

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE IN MONMOUTHSHIRE – BRYN Y CWM PILOT</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>BRYN Y CWM AREA COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> JULY 2017</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>

**NON-PUBLICATION: (Insert appropriate non publication paragraph if necessary)**

**1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 To present for discussion, the principles of the Bryn Y Cwm (BYC) Area Committee pilot and associated measures to determine its success.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee:

- Notes the findings of the Community Engagement review to date;
- Notes to take forward the agreement to disband the Programme Board and the Community Forum with the Area Committee to be retained as the sole structure;
- Agrees to act as the Area Cluster representative forum for the BYC Area thus reducing any potential for duplication;
- Agrees that an invitation is extended to include a single representative from each of the Community or Town Councils in the proposed pilot area and also an open invitation extended to other Area Committees during the pilot phase;
- Agrees to consider a new name for example Abergavenny and District Area Committee; and
- Considers the proposed indicators and accepts the request to take part in consultation exercises to measure the success of the pilot.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

**BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In October 2015, a review of community governance established the need to understand the Authority's level and type of community engagement and its direct relationship to how local needs and solutions are identified, developed and delivered in the context of the role of local decision making by Area Committees.

**4. REASONS**

- 4.1 In October 2016, there was a recognition that in light of the Future Generations Act and the Authority's evolving Future Monmouthshire programme, there was a need to extend the review to address the following objectives:

- Clarification of the strategic direction required to meet legislative requirements & enable asset and place based delivery;
- Repurposing of the Authority's Whole Place team;
- Identification of joint working opportunities internally to enable a streamlined approach;
- Assessment of new roles in the provision of impartial advice across the county's five strategic settlements;
- Understand how Section 106 and Area Committee Grants can be used strategically to address resource implications for a sustainable, place and asset based approach; and
- Reconfiguration of the community governance model to preserve the leadership role of Members and encourage wider community participation.

## **4.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REVIEW FINDINGS**

With regard to the Community Governance specifically the review has identified the following findings:

- The role of ward Members is key to community participation & engagement, with legislation and cluster areas important to the future shape of community governance & Area Committees;
- The role of Cluster Areas provides the opportunity to involve Community/Town Councils in strategic policy & highlight funding opportunities with the opportunity to think spatially as well as locally. This provides the conduit for county wide organisations to share thinking and support, providing a bridge between Community/Town Councils, Area Committees and the Authority's Senior Leadership Team (SLT);
- The role of Area Committees provide a clear link between Cluster Areas and Authority decision making; with a key opportunity for communities to have a voice and participate in local democracy. This provides a place to receive local plans that respond to community need, provide support for joint working solutions, adopt strategic approach to coordinated funding and receive community engagement updates;
- Area committee grants need to work in a more integrated manner, providing a smarter use of funding aligned to maximise impact and value; and
- The developing Community Leadership Academy can provide the resource to upskill members as well as community organisations to enable a common approach.

In addition the review also recognises a disconnect between the PSB, the Authority and the local community. This disconnect will need to be addressed and to enable this it is proposed that the Authority's community engagement activities will be repositioned within a more centralised role providing specialist support in strategic PSB areas such as health and well-being issues, isolation, ageing well, community cohesion, etc. and engagement/liasion with Town/Community Councils. Further details will follow.

## **4.3 BRYN Y CWM AREA COMMITTEE PILOT**

4.3.1 In March 2017, the Authority were presented with seven options (see Appendix One) which had been discussed as part of a cross party member working group to consider the recommendations of the 2015 review and decide upon a structure for community governance. The group were asked to follow the following principles when making a decision:

- Provide a forum for local councillors to engage with residents about local issues;
- Give local communities a stronger and more direct voice in decision making in their local area;
- Enable members to have influence over decisions that are specific to their local area;
- Develop and oversee the delivery of localised plans;
- Engage with representatives of town and community councils;
- Harness and channel community energy to deliver improved outcomes for the local area and its communities; and
- Bring together partner agencies to focus on locally specific issues

4.3.2 In addition, Members also gave consideration to the five principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act namely:

- Integrated;
- Collaborative;
- Long term;
- Involving; and
- Preventative

4.3.3 Following a wide ranging debate, members agreed that Option 2 , detailed below, was their preferred option with the addition that an invitation could be extended to include a single

representative from each of the Community or Town Councils in the proposed pilot area. An analysis of this option can be seen in the table below.

#### 4.3.4 **Option 2 – Area Committees are retained as the sole structure with an increase in co-opted members**

<b>Positives</b>	<b>Negatives</b>
Members are accountable	Scale of meeting (number of committee members)
Transparent co-opting agreement	Can co-opted members vote?
Clear alignment to constitution	Community representatives could be elected (C&T Council), representative or individual – how will this be determined?
Decision making strengthened and streamlined	Breadth of geographical cover
Single entry point to public	Disparity between the area committees effectiveness
Community voice greater than currently	

4.3.5 The decision to pilot the model in Bryn y Cwm is based on the evidence of the review and the fact that the Bryn y Cwm area has proven to be the most resilient example of Area working and the high level of social capital in the area and developed links to the local town and community councils.

