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THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

I HEREBY SUMMON YOU TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE **COMMUNITY & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE **CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, CARMARTHEN. SA31 1JP AND REMOTELY AT 10.00 AM ON THURSDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2022** FOR THE TRANSACTION OF THE BUSINESS OUTLINED ON THE ATTACHED AGENDA

Wendy Walters

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Democratic Officer:	Kevin J Thomas
Telephone (direct line):	01267 224027
E-Mail:	KJThomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
This is a multi-location meeting. Committee members can attend in person at the venue detailed above or remotely via the Zoom link which is provided separately.	
The meeting can be viewed on the Authority's website via the following link:- https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home	

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

COMMUNITY & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

PLAID CYMRU GROUP - 7 Members

Cllr. Bryan Davies
Cllr. Handel Davies
Cllr. Terry Davies
Cllr. Ken Howell
Cllr. Betsan Jones (Vice-
Chair)
Cllr. Denise Owen
Cllr. Russell Sparks

LABOUR GROUP - 4 Members

Cllr. Deryk Cundy (Chair)
Cllr. Rob Evans
Cllr. Martyn Palfreman
Cllr. Michael Thomas

INDEPENDENT GROUP - 2 Members

Cllr. Hugh Shepardson
Vacancy

A G E N D A

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM**
- 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)**
- 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRE-DECISION TASK AND FINISH GROUP (DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY) 5 - 14**
- 5. COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22 15 - 32**
- 6. COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2022/23 33 - 38**
- 7. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT 39 - 40**
- 8. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 31ST JANUARY 2022 41 - 50**

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COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29TH SEPTEMBER 2022

SUBJECT:

**ESTABLISHMENT OF PRE-DECISION TASK AND FINISH GROUP
(DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS
POLICY)**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to:

- Confirm the establishment of a pre-decision Task and Finish group, to develop an emergency allocations policy for social housing in Carmarthenshire;
- Confirm the membership of the pre-task and finish group; and
- Agree the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group.

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- The rationale and process for the development of an emergency allocation policy through a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group; and
- Establishment of Task and Finish Group.

Reasons:

- To allow a cross party Task and Finish of Community and Regeneration Scrutiny to develop an emergency policy for submission to the Cabinet for consideration.

To be referred to the Cabinet / Council for decision: YES

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: -

Cllr Linda Evans- Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Leader

Directorate

Communities

Name of Head of Service:

Jonathan Morgan

Report Author: Angie Bowen

Designations:

Head of Housing

Housing Hwb Manager

E Mail Addresses:

JMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

AnBowen@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29TH SEPTEMBER 2022

SUBJECT:

**ESTABLISHMENT OF PRE-DECISION TASK AND FINISH GROUP
(DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGENCY SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS
POLICY)**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to:

- Confirm the establishment of a pre-decision Task and Finish group, to develop an emergency allocations policy for social housing in Carmarthenshire;
- Confirm the membership of the pre-task and finish group; and
- Agree the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group.

1. What is the context?

Housing Options and Homelessness services are facing unprecedented and increased demand due to:

- No one left behind” approach to ensure everyone has a safe and secure place to live and to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and unrepeatable.
- Unintended consequences of introduction of new Rented Homes Act;
- Huge pressures in general market in terms of house prices and rents;
- Ukraine re-settlement programme; and
- UK wide proposed asylum dispersal scheme.

As a result, and as part of a wider programme on intervention, we would like to establish a Scrutiny task and finish group to explore options to revise the current Social Housing Allocations Policy (SHAP)

2. Why do we need to develop a new emergency allocation policy?

We are experiencing, along with all Local Authorities in Wales, an unprecedented situation for housing where demand is exceeding supply, with the position significantly worsening in the last few weeks because of external factors.

As an authority we have also made some rapid changes and restructured services to enable us to move from the reactive stage to prevention and bring together the main elements of the prevention programme under one umbrella.

Whilst the system has, with some difficulty, coped to date the signs are now that we are seeing severe stress in the system. This includes:

- More than 2000 people projected as presenting homeless by the end of the year. This is more than 20% higher than pre pandemic levels;
- During 2022/23 there is projected to be a 33% increase in the number of households we have a full duty to rehouse (440 households projected); and
- In addition to this, the number waiting for housing for whom we have a current full duty to house has risen from 180 households in 2021 to 327 at the end of June 2022.

We believe the current policy is not fit for purpose and needs revising. The task and finish group will:

- Assess the current demands on the housing options and homelessness service;
- Develop proposals for a new policy; and
- Confirm proposals to be considered by Cabinet.

It is anticipated the group will meet four times (maximum) and finalise its work within one month of starting

Recommendations

- To confirm the rationale and process for the development of emergency allocation policy through a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group; and
- To confirm the establishment of the Task and Finish Group.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	NO
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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: Jonathan Morgan Head of Housing

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Any proposed interim changes, because of the Task and Finish Group's work, will require formal political approval.

Community tensions could also arise if the approach is not considered fair and proportionate to the circumstances.

2. Legal

It should be noted that in the intervening period, pending the development of an emergency policy, the Head of Housing will be using his delegated authority to direct match to properties on a significantly greater scale.

3. Finance

Failure to respond to the current situation could result in significant financial pressures around the use of temporary accommodation and the inability to move households on to more permanent accommodation.

5.Risk Management Issues

Failure to instigate some immediate proposals around availability of more permanent accommodation could result in:

- The overall housing system in the County “silting up” with little move-on opportunities to permanent accommodation;
- Increased use of temporary, and more expensive accommodation, to meet housing need; and
- Perception that we are not looking at more sustainable plans for the general homeless population in the County.

6.Physical Assets

Council housing will be used as solutions for temporary as well as permanent solutions.

7.Staffing Implications

A new “Housing Hwb” structure was approved in May 2022.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Jonathan Morgan Head of Housing

1. Local Member(s)

Local members will be informed of any vacant homes and when the property has been successfully allocated in their wards. It is intended that discussions will also take place with political groups after Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee discussions.

2. Community / Town Council

n/a at current time.

3. Relevant Partners

Discussions will take place with RSL colleagues as part of the policy development.

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Managers and Team Leaders have been fully involved in the development of the proposals

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**
YES

Include any observations here

Cabinet Member for Homes and Deputy Leader supports further discussion and to explore options at Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Community Scrutiny Committee

Task & Finish Group 2022

Emergency Interim Social Housing Allocations Policy

Draft Planning & Scoping Document

<p>Task & Finish Objectives(s)</p>	<p>To develop an Emergency Interim proposal and recommendations to present to Cabinet and full Council for approval. The work aligns with the review of the current SHAP and the development of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan in line with Welsh Government policy to make homelessness rare, brief, and unrepeatable.</p>
<p>Context</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>The Social Housing Allocations Policy (SHAP) was approved by Full Council on 14th December 2016 in preparation for the launch of the Choice Based Lettings service. The existing policy gives priority to Band A applicants; however, it does not include a letting target to determine what percentage of empty homes should be allocated to each priority group.</p> <p>Following a recent review, we know that in 2021/22, 52% of all allocations of Social Housing (CCC & RSLs combined) were to households to whom we owed a duty under the Housing Wales Act. Even with this level of priority as of March 2022 we still had an overall open homelessness caseload of 783 households requiring housing. There are currently 122 households in temporary accommodation (TA). This number is set to increase as a direct consequence of the issues, policies, and market conditions set out in the full report.</p> <p>There is a severe shortage of affordable housing in the County across both Social and PRS. 4,334 households are waiting for social housing in the County but only 839 tenancies commenced in 2021/22 (including RSL allocations). During 2021/22 we discharged our duty to the private rented sector for 213 households, this trend has turned, and we currently have 195 households under Section 21 notice of eviction to leave their PRS tenancies. As a result, the waiting list is growing all the time.</p> <p>As the requirements of residents have changed, with more applicants in severe need, the current letting policy is not currently fit for purpose, and the Council needs to create an interim fairer, more transparent housing register, better suited to the situation in the County today.</p> <p>The SHAP requires to be reviewed regularly but due to additional demand placed on the Housing Service as a result of COVID 19 and Welsh Government's 'no-one left out approach' this has not been progressed as quickly as had been hoped (however, a full review will</p>

	commence following the development of the Rapid Rehousing Plan in September and a report will be submitted to Pre-Cabinet later in 2023 setting out the proposals, and requesting approval to commence a consultation process).
Membership	<p>Elected Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be agreed at the Community Scrutiny Committee Meeting to be held on 1st September 2022 • Up to 6 elected members appointed to reflect the political balance of the Council as whole • Advisors and support officers to be confirmed/agreed
What will the Task and Finish Group's work focus on?	<p>The Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee acting as the Task and Finish group will meet to discuss and agree a simplified interim SHAP based on data and evidence provided by officers. This will enable a transparent process for allocating homes during this emergency period. It will enable staff to focus on their caseload and not be distracted by the bidding system; and target households in greatest need who have been waiting longest.</p> <p>The agreed Emergency Interim Allocation Policy and accompanying recommendations will be presented to Cabinet and Full Council for approval and if approved the current policy will be suspended for an agreed length of time to allow the Emergency Interim Policy to take effect.</p>
Scope of the review	This review will focus on developing an Emergency Interim proposal and recommendations to present to Cabinet and full Council for approval.
How it will contribute to achieving corporate/ community objectives and well-being objectives?	<p>This review will contribute to the following Well-being Objectives set out in the Corporate strategy 2018-2023 (updated April 2021)</p> <p>4. Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work and improving the lives of those living in poverty</p> <p>6. Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes</p> <p>And the following community objective set out in the Cabinet Vision Statement 2022-2027 (July 2022)</p> <p>Homes -10 Continue to work with key partners to end homelessness</p> <p>It also supports the PSB's Wellbeing Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling poverty and its impacts

List of key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Housing providers (RSLs) • Tenants and Residents • Third Sector • Elected Members, and • Others stakeholders will be identified as the work of the group progresses 															
What information/documents are required to inform the work of the study?	<p>To be agreed at the meeting of the Community Scrutiny Committee to be held on 1st September 2022, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case for Change Report • Housing Need Assessments • Homelessness data • Temporary Accommodation information • Canfod Cartref data <p>This list not exhaustive</p>															
The main outcomes of the review	<p>Agree recommendations and an Emergency Interim Policy to be presented to Cabinet on *** and Full Council on *** for approval.</p>															
Timescale for completion of the review	<p>The group will meet four times over a period of four consecutive weeks</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="448 1099 1498 1585"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="448 1099 643 1211">T&F Group Meeting</th> <th data-bbox="643 1099 831 1211">w/c</th> <th data-bbox="831 1099 1498 1211"></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1211 643 1283">1</td> <td data-bbox="643 1211 831 1283"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1211 1498 1283">Presentation of data and discussion</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1283 643 1386">2</td> <td data-bbox="643 1283 831 1386"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1283 1498 1386">Presentation of proposals based on previous meeting and discussion</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1386 643 1489">3</td> <td data-bbox="643 1386 831 1489"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1386 1498 1489">Feedback from previous meeting, draft policy proposal and discussion</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="448 1489 643 1585">4</td> <td data-bbox="643 1489 831 1585"></td> <td data-bbox="831 1489 1498 1585">Final policy proposals, agree recommendation for cabinet and full council</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	T&F Group Meeting	w/c		1		Presentation of data and discussion	2		Presentation of proposals based on previous meeting and discussion	3		Feedback from previous meeting, draft policy proposal and discussion	4		Final policy proposals, agree recommendation for cabinet and full council
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4		Final policy proposals, agree recommendation for cabinet and full council														

Community Scrutiny are asked to consider and comment on:

- The proposed approach to the Task and Finish Group’s work.
- The planning and scope of the work to be undertaken.

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COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – Annual Report 2021/22

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That members consider and approve the Community Scrutiny Committee’s annual report for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Reasons:

- The Council’s Constitution requires scrutiny committees to report annually on their work.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

Chair of Community and Regeneration Scrutiny: Councillor Deryk Cundy

<p>Directorate Chief Executives Name of Head of Service: Linda Rees-Jones Report Author: Kevin Thomas</p>	<p>Designations: Head of Administration & Law Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>Tel Nos / E Mail Addresses: 01267 224010 lrjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 224027 kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29th SEPTEMBER 2022

Community Scrutiny Committee – Annual Report 2021/22

The attached report has been prepared in order to comply with Article 6.2 of the County Council's Constitution which states that a scrutiny committee must:

“Prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committee’s activities over the previous year.”

The report provides an overview of the workings of the Community Scrutiny Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year and includes information on the following topics:

- Overview of the forward work programme
- Key issues considered
- Issues referred to or from Executive Board / Other Scrutiny Committees
- Task & Finish Review
- Development Sessions
- Member attendance at meetings

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: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

2. Legal – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

- 1. Local Member(s) - N/A**
- 2. Community / Town Council – N/A**
- 3. Relevant Partners - N/A**
- 4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations**

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW OR THERE ARE NONE (Delete as applicable)

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Community Scrutiny Committee Reports and Minutes		https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Annual Report

2021 - 2022

Scrutiny
in Carmarthenshire



carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Cyngor **Sir Gâr**
Carmarthenshire
County Council



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Chair's Foreword



As the Chair of this Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year, I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year. This report provides a comprehensive summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during this period and provides an opportunity to reflect on this work.

The past year has again been a challenging period for the Council due to the covid pandemic and I feel this Committee has continued to constructively play its part in terms of scrutinising performance and contributing to key council policies and decisions.

The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which came into force on the 22nd April 2020 allowed the Authority to make arrangements for meetings to take place remotely. This obviously had its own challenge in changing how we worked, as both elected members and officers, in adapting to new technology to enable meetings to be held remotely but, we were able to discuss and scrutinise a wide variety of topics and play a constructive part in scrutinising performance and contributing to key council policies and decisions. These included the standard and regular monitoring reports as well as new policies and strategies being introduced by the County Council.

The forthcoming year will no doubt again be challenging as the Council recovers from the impact and on-going implications of the Coronavirus. I am confident though that the Committee will continue to focus on how to improve services effectively and efficiently and will have a positive impact on the outcomes for the residents of Carmarthenshire. I'm sure the Committee will also continue to work closely with the Council's Senior Managers and Staff to ensure that 2022/23 will be a productive year.

I would also like to thank all members of the Committee for their contributions and dedication during 2021/22.

Councillor Fozia Akhtar
Chair of Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee (2021/22)

1. Introduction

Article 6.2 of the Council's Constitution requires all scrutiny committees to "*prepare an annual report giving an account of the Committees activities over the previous year.*"

The main aims of the report are to highlight the work that has been undertaken by the Community Scrutiny Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year. The document may also facilitate discussions on other items that could be included within future work programmes.

The Committee was chaired by Cllr. Fozia Akhtar and is made up of 13 Elected Members. Support is provided to the Panel by the Democratic Services Team and other Council officers as and when required.

This report provides an overview of the work of the Community Scrutiny Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year. It gives Members the opportunity to reflect on the achievements during the year and to identify what worked well and where improvements could be made. This analysis is instrumental in developing scrutiny

2. Overview of the work of the Committee in 2021/22

2.1 Number of Meetings

The Scrutiny Committee held 5 meetings during the 2021/22 municipal year.

2.2 The Forward Work Programme

The Scrutiny Committee develops its own Forward Work Programme (FWP) and in the main, meeting agendas were consistent with those outlined in the FWP, which was confirmed by the Committee at its meeting on the 1st July 2021.

The Forward Work Programme was mainly based on key areas identified as objectives within the Integrated Community Strategy and Improvement Plan together with standard items such as performance and budget monitoring reports, action plan monitoring reports and specific requests from the scrutiny committee itself. Additional reports were also requested by the scrutiny committee during the year and the Forward Work Programme was amended accordingly.

The development of the concept of the Forward Work Programme and the process for its agreement, has allowed each scrutiny committee to determine its own work agendas. The benefits of such an approach has led to an improved level of debate and input during scrutiny committee meetings.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 put long term sustainability at the forefront of how public services are designed and delivered and it places emphasis on public bodies to work in partnership with each other and the public to prevent and tackle problems.

The Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's key responsibilities are for:

- Housing – Social and Private Sector
- Planning Policy
- Regeneration including physical and rural development
- Economic Development
- European and Externally Funded Programmes
- Libraries
- Arts and Theatres
- Museums and Archives
- Countryside facilities
- Sports, Leisure and Recreation

To compliment the work undertaken during formal meetings, the Committee also undertakes other scrutiny functions such as task and finish, visits to establishments falling within its remit together with member development sessions

2.3 Performance Monitoring / Strategic Issues

Performance Monitoring Reports - One of the principal roles of Scrutiny Committees is to monitor the performance of services and functions within its remit. They undertake this work mainly through the consideration of performance monitoring reports and various action plan monitoring reports. The performance monitoring reports provide a balanced picture of performance across the relevant service areas. The Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee received the Performance Monitoring Reports for the Council's 2021/22 Wellbeing Objectives for the period 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021 at its meetings on the 30th September 2021 (Quarter 1) and 14th December 2021 (Quarter 2). It was noted at the meetings that 2021/22 was the first year the Council would self-evaluate and report on under the terms of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, especially Part 6 thereof relating to Performance and Governance

Carmarthenshire County Council Annual Report 2020/21 - As part of its performance monitoring role, the Committee received relevant information from the Council's key strategies and plans. One of the key areas relating to the Council's management is the Annual monitoring of progress achieved against the Council's well-being objectives detailed within the 2020/21 Report. With that in mind, the Committee, in July 2021, considered the Annual report detailing the progress and adaptations made during the year for each of the Council's 15 Well Being objectives, adopted in June 2018, as amended, to reflect developing priorities and the impact of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, Brexit and climate change. The Committee noted that while it was considered good practice to ensure the Corporate Strategy was up to date and resources allocated to priorities, the Improvement Objectives must be published annually

in accordance with both the Local Government (Wales Measure 2009) and The Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Outcome:

The Cabinet at its meeting in September 2021 recommended to Council that the Annual Report 2020/21 be approved which was subsequently adopted by the Council in October 2021.

Departmental Draft Business Plans 2022 - 2023 – In February 2022 the Committee considered the Departmental Draft Business Plans 2022 - 2023 for those areas of the Communities and Chief Executive Departments falling within its remit providing a summary of the key actions and measures required to support the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and the Council's Well-Being Objectives. This provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider and comment upon the priorities outlined for the departments.

The Committee also noted that production of the Environment Department Business Plan had been delayed following the Departure of the Director and subsequent appointment of two interim directors

Outcome:

The Committee received the Communities and Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plans falling within its remit

Actions & Referrals - During the course of the municipal year requests can be made by members for additional items to assist in discharging their scrutiny role. Actions & Referrals updates are presented to Committee bi-annually providing an update on progress in relation to these requests.

2.4 Revenue & Capital Budgets

Budget Monitoring Reports - The Committee received quarterly reports on the departmental and corporate revenue and capital budgets. Due to a heavy agenda, the January 2022 report was e-mailed direct to Committee members. These reports enabled members to monitor and challenge the level of spend in each service area and the progress made in connection with any capital works.

Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2022/23-2024/25 - As well as monitoring the revenue and capital budgets, the Committee was also consulted on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25. The report provided the Committee with the proposed Revenue Budget Strategy for 2022/23 together with indicative figures for the 2023/24 and 2024/2025 financial years.

Outcome:

As part of the widespread consultation undertaken on the Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25, the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered the Strategy at its January meeting and endorsed the budget proposals, as submitted. The Budget Strategy was subsequently adopted by the Cabinet and Council at their meetings in March 2022, subject to some amendments and a reduction in the planned council tax levy

2.5 Policy for Anti-Social Behaviour and Breaches of Tenancy 2021

In July 2021 the Committee considered proposals for the adoption of a policy detailing the approach to be adopted by the Neighbourhood Team within Environmental Protection for processing complaints for Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Breaches of Tenancy Conditions and their prioritisation into the following three categories:-

- Category A – Urgent or serious cases -to be dealt with as quickly as possibly (aim to contact within 24 hours)
- Category B – Serious Issues- aim to contact within 5 working days
- Category C – Low Level – aim to contact within 10 working days

Outcome:

The Committee recommended adoption of the policy which was subsequently approved by the Council's Cabinet at its meeting held on 26th July 2021

2.6 Tyisha/Station Road Area

In August 2022, at a special meeting, the committee considered a report on the Council's proposals for the Tyisha/Station Road area of Llanelli. That report detailed the work undertaken to date, including the demolition of the vacant flats in the "4 Ty's" together with outlining other key priorities for moving the programme of change forward. One of the key objectives aimed to develop a transformational plan to address the significant issues affecting the Tyisha community and making the area a vibrant place to live and work.

Outcome:

The proposals were received and accepted by the Committee and subsequently approved by the Cabinet at its meeting held on the 13th September 2021.

2.7 Cartrefi Croeso

In August 2022, at a special meeting, the Committee considered a report on the future of Cartrefi Croeso, the Council's Local Housing Company established in 2018 to support the delivery of affordable homes for sale and rent to ensure a range of available housing options were available to meet both affordable housing needs and aspirations of supporting economic growth and strategic regeneration. The report detailed the progress achieved by the company to date and the proposals for the Council to take on its future roles thereby making the company 'dormant'. That proposal had arisen due to changes introduced since its establishment, one of which related to the Welsh Government's decision to lift the HRA borrowing restrictions thereby enabling the Council to become more ambitious and to build up the appropriate skills and capacity in the number of homes it could deliver

Outcome:

The proposals were received and accepted by the Committee and subsequently approved by the Cabinet at its meeting held on the 13th September 2021.

2.8 Primary Town Centre Economic Recovery Plans – Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli

The Committee, in September 2021 was consulted on Council proposals for the introduction of Economic Recovery and Delivery Plans, post covid, for the three primary towns within Carmarthenshire of Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli. The plans set out the impact of covid, highlighting key issues/opportunities and providing a delivery framework of be-spoke interventions for each centre. It was envisaged the plans would be owned and delivered by the stakeholders in the three towns' respective Task Force/Forum, with the Council working with potential funders in both Welsh Government and Westminster to lever funding when opportunities arose and to utilise corporate funding identified within the council's capital programme to facilitate implementation of the three plans.

Outcome:

The Committee endorsed the Recovery Plans which were subsequently adopted by the Cabinet on the 17th January 2022

2.9 Annual Monitoring Report 2019/21 Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan

In September, the Committee received the 2019/21 Annual Monitoring report on the Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan, produced in accordance with statutory requirements for its submission to Welsh Government, and publication on the Council's website by the 31st October. The report covered an extended two year period reflecting the impact of Covid 19, and its associated restrictions, upon the recording, availability and reporting of data

In considering the report the Committee raised a number of issues, including:

- the impact current of Natural Resources Wales' (NRW) regulations on phosphates on water quality were having on development and regeneration not only in Carmarthenshire but Wales wide
- the provision within the LDP for additional official gypsy and traveller sites within the County
- the impact of Brexit and Covid on the increased cost of building materials for the construction industry and the potential impact on the provision of affordable homes

Outcome:

The report was approved for submission to the Welsh Government and subsequently adopted by both the Cabinet and Council at their meetings held on the 11th October and 10th November 2022

2.10 Audit Wales Report: Regenerating Town Centres in Wales

In December, the Committee considered Audit Wales' National Report on Regenerating Town Centres in Wales that produced 6 recommendations for all levels of government in Wales to help make town centres sustainable with recommendations 4 and 6 specifically relating to the role of local government.

The Committee commented on a number of areas within the report of both national and local significance. Those included the Council's 10 Towns Initiative, provision of capital funding, increased competition from internet shopping and the streamlining of grant processes

Outcome:

The report was received and the Council's Action Plan produced in response to the report was approved.

2.11 Actif Sport & Leisure's 'Actif' Anywhere platform

In December, the Committee considered a report on developments within the Leisure Services Division that were leading the way in terms of digital development to enable the population to access and participate in digital activity across the life course and health spectrum not only in Carmarthenshire but in Wales, the U.K. and Worldwide. Whilst it was not intended to replace activity within physical buildings, the platform's primary aim was to provide a greater mix and flexibility of choice/provision for people to become more active

Outcome:

The report was received.

2.12 Update on the Outdoor Education Offer in Carmarthenshire

In December, the Committee was consulted on a report providing a backdrop to current Outdoor Education Provision within Carmarthenshire, including, a review of assets, financial resources, staffing activity and how the service would need to re-model and evolve in the short, medium and long term within existing resources

The Committee re-emphasised it's support for the retention and development of the existing facility at the Pendine Outdoor Education Facility

Outcome:

The report was adopted with an additional recommendation to pursue all grant opportunities to fund improvements to the Pendine Outdoor Education Centre.

2.13 Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23

In January, the Committee considered the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23, presented as part of the budget consultation process. The report reflected the latest proposals contained in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, being the primary financial planning tool for delivering the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard Plus (CHS+).

The Committee endorsed the report and proposed rent increases to the Cabinet and Council for consideration as part of the budget submission to the Council

Outcome:

The Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent setting proposals were adopted by the Executive Board and Council at their meetings in February and March, 2022 respectively

2.14 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-25 Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme

In February, the Committee considered the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-25 Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Plan, the five main themes of which were:

- Supporting Tenants and Residents
- Investing in Homes and Surrounding areas
- Providing more homes
- Decarbonisation of the Housing Stock
- The Local Economy, Community Benefits and Procurement

The Committee raised a number of issues on the report that included: void levels, impact of the NRW'S Phosphate Regulations on Development and Regeneration within the County. The Committee endorsed the report to the Cabinet and Council for consideration as part of the budget submission to the Council

Outcome:

The report was accepted by the Cabinet and Council at their meetings in February and March 2022 respectively.

