further investment, once the feasibility has been established or opportunities identified a further business case will need to be presented for Executive Board consideration.

It is also suggested that the Task Group continues in an Advisory Panel capacity to support the Executive Board Member for Communities and Rural Affairs in taking forward these recommendations and monitoring progress and review and respond to the possible implications of Brexit and any other emerging issues likely to affect rural communities.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT & Corporate Policy

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	**NONE**	**YES**	**NONE**	**YES**	**NONE**	**NONE**

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The report and recommendations are framed in the context of supporting the future sustainability of Carmarthenshire's rural communities and as such follows the principles set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Task Group has considered ways in which the Council can take action to ensure the long-term viability of its rural communities and the recommendations are aimed at preventing decline through working across Council departments as well as with other public sector organisations and other stakeholders.

3. Finance

Where already known, estimated costs of implementing some recommendations have been outlined in Appendix A, however it is expected that most of the recommendations should be delivered within existing service capacity.

For other recommendations where costs are currently unknown, once the recommendations are approved in principle, further work will be undertaken to identify appropriate sources of funding or additional capacity to deliver those recommendations that require additional funding. These will need to be considered on a case-by-case prioritised basis.

5. Risk Management Issues

The uncertainty surrounding the possible implications of Brexit on the agricultural sector is a concern and managing those risks will be challenging until the final Brexit position in known.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Noelwyn Daniel, Head of ICT & Corporate Policy

1. Scrutiny Committee: N/A

2.Local Member(s)

All members were made aware of the Task Group's consultation undertaken between November 2017-April 2018.

3.Community / Town Council

All councils were made aware of the Task Group's consultation undertaken between November 2017-April 2018.

4.Relevant Partners

A full list of stakeholders who have contributed to the Task Group's deliberations is included as an appendix to the full report.

5.Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Not applicable

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Characteristics of Carmarthenshire (prepared by Wavehill April 2019)		Available through Gwyneth Ayers
A number of other reference reports are listed in the appendices of the report		Available through Gwyneth Ayers