



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL PARTNERSHIPS AND
COLLABORATIONS**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is twofold:

- to inform the Scrutiny Committee of the work undertaken around the Council's partnerships and collaborative work and,
- to seek the Committee's endorsement for the proposed Collaboration and Partnership Protocol with action plan for delivery, and the proposed Partnership Governance Toolkit for referral to Cabinet for decision.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office on the partnership and collaborative work of the Council, an exercise commenced last October to identify the Council's partner organisations, significant partnerships and collaborations. The total number of significant partner organisations for the Council is 146, with 35 formal partnerships, 25 collaborations, and the Council the lead in 8 of the collaborative arrangements. This report presents the proposed Collaboration and Partnership Protocol with action plan for delivery, and the proposed Partnership Governance Toolkit for the effective management of these partnerships for endorsement, before referral to Cabinet for a decision and implementation.
- 2.2 The proposed Collaboration and Partnership Protocol sets a partnerships and collaborations framework to ensure there is a clear structure for partnership work, and provides a twelve month action plan for embedding a robust structure for partnership working. Responsibility for forming and terminating partnerships and collaborations is set at Heads of Service level, with quarterly review of the list of partnerships and collaborations, and the updated list published for staff reference on the Intranet.
- 2.3 The intention of the proposed Partnership Governance Toolkit is to provide partnership leads with guidance on ensuring effective and purposeful partnership, achieving intended outcomes, with robust scrutiny and governance arrangements in place, which is also called for in the Wales Local Government White Paper on Reforming Local Government.
- 2.4 By identifying all of its partnerships the Council has already met the recommendation of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery on developing a single register of partnerships, with clear alignment with national and local priorities.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Compliance with recommendations of the Wales Audit Office under the Council's Improvement Plan, and requirements of the Annual Governance Review Panel on the partnership and collaborative working of the Council.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Following recommendations made by the Wales Audit Office on the partnership and collaborative work of the Council, an exercise commenced last October to identify the Council's partner organisations, significant partnerships and collaborations. The total number of significant partner organisations for the Council is 146, with 35 formal partnerships, 25 collaborations, and the Council the lead in 8 of the collaborative arrangements. Working definitions on collaborations and significant partnerships were used as a guide, based on references from Audit Commission, Wales Audit Office and Welsh Local Government Association publications. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the Council's formalised partnerships and collaborative working, and the key data concerning the arrangements for the partnership work. This report presents a proposed protocol for the Council in managing partnerships and collaborations, and accompanying guidance toolkit for ensuring effective collaborative and partnership working.
- 4.2 The proposed Collaboration and Partnership Protocol (see Appendix 2) sets out the importance of collaborative work, as well as the pitfalls, so clearly highlighted by the Commission on Public Service and Delivery, and subsequent White Paper on Reforming Local Government, and accompanying Welsh Government paper *Improving Public Services in Wales*, and The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales Bill). The protocol sets a partnerships and collaborations framework to ensure there is a clear structure for partnership work, and provides a twelve month action plan for embedding a robust structure for partnership working. Responsibility for forming and terminating partnerships and collaborations is set at Heads of Service level, with quarterly review of the list of partnerships and collaborations, and the updated list published for staff reference on the Intranet.
- 4.3 The current Welsh Government policy context is clearly one that encourages both greater and better collaboration. The Local Government White Paper notes – "We want to see a renewed drive amongst Local Authorities for greater collaboration and partnership working with each other, with other parts of the public service, and with the Third Sector, where this represents the best way of delivering for communities" (p13). The White Paper calls for a "greater pace and commitment in progressing collaborative initiatives" contending "we do not believe partners have taken all the opportunities available. It is the role of Government to set the strategic outcomes, and for partnerships then to deliver these outcomes" (p17). The Welsh Government are currently commissioning an evaluation of funding streams which support collaborative working, and also consider impact, which is due for publication in December 2015.
- 4.4 The intention of the proposed Partnership Governance Toolkit (see Appendix 3) is to provide partnership leads with guidance on ensuring effective and purposeful partnership, achieving intended outcomes, with robust scrutiny and governance arrangements in place, which is also called for in the Local Government White Paper. The White Paper notes the Welsh Government "want to see Local Authorities taking full responsibility for the performance of their service...with scrutiny committee providing effective challenge to how their Authority performs" (p19). The Welsh Government notes it is its intention to review the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to see if there is scope "for it to be changed so as more effectively to support service improvement, and to ensure the relationship between self assessment and external inspection is made clear" (p19).
- 4.5 By identifying all of its partnerships the Council has already met the recommendation of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery on developing a single register of partnerships, with clear alignment with national and local priorities. It is considered that the

proposed collaboration and partnership protocol, twelve month action plan for delivery, and partnership governance toolkit will meet the needs of recent Welsh Government direction around proactively considering the benefits of partnership and collaborative working, and potential for securing community benefits, and in improving partnership performance, and robustness of governance and scrutiny arrangements.

- 4.6 The work around the Council's partnerships and collaborative working has been directed by the Council's Corporate Governance Review Panel and Improving Governance Programme Board, with the Corporate Management Team supporting the draft protocol and action plan. Updates on the work have been presented to the Audit Committee on 11th December 2013 (see Appendix 4), 5th March 2014 (see Appendix 5), and 11th June 2014 (see Appendix 6). In addition the Improving Governance Programme Board action plan updates have been delivered to Cabinet regularly. All Members comments have been taken on board in designing a method for identifying partnerships, and developing a protocol and toolkit for managing partnership and collaborative working.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's partnerships and collaborative working take into consideration the Equalities Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The table under Appendix 1 notes whether financial information is provided for the Council's partnerships and collaborations. Further details on financial information provided is available in the full report of CCBC's partnerships and collaborations, copies of which can be obtained through the report's author.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Significant staff time is invested in partnership and collaborative working by the Council.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Collaboration and Partnership Protocol and Action Plan for Delivery, together with accompanying Partnership Governance Toolkit, were issued for a 4 week consultation. Consultees included: the Corporate Management Team, all Heads of Service, partnerships and collaborative leads, the Caerphilly Delivers Single Integrated Plan delivery group (CCBC staff only), and all officers who provided information on CCBC partnerships and collaborations. Six responses were made, which were generally supportive of the proposed documents with a couple of minor additions suggested, which will be incorporated into the finalised Protocol and Governance Toolkit, together with any other further comments received on the documents following the Policy and Resources Scrutiny committee meeting of 30th September 2014, and the Cabinet meeting of 15th October 2014 (see Appendix 7 on the consultation responses).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 For the Committee to endorse both the Collaboration and Partnership Protocol and action plan for delivery, and Partnership Governance toolkit subject to minor changes following the consultation, comments from the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, and Cabinet, and updating with reference to the recently published White Paper on Reforming Local Government, and accompanying Welsh Government paper *Improving Public Services in Wales*, and The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales Bill).

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 For the protocol setting out the 12 month action plan for delivery and Partnership Governance toolkit to be endorsed by the Committee for referral to Cabinet for decision on approval and subsequent implementation.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000, and the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Part 2) Community Strategies.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Caerphilly County Borough Council Partnerships Overview
Appendix 2 Proposed Collaboration and Partnership Protocol and Action Plan for Delivery
Appendix 3 Proposed Partnership Governance Toolkit
Appendix 4 Audit Committee Report 11th December 2013
Appendix 5 Audit Committee Report 5th March 2014
Appendix 6 Audit Committee Report 11th June 2014
Appendix 7 Consultation Responses on proposed Collaboration and Partnership Protocol and Action Plan for Delivery, and Partnership Governance Toolkit