2.15 Housing Regeneration and Development – Five Year Delivery Plan

In February, the Committee considered a proposed Five Year Delivery Plan detailing the Authority's plans to support the delivery of over 2,000 additional homes across the county over the next five years. The plan would build on the success of current affordable housing delivery plans, would support economic growth by investing over £300m into communities directly supporting the actions in the Economic Recovery Plan, supporting Business, people and places

The Committee recommended the Plan's adoption to the Cabinet and Council

Outcome:

The Plan was adopted by the Cabinet and Council in their February and March meetings.

2.15 Task and Finish

The Committee did not undertake a Task and Finish exercise in 2021/22

2.16 Site Visits

Whilst a number of site visits were included within the Committee's 2021/22 Forward Work Programme, it was unable to undertake those due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions.

2.17 Development Sessions

The Committee held one service specific development session during 2021/22 on the Draft Leisure Strategy to help inform its development prior to consideration by the Council in 2022.

The following all member development sessions / member seminars were held during 2021/22:-

- Historic Buildings and Carmarthenshire's Net Zero Carbon Commitment - May
- The Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency – June
- Microsoft Teams Training for online meetings – numerous sessions - June
- Hywel Dda University Health Board – Covid Briefing - September
- Planning Service Seminar – September
- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Workshop - October
- Planning Service Phospates Briefing -November
- Overview of Budget proposals – budget consultation seminar - January
- Digital Connectivity - February

In addition to the above, several budget seminars were held during January as part of the Council's consultation process on the 2022/23 Revenue Budget and five year capital programme.

2.18 Referrals

In July 2021, the Committee, as part of its consideration on the Council's Annual Report for 2020/21, raised and referred to the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee an issue relating to the lack of pavements on public highways to facilitate safe walking, with there being over 300 applications for pavements outstanding

Outcome:

The Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in March 2022 received a report on the provision of footpaths and noted that the £250k capital budget provision enabled delivery of a maximum of three schemes per annum.

3. Challenges

One of the significant challenges faced by the County in 2021/22 was the impact of the Covid Pandemic on the provision of services to the residents of Carmarthenshire.

4. Future Work

The Committee has made significant progress and will continue to concentrate on topics where Members' input will result in positive outcomes to drive forward service improvement. To ensure best use is being made of meeting time and with the benefit of the added value of pre-meetings, the Committee is keen to achieve a more streamlined scrutiny process.

The future work of the Committee will be considered as part of the Forward Work Programme planning session. The FWP will continue to be monitored during the course of the year, together with the Executive Board FWP.

5. Support for the Scrutiny Function

Support for Carmarthenshire County Council's Scrutiny function is provided by the Democratic Services Unit, based in the Administration & Law Division of the Chief Executive's Department.

Support for the Scrutiny function includes:

- Formulating, in accordance with the FWP, and despatching agendas for Scrutiny Committee meetings a minimum of 4 working days prior to the meeting;

- Providing support and constitutional advice to the Scrutiny Committees and to members of those Committees as well as producing minutes of their meetings and ensuring items arising from those meetings are actioned;
- Giving support and advice in relation to the functions of the Council's Scrutiny Committees to executive and non-executive members of the Council and its officers;
- Managing the strategic development of Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire through engaging in national and regional Scrutiny networks and initiatives, supporting the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum and meetings of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs with the Executive Board;
- Advising and supporting the implementation of the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 as and when guidance is published;
- Managing the co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny Committees' forward work programmes in conjunction with Scrutiny Committee members;
- Managing and co-ordinating Scrutiny review work, including the administration of scrutiny task and finish groups, assisting in writing reports in conjunction with the groups and assisting in the implementation and monitoring of completed reviews;
- Assisting with the Scrutiny member development programme.

For more information on Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire including forward work programmes, task and finish reports and annual reports, visit the County Council's website at: www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/scrutiny

To contact the Democratic Services Unit, please call 01267 224028 or e-mail scrutiny@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

6. Attendance

Attendance by members of the Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year is shown in the table below. A total of 5 meetings were held between May 21 and April 2022 against the scheduled 8.

Scrutiny Committee Member	No. of meetings attended	%
Cllr F. Akhtar	4	80
Cllr. Ann. Davies	5	100
Cllr. Anthony Davies	5	100
Cllr. H. Davies	3	60
Cllr C. Evans	4	80
Cllr R. Evans	5	100
Cllr. J. Gilasbey	5	100
Cllr. B. Jones	5	100

Cllr. H. Jones	5	100
Cllr. S. Matthews	3	60
Cllr. H. Shepardson	5	100
Cllr. G. Thomas	4	80
Cllr. D. Thomas	4	80
Substitutes	No. of meetings attended	
Cllr. M.J.A. Lewis	1	
Cllr M. Charles	2	
Cllr G. John	1	
Cllr D. Cundy	1	
Cabinet Member	No. of meetings attended	
Cllr E. Dole	4	
Cllr. L.D. Evans	4	
Cllr. M. Stephens	4	
Cllr. P.H. Griffiths	5	
Cllr D. Jenkins	2	
Cllr H. Evans	2	
Cllr C. Campbell	3	

COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for 2022/23

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- That the Committee confirm its Forward Work Programme for 2022/23.

Reasons:

- The County Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to develop and publish annual forward work programmes that identify issues and reports to be considered during the course of the municipal year.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: NO

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- NOT APPLICABLE

<p>Directorate: Chief Executive's</p> <p>Name of Head of Service: Linda Rees-Jones</p> <p>Report Author: Kevin Thomas</p>	<p>Designations:</p> <p>Head of Administration & Law</p> <p>Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:</p> <p>01267 224010 lrjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p> <p>01267 224027 kjthomas@carmarthenshire.gov.uk</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 29TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for 2022/23

Purpose of the Forward Work Programme

Article 6.2 of the County Council's Constitution states that: *"Each scrutiny committee is required to develop and publish an annual forward work programme, identifying issues and reports to be considered during the course of a municipal year"*.

