

Annex 6: Viewpoint Panel Meeting (Wed 28th Nov 2018 at Penallta House)

Group 1

Proposal	How/why it will have a big impact	How we can mitigate against this impact
Community Centres – reduction of caretaker support across all centres. Community Centres – closure of 4 centres	Loss of courses / activities for local population Reduction in quality of life Will lose hub of town and community spirit Increased poor behaviour	Can churches support the running of these centres – they already support lots of local initiatives Include community centre role in the development of hubs.
Council Tax – Increase in Council Tax by 6.95% for the 19/20 financial year	How can the older population afford this? Will people on state pension have to pay this increase? This will decrease spending ability for each citizen Will increase demand on local authority services	Bring council costs down by joint procurement through City Deal Develop hubs that co-locate services and thus cut costs by reducing assets and running costs Use existing assets better i.e. schools
Waste Management – closure of 2 Civic Amenity Sites – Penallta and Aberbargoed	More fly tipping + increased costs for local authority to clear it up Residents will put this waste in household bins Savings are not very high £98K How much will it cost to remove the civic amenity site ?	Open a shop at the tip – civic amenity site Make more use of recyclable goods and materials Have more centres to drop off wood / furniture / materials for customers to purchase at low cost
Increase of car parking charges	People might not use car park and thus not use the high street shops. Increase in illegal parking Some suggested increased should be more than 20p	
Waste Management – closure of all 5 Public Conveniences	People will not come into town and use high street shops and attractions How do we know where the toilets are ?	Local businesses to look after the public conveniences to keep people coming into town Charge for use

Proposal	How/why it will have a big impact	How we can mitigate against this impact
<p>Libraries – reduction in book fund, reduction in premises costs, staff and books, additional £30K</p> <p>Not enough info – what does this mean ?</p>	<p>Libraries are used for lots of community services / activities – these will reduce.</p> <p>Facilities are available for residents to claim Universal Credit – what will be the impact of taking this facility away ?</p> <p>The library is a social hub – there is lots of talk about making hubs but we are taking this away.</p>	<p>Include in development of new hubs . join up services and assets to reduce costs. Include using schools outside of school hours</p> <p>Use volunteers to run libraries</p> <p>Use youth who are out of work</p> <p>Fundraise within the library. Use opportunity to income generate</p>
<p>Visually Impaired Service – 4.4% reduction in contribution</p>	<p>What are these cuts ? How much is this ? What does this mean ?</p>	
<p>Lunchtime school crossing patrols</p>	<p>This was discussed and agreed as a good proposal</p>	
<p>Cessation of the Community Safety Warden Service</p>	<p>What is this service ?</p> <p>Will create lawlessness</p>	<p>Parents must take responsibility for their children. Should challenge parents</p> <p>Need more services for youth / young people</p> <p>Look at examples that have worked in other countries – don't just look but implement good findings</p>
<p>Cuts to Voluntary Sector funding</p>	<p>Will result in loss of jobs in voluntary sector</p> <p>Will increase referrals for services from local authority</p>	<p>Use more volunteers</p> <p>Voluntary organisations should make stronger links to private sector initiatives. Many organisations will release staff to volunteer under their corporate social responsibility</p>