#### **4.4 PROPOSALS TO MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF THE PILOT**

4.4.1 In order to guide the delivery of the pilot and assess its success the following recommendations are proposed:

##### Governance

1. The BYC Area Committee notes to take forward the agreement to disband the Programme Board and the Community Forum and for the Area Committee to be retained as the sole structure;
2. The BYC Area Committee agrees to also act as the Area Cluster representative forum for the BYC Area thus reducing any potential for duplication;
3. The Committee agrees an invitation is extended to include a single representative from each of the Community or Town Councils in the proposed pilot area and also an open invitation extended to other other Area Committees during the pilot phase;
4. The Committee agrees to consider a new name for example Abergavenny and District Area Committee.

4.4.2 It is proposed that the pilot takes place over a twelve month period starting in July 2017 after which its success will be measured using the following proposed indicators:

- No. of issues raised by the public appearing as an agenda item and the resulting outcomes;
- No. of recommendations reported to the Authority by a County Councillor on behalf of the Committee; and
- No. of representatives attending regularly from other Area Committees.

4.4.2 In addition, the BYC Area Committee agrees to take part in a review exercise during the twelve month period. The exercise will include a consultation in relation to the strategic coordination of Area Committee Grant funding, to be distributed equally amongst the five Cluster Areas. It is proposed that funding will be allocated on an annual basis, subject to evidence of how it addresses local needs and priorities, maximises opportunities and impact e.g. use as match funding and attributes to the county's wellbeing objectives. It is also requested that the Committee takes part in an exercise following the pilot period to assess next steps.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no resource implications for the initial pilot phase in Bryn y Cwm.

**6      CONSULTEES**

Senior Leadership Team  
Cabinet Members

**7      BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Appendix A – Seven Different Models**

**8.     FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS**

The report meets the principle of engagement and involvement – two key tenants of the well-being of future generations work.

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## Appendix A – Seven Different Models

### Option 1 (Status Quo) Area Committees and Programme Boards co-exist with no formal relationship but have representation.

#### Positives

Members retain local accountability/visibility  
Clear structure for council as per constitution  
council representatives on Programme Boards have equal voice with community members

#### Negatives

Confused responsibility for communities  
Disparate area committee practice  
No clear representative lines for Programme Boards  
Members disenfranchised

### Option 2) Area Committees are retained as the sole structure with an increase in Co-opted community members

#### Positives

Members are accountable  
  
Transparent co-opting arrangement  
Clear alignment to the constitution  
  
Decision making strengthened and streamlined  
Single entry point to public  
  
Community voice greater than currently

#### Negatives

Scale of meeting (number of committee members)  
  
Can co-opted members vote?  
  
Community representatives could be elected (C&T Council), representative or individual – how will this be determined?  
  
Breadth of geographical cover  
  
Disparity between the area committees effectiveness

### Option 3) Area Committee with no representation from public. As above but without formalised co-opted members / public involvement

#### Positives

Members are accountable  
  
Single entry point to public  
  
Clear alignment to the constitution  
  
Decision making strengthened and streamlined

#### Negatives

No community voice – how is this different from Council meetings  
  
No local voice from Town & Community Councils  
  
How will the local plans be delivered with no community input  
  
Breadth of geographical cover

#### **Option 4) Area committee with local area focus group**

##### **Positives**

All of positives above re.  
member alignment &  
involvement  
No complexity of vote structure

Community participation

Membership of the focus group  
could align to the PSB.

##### **Negatives**

Risk of same, regular voices  
and contributors

Perceptions of tokenism

Risk of consultation and not  
engagement

#### **Option 5) Programme Board without Area Committee**

##### **Positives**

Significant local engagement

Local expertise and involvement

Place driven

##### **Negatives**

Disenfranchised members and a  
lack of clarity for members  
involved in the Programme Board

Unelected/Unaccountable  
community representatives

Lack of clarity of vote of local  
member

Lack of clarity regarding routes to  
council

#### **Option 6) Programme Board with limited and defined elected member representation.**

##### ***3 members per programme board selected at Monmouthshire County Council AGM***

##### **Positives**

As above.

Clear conduit to council

##### **Negatives**

Members could feel  
disenfranchised

As above

#### **Option 7) Community Area Committee as per LG Bill (sections 44 – 46) - only 2 in Monmouthshire, one in the north and one in the south.**

##### **Positives**

Inclusive of Community and  
Town councils

##### **Negatives**

Only 2 – divided local areas

Difficult to manage local issues  
and implementation of plans to  
meet local