The development of a work programme:

- Provides an opportunity for members to determine the priority issues to be considered by their scrutiny committee over the course of the next year.
-
- Provides a focus for both officers and members, and is a vehicle for communicating the work of the Committee to the public. The programme (see attached report) will be published on the council's website and will be updated on a quarterly basis – www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/scrutiny – and sent to key stakeholders for information. It will also be updated on a quarterly basis.
- Ensures agreement of provisional agendas for scheduled scrutiny meetings within the council diary. The Programme is a flexible document that can be amended to reflect additional meetings and agenda items during the course of the year.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES – Draft Forward Work Programme 2022/23

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: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

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

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

2. Legal – In line with requirements of the County Council’s Constitution.

CONSULTATIONS

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

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones

Head of Administration & Law

1. Local Member(s) - N/A

2. Community / Town Council – N/A

3. Relevant Partners - N/A

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations N/A

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

- N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection

Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – Forward Work Programme 2022/23

29 th Sept 22	16 th Nov 22 -	14 th Dec 22	26 Jan 23	23 rd Feb 23	5 th April 23
Annual Performance Report 2021/22 (Planning Services)	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/23 <i>(Apr-Aug Monitor)</i>	Housing Strategy – Withdrawn – new date TBC	HRA Budget Service Charges and Rent Setting 2023/24	Scrutiny Actions update	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 <i>(April to December)</i>
Adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan – Annual Monitoring Report 2021/22	Scrutiny Actions Update		Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023-26 Carmarthenshire Investment Programme		Quarter 3 Performance Management
Quarter 1 Performance Management	Corporate Strategy		Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 <i>(April to October)</i>		New Social Allocation Policy – Homelessness Duty <i>(tbc)</i>
Council Annual Report	Community Asset Transfer Policy		Revenue Budget Consultation 2023/24 - 2025/26		
Community Scrutiny FWP 2022/23	Consolidated Deposit Revised LDP		Business Plans) x3 – C/ex, Community, Env		
Community Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22	Leisure Strategy		Quarter 2 Performance Management		
Innovation Strategy					

Leisure Strategy (moved to November Meeting)					

<p>OTHER REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED: Section 106 – Date to be confirmed (Planning) Tenant Compensation Policy – Date to be confirmed (Communities)</p>
<p>Site Visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Y Stordy / Museums / Libraries – Dates to be confirmed following the relaxation of Covid 19 rules
<p>TASK AND FINISH REVIEW The Committee has yet to determine a Task and Finish Group for 2022-23</p>

EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION

DATE OF MEETING: 29TH SEPTEMBER 2022

ITEM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	EXPLANATION	REVISED SUBMISSION DATE
Q1 Performance Management	Noelwyn Daniel	Due to unforeseen circumstances, this report is being delayed.	16.11.22
Council Annual report	Noelwyn Daniel	Due to unforeseen circumstances, this report is being delayed.	16.11.22
Innovation Strategy	Jason Jones	Due to unforeseen circumstances, this report is being delayed.	16.11.22
Planning Annual Monitoring Report	Ian R Llewellyn	Due to unforeseen circumstances this report is being delayed	16.11.22
Planning Annual Performance Report	Ian R Llewellyn	Due to unforeseen circumstances this report is being delayed	16.11.22

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COMMUNITY & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 31 January 2022

PRESENT: Councillor G.B. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors:

W.R.A. Davies, H.L. Davies, D.C. Evans, W.T. Evans (In place of S.J.G. Gilasbey), J.K. Howell, B.W. Jones, H.I. Jones, H.B. Shepardson and D. Thomas

Also in attendance:

Councillor L.D. Evans, Cabinet Member for Housing
P. Hughes-Griffiths, Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Tourism
D.M. Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Resources

The following Officers were in attendance:

C. Moore, Director of Corporate Services
I. Jones, Head of Leisure
J. Jones, Head of Regeneration
J. Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities
J. Fearn, Head of Housing Property and Strategic Projects
R. Hemingway, Head of Financial Services
R.M. Davies, Strategic Housing Delivery Manager
M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer
S. Rees, Simultaneous Translator
G. Williams, Team Leader
S. Williams, Senior Accountant
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting - 2.00 - 3.30 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F. Akhtar and J. Gilasbey and from Councillor E. Dole (Leader of the Council with responsibility for Regeneration).

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

Councillor	Minute No (s)	Nature of Interest
H. Shepardson	Minute 4 – Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation 2022/23 to 2024/25 (Appendix C – Charging Digest)	Season Ticket holder for Pembrey Country Park and the Millenium Coastal Car Parks

G. Thomas	5 – Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23	Personal – Lets a property to the Council for Letting
D. Thomas	5 – Housing Revenue Account Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23	Personal – Wife lets a property to the Council

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2022/23 to 2024/25

(NOTE: Councillor H. Shepardson had earlier declared an interest in Appendix 'C' to the report (Charging Digest) did not speak or vote on that Appendix)

The Committee considered the report presented by the Cabinet Member for Resources on the Council's Revenue Budget Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25, as endorsed by the Cabinet for consultation purposes at its meeting held on the 17th January 2022. The report provided Members with the current view of the Revenue Budget for 2022/2023 together with indicative figures for the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 financial years based on officers' projections of spending requirements and taken account of the provisional settlement issued by Welsh Government on the 21st December 2021. It also reflected current departmental submissions for savings proposals after taking account of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the delivery of those savings.

The Cabinet Member advised that the provisional settlement from Welsh Government this year was considerably higher than we had planned for, however he also noted that the scale of expenditure pressures that we and other local authorities were facing was also at an unprecedented high level, which offset the higher settlement. The provisional settlement represented an average increase of 9.4% across Wales on the 2021/22 settlement, Carmarthenshire's increase had been 9.2% (£26.335m) thereby taking the Aggregate External Finance to £311.957m for 2022/23 which included £302k in respect of the Social Care Workforce Grant.

Across the whole of the council's budgets, validation added £23m, by some margin the highest we have needed to allow for in recent years.

The budget also included £12.5m. for new departmental expenditure pressures which have been identified by departments and were inescapable if we are to continue to deliver our main services at the current level. As with the inflationary uplift, this is considerably more than we have normally had to build in and reflects the scale of pressures on council services currently.

Turning to our savings proposals, the Cabinet Member highlighted our continued response to the pandemic had further impacted on the delivery of efficiencies. Nevertheless, he noted our budget strategy puts forward some £3.8m of savings next year and a further £7.9m over the following 2 years. Within this committee's remit, the current proposals totalled some £268k in year 1 and a further £573k

over the following 2 years.