Identify any suggestions for how we could save money in different ways

- Joint procurement will answer many calls to save money across services. Major opportunities to jointly procure across services / departments with 10 other local authorities through City Deal.
- Make more use of schools for community activities. Create hubs within communities including school buildings. Move community centre facilities + libraries into existing buildings and create hubs. Co-locate services to save money and rebuild heart of the community
- Increasing Income Tax. Lobby for this
- Increase car parking charges (not all agreed with this). Enforcement will income generate from April 2019 – is this included in budget forecast?
- Resolve senior management / chief executive pay issue. This is paid by the residents via council tax
- Use City Deal hubs to give people local jobs. Some people can only work a few hours a day and need local opportunities. This will improve the economy
- Agree to remove school lunchtime patrols.
- Stop using service dressings on roads (not all agreed with this). Only provides a sticking plaster / can be a 5 year sticking plaster
- Fill pot holes more effectively so it does not need repeating every year. Look at different ways from other countries i.e. Holland
- Less staff to cut the grass. Recently saw 10/12 staff members cutting grass in Islwyn Park.
- Too many staff in schools – can be done by less people if staff are more efficient
- Council has spent huge amount of money on road speed reduction scheme / pavement changes which has made no difference. Pavement is worse ‘shocking job’ achieved nothing. Bryn Lane + Forest Hill
- Sell off capital sites / assets i.e. Cwmcarn School but will increase traffic and service/amenity demands if sold for housing
- How much is spent on school transport if schools are further away from villages?
- Housing at Heolddu Rd has 3 lots of scaffolding re: roofs cladding, downpipe and fencing
- Roof replacements on modern homes under 50 years old. Not needed?

Group 2

Areas felt to have to most impact and suggestions to reduce impact

Civic Amenity Sites

Second-hand shop at recycling sites - This would encourage people re-use and recycle items rather than them being thrown away

Toilets

How else can we provide these services?

Locally businesses should be helping out by providing toilets; these small things can make a big difference especially to the elderly.

Newbridge Community Council offered to take over the toilets and the Council turned down the proposal

Public Transport

What about sponsorship to help pay for public transport and keep pollution down taking more people out of their cars.

Music Service

We shouldn't be making cuts to the music services in schools as music plays in role in the child's well-being as well as education and can be very therapeutic. Is the Council looking at using peripatetic teachers or student music teachers to visit schools as this would be a cheaper option? The council could work with the students at the college of Music and Drama in Cardiff and use them as a teaching resource. Choirs and orchestras could be combined

Schools

Schools and the Council should be looking into clusters of schools working together to offer these services, to prevent cuts. Schools need to work holistically and possibly share teachers and services. Applying the same principles across schools

We already confederating schools and joining head teachers and governing bodies. E.g. Park Primary is a confederated school with a joint head teacher and one governing body.

What impact are school cuts having on children with learning disabilities; inclusion is a very important especially to those with learning needs.

Social Services

Is the Council having discussions with the Health Board about collaborating as they do in England? Collaborating with the health board and sharing resources.

A lack of Social Workers –introduce a golden handshake e.g. as Swansea did – discussion - needs to be sustainable, as this approach doesn't retain social workers long term

(Social Services have introduced a market supplement in order to attract more social workers)

Leisure

Closing one facility will have an impact on similar facilities and the environment as people need to travel further and use their cars.

What will happen when we remove Community Safety Wardens? Discussion re the council looking into parking enforcements and possibly using Community Safety Wardens to undertake this work and work with Gwent Police

Meals on wheels

Reductions will affect older people greatly and have an impact on carers who are not there to make meals. Not being able to receive meals at home is also one of many reasons older people often made to remain in hospital, which then causes bed blocking. If the impact is high and we have no alternative, why is the Council choosing to cut this service? Can we work with partner agencies to provide this lost service?

We need to be supporting the most vulnerable in our society

Support for voluntary sector

In the future the elderly will need more and more support - the Council has already withdrawn funding to a voluntary service, which helped older people taking them to the hospital and out for the day.

Supported housing for older people - We need more bungalows for older people to live in – response - The council is looking at homes for life, working with the health board and the prevent agenda

Savings Suggestions

- Use the community payback scheme to litter pick and highway cleaning as we don't see them around anymore? The council should talk to the probation service as they are on the PSB.
- Does the Council do market testing for service costs to make sure the correct amount is being charged? What about using the private sector or sharing services with neighbouring Authorities?
- Maximise use of buildings e.g. make better use of Ty Penalta / other council buildings outside of office hours for community at a charge. Will there be a reduction in assets to offset the reduction in the budgets?
- (Capitