



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30th JULY 2020

CONSIDERATION OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (DETAIL OF THE CABINET REPORTS CONSIDERED ON THE 28th JULY 2020)

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to further scrutinise, review and challenge the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the information within the Cabinet report titled, '**UPDATE ON COVID 19 POSITION IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF – RECOVERY PLANS**', to be considered by Cabinet on the 28th July 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- 2.1 Acknowledge the contents of the information included and determine whether there are any areas in which Members would like to receive additional information at its next scheduled meeting (further to those areas selected at the previous meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as set out in 4.2); and
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1 above, request the Service Director Democratic Services and Communications continues to report any relevant and further information to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Cabinet reports cited within this report, identify the critical actions taken by the Council since the COVID-19 restrictions were imposed by the UK and

Welsh Governments and set out the future steps the Council will take in respect of service planning in the next recovery phase.

- 3.2 To support the committee's previous recommendations to consider the recovery plans of Council services and to give consideration to any detail committee may require arising from the emerging recovery plans.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 With the introduction of [the Local Authorities \(Coronavirus\) \(Meetings\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2020 in May](#) all local authorities in Wales have been provided with the opportunity to resume their committee processes. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee met for the first time under these arrangements on 26th June 2020.
- 4.2 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee determined areas for scrutiny over the extended municipal year up to the Council's Annual General Meeting on 16th September 2020 at its first meeting, from a Council-wide service perspective and this included receiving information in respect of the Council's recovery planning, following information received from the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 4.3 As part of the second phase of committee arrangements to resume operating virtually, the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee met for the first time on Wednesday 22nd July. Alongside scrutinising the response of the Council to the pandemic from an education perspective over the last four months, members also considered the recovery arrangements for schools and guidance provided by the Council to support Schools from September. Members are therefore advised that this aspect has already received appropriate challenge and scrutiny from Members.

5. CONTINUING TO SCRUTINISE THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

- 5.1 Attached for Members are the reports considered by Cabinet at its meetings held on the 28th July 2020, setting out the Council's step by step approach to re-opening services in line with Welsh Government guidance. **Members are asked to consider and scrutinise the attached report and determine whether there are any issues on which they would like to receive further information or review in greater detail at its subsequent meeting.**
- 5.2 Opportunity will continue to be afforded for Scrutiny to be updated verbally with the latest service developments and information, providing greater scope to engage in these matters and request information and additional reporting as deemed appropriate by Committee Members.
- 5.3 Within the current constraints the Council is operating and swift pace of change, it is proposed that the focus of Members' discussions should continue to be facilitated around verbal updates and to committee. Members of the Council's Cabinet and Senior Leadership Team will be in attendance to assist Members' considerations as part of this report.

5.4 The report to be considered at the Cabinet meeting held on the 28th July 2020 titled **UPDATE ON COVID 19 POSITION IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF – RECOVERY PLANS** is attached at Appendix A.

6. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

6.1 There is no requirement to consult on this report, it is primarily for information.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

10. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

10.1 This is an information report presenting the Cabinet report which outlines how the Council is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. No decisions are being taken in this report.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 Scrutiny continues to receive regular information identifying the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, potential pressure points on council services along with the business of reinstating services and the recovery and service planning process. Beyond the Council's AGM in September consideration will need to be given to the prioritisation of ongoing scrutiny matters, to ensure that the democratic process and decision making is transparent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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