The Budget Strategy proposed a Council Tax of 4.39% for 2022/23, in line with the Medium-Term Financial Plan, and that proposal would be considered as part of the budget finalisation process over the next month and where the Authority received further clarification on cost and grant funding with a view to limiting the Council Tax increase as far as possible. Final budget proposals would then be presented to the Cabinet late February, to ensure a balanced budget was presented to County Council.

The Committee thereupon considered the following detailed budget information appended to the Strategy relevant to its remit:

- **Appendix A(i)** – Efficiency summary for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;
- **Appendix A(ii)** – Growth Pressures summary for the Regeneration and Planning Services (none for the Leisure and Non HRA Services);
- **Appendix B** – Budget monitoring report for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;
- **Appendix C** – Charging Digest for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Housing Services;

The following questions/issues were raised on the report:-

- In response to a question on the savings achieved on travelling costs during the covid pandemic, the Director of Corporate Services advised that while those figures were available departmentally and in some cases had been adjusted as part of the budget process, they were not consolidated corporately, as we needed to understand the impact of the revised way of working post covid before adjustment to the corporate were made. However, he would make arrangements for the committee to be provided with that information.

RESOLVED that:

- 4.1 The 2022/23 – 2024/25 Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation be received.**
- 4.2 The Charging Digests for the Regeneration, Leisure, Planning and Non HRA Services, as detailed in Appendix C to the report, be endorsed.**

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND HOUSING RENT SETTING FOR 2022/23

(NOTE:

- 1) Councillor G.B. Thomas having earlier declared an interest in this item redeclared that interest. He had received legal advice that he could remain in the meeting and participate in the vote;
- 2) Councillor D. Thomas having earlier declared an interest in this item redeclared that interest and left the meeting for its consideration and did not participate in the discussion or voting)

The Committee considered the report presented by the Cabinet Member for

Resources on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Rent Setting for 2022/23, being presented as part of the budget consultation process that brought together the latest proposals for the Revenue and Capital budgets for the Housing Revenue Account 2022/25 to be presented to the Cabinet and Council for determination.

The Cabinet Member advised that the report had been prepared reflecting the latest proposals contained within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, being the primary financial planning tool for delivering and maintaining the Carmarthenshire Homes Standard *Plus* (CHS+) for the future. The proposed investment within the current business plan delivered the CHS by 2015 (to those homes where the tenants agreed to have work undertaken) provided investment to maintain CHS+ and continued investment for the Authority's Housing and Regeneration Delivery Plan.

The report detailed how rents would increase for 2022/23 with the HRA budget being set to reflect:-

- Social Housing Rent Policy (set by Welsh Government) which this year, due to the increased level of CPI had activated the Minister's determination
- Proposals contained in the Carmarthenshire Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan

The Cabinet Member reminded the Committee that with regard to the setting of the Housing Rents, the Authority had, on the 24th February 2015, adopted the Welsh Government's Social Housing Rent Policy for the four year period ending in 2018/19. For 2019/20, the Welsh Government had provided an interim policy while it awaited the results of the Affordable Housing Supply Review. Following that review, the Welsh Government had decided to retain the policy for a further 5 year period from 2020/21 – 2024/25 with some additional/amended requirements, as detailed within the report.

This policy allowed local authorities to uplift the total rent envelope by CPI + 1% for each of the 5 years running to 2024/25. It also allows for the level of rent for individual tenants to rise by up to an additional £2 over and above CPI+1% for the rent harmonisation, on condition that the total rental income collected by the social landlord increases by no more than CPI+1%.

However, should CPI fall outside the range of 0% to 3%, the policy provides for the Minister with responsibility for Housing to determine the appropriate change to rent levels to be applied for that year only. As CPI was 3.1% in September 2021 this clause has been activated this year and the Government Minister for Climate Change had instructed that the maximum increase in the rent envelope for any local authority should not exceed 3.1%

The Cabinet Member went on to confirm that this year we had been able to respond to all our priorities and been able to balance the business plan and propose a rent increase at an overall increase of 2.9%, which will produce an average rent of £94.26 for our tenants.

Included within the overall rent increase envelope it was proposed that the

Authority continues with the rent progression and this will be set at a maximum of £1 for properties below target rent.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET/COUNCIL:-

- 5.1 to increase the average housing rent by 2.90% (£2.66) per dwelling as per the Welsh Government's Social Housing Rents Policy thereby producing a sustainable Business Plan, maintain CHS+ and resource the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan, as supported by the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team;**
- 5.2 To keep garage rents at £9.00 per week and garage bases at £2.25 per week;**
- 5.3 To apply the service charge policy to ensure tenants who received the benefit from specific services paid for those services;**
- 5.4 To increase charges for using the Council's sewerage treatment works in line with the rent increase;**
- 5.5 To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2022/25 (2023/24 & 2024/25 being soft budgets) as set out in Appendix A to the report;**
- 5.6 To approve the proposed Capital Programme and applicable funding for 2022/23 and the indicative spends for 2023/24 to 2024/25, as set out in Appendix B to the report.**

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2022-25 CARMARTHENSHIRE HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report presented by the Cabinet Member for Housing on the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-25 Carmarthenshire Housing Investment Programme the purpose of which was fourfold. Firstly, it explained the vision and detail of the housing investment programme over the next three years and what it meant for tenants. Secondly, it confirmed the income to be received from tenants' rents and other funding sources over the next three years. Thirdly, it confirmed the financial profile based on current assumptions, for the delivery of the housing investment programme and council new build over the next three years. Fourthly, it produced a business plan for the annual application to the Welsh Government for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) Grant for 2022/23 equating to £6.1m.

The report highlighted the importance of the Council supporting its tenants and residents in everything it did, with the following five key themes having been identified as driving the business for the next three years:-

- Theme 1 – Supporting Tenants and Residents;
- Theme 2 – Investing in Homes and Surrounding Areas;
- Theme 3 - Providing more homes;
- Theme 4 – Decarbonisation of the Housing Stock;
- Theme 5 – The Local Economy, Community Benefits and Procurement

The Following questions/issues were raised on the report:

- In response to a question on the time taken to undertake work to void properties prior to re-letting, the Committee was advised that currently the level of void properties had reduced from in excess of 400 to 344, as at the end of December, 2021, set against a total stock number in excess of 9,200. While the level of voids had reduced, there were a number of reasons for the delays in their re-letting. Those included, for example, the impact of covid, availability of contractors and the availability of materials. It was also noted that 45 of those voids may not be returned to the stock and consideration was being given to their future which included sale or, possibly, demolition.

The Head of Housing Property and Strategic projects advised that a review was currently being undertaken on voids with a view to increasing turn-around times. That included visiting other local housing authorities and social landlords to gain a perspective on their processes/procedures. Additionally, the minor works contractor framework was due for renewal in the coming months and, as part of that tendering process, consideration would be given to the feasibility of extending the framework to include an increase in the number of contractors.

- As part of the discussion on voids, reference was made to local members not being apprised of turn-around times for them to advise their electorate. It was confirmed that arrangements would be made for local members to be informed following an inspection of a void property of its estimated re-letting time.
- Reference was made to the discussion undertaken at the Committee's previous meeting on the impact of NRW regulations re phosphates on development/regeneration. The Head of Homes and Safer Communities advised that a meeting had recently been held thereon with the Welsh Government and arrangements were being made for it to meet with local authorities, including Carmarthenshire, to discuss the issues. An update on those discussions could then be provided to members at a later date.

RESOLVED THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET/COUNCIL TO:-

- 6.1 Confirm the vision of the Housing Investment Programme over the next three years;**
- 6.2 Agree the 2022/23 Business Plan could be submitted to the Welsh Government**
- 6.3 Note the contribution the Plan made to the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan in supporting the delivery of over 2,000 new homes**
- 6.4 Note the principles behind moving towards net zero carbon homes and developing a Decarbonisation and Affordable Warmth Strategy to support that;**
- 6.5 Note the importance of the investment included in the Plan and its role in stimulating the local economy and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.**

7. HOUSING REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT - FIVE YEAR DELIVERY PLAN (2022 - 2027)

The Committee considered a report presented by the Cabinet Member for Housing

detailing the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan that set out the Authority's plans to support the delivery of over 2,000 additional homes across the County over the next five years. If adopted, the Plan would build on the success of the current affordable housing delivery plans, would support economic growth by investing over £300m into communities and directly support the actions in the Economic Recovery Plan, supporting business, people and places.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET/COUNCIL TO:-

- 7.1 Confirm that the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan will support the delivery of over 2,000 homes for rent and sale in the County over the next five years, meeting housing need, stimulating economic recovery and growth and supporting the Council's Net Zero Carbon Principles;**
- 7.2 Agree that the authority acquire non-Council owned land and buildings identified in the Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan, together with any other land and/or buildings that would add value to the Council's Housing and Regeneration priorities and aspirations be delegated to the Head of Regeneration in consultation with the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team;**
- 7.3 Agree that the Plan would play a key role in increasing the supply of social rented homes in our communities, including homes suitable for:
 - General needs households;
 - Specialist supported accommodation for people with complex needs and;
 - Easily adapted flexible accommodation for older people.**
- 7.4 Confirm that mixed tenure developments, consisting of homes for social rent, low-cost home ownership and open market sale will be supported through this delivery plan, creating balanced, strong resilient communities;**
- 7.5 Agree that the Plan would include providing new flexible, innovative, mixed tenure housing solutions that meet the needs of an aging population;**
- 7.6 Agree that the Plan would support the delivery of the Council's strategic regeneration sites by providing more homes for rent and sale, including:
 - Town Centre Regeneration;
 - Rural towns and villages;
 - Pentre Awel Life Science Village and;
 - Tyisha.**
- 7.7 Confirm that the homes supported through the plan would be delivered using a range of delivery vehicles that offer flexibility, scale and place;**
- 7.8 Agree that the county-wide delivery of homes in the plan would follow the affordable housing action areas, building up wards in the County into distinctive areas which link geographically and culturally.**

8. DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23

The Committee considered a report presented by the Cabinet Members for Culture, Sport and Tourism and for Housing providing an extract of the Communities Departmental Business Plan 2022/23 for Leisure and Housing Services and providing it with the opportunity to review and comment thereon. The Business Plan provided a summary of the key actions and measures required to support the delivery of those services within the Corporate Strategy and the Council's Well-being Objectives and was supported by a detailed divisional plan subject to regular review.

The following issues were raised on the report:-

- In response to a question on the progress of the Pentre Awel Project, the Head of Leisure reminded the Committee that a large element thereof related to the provision of a new leisure centre. It was anticipated works on its construction would commence in the current year, with an anticipated 2024 completion date.

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed a contractor for the project had been appointed and final discussions were being undertaken on firming up the contract details.

- With regard to the new Archives building in Carmarthen, it was anticipated it would open to the public in the Spring of 2022 following the completion of the transfer of materials and resources.
- With regard to works being undertaken at Llyn Llech Owain Country Park the Head of Leisure advised that over £188k had been spent to date on new paths, ground and tree works and a new play area.
- Reference was made to the success of the caravan park facility at Pembrey Country Park and to whether the Council would be considering providing additional facilities at other areas within the County.

The Head of Leisure referred to the unique position of the Pembrey Country Park and to the enhancement the caravan park provided to its facilities. On the question of providing other caravan parks, he advised that the Council would need to be mindful of that uniqueness and to the impact any expansion in provision could have on private caravan site owners in the county. However, one growing element of the Tourism trade within the county and U.K. wide was the increased popularity with motor homes. Currently, the authority had provided a facility to accommodate 10 motor homes at Burry Port and would be monitoring future demand

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Communities Departmental Business Plan 2022/23 insofar as it related to Housing and Leisure Services be received.

9. REGENERATION EXTRACT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23

The Committee considered an extract of the Chief Executive's Departmental Business Plan 2022/23 for Regeneration Services that provided it with the opportunity to review and comment upon. The Business Plan provided a summary of the key actions and measures required to support the delivery of regeneration

within the Corporate Strategy and the Council's Well-being Objectives and was supported by a detailed divisional plan subject to regular review.

The following question/issue was raised on the report:-

- Reference was made to the allocation of income derived from Section 106 Planning Agreements and the Head of Regeneration confirmed he would arrange for members of the Committee to be provided with a guide on the allocation process

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Regeneration Services element of the Chief Executive's Business Plan 2022/23 be received.

10. NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee received an explanation for the non-submission of the following scrutiny report(s)

- Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2020/21: Carmarthenshire;
- Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2021/22;
- 5 Year Capital Programme Budget Consultation
- City Deal Procurement Update;
- Decarbonisation and Affordable Warmth Strategy;
- Environment Department Business plan

RESOLVED that the explanation for the non-submission be noted.

11. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee received a list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting to be held on the 24th February, 2022.

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 24th February, 2022 be noted.

12. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2021

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 14 December, 2021 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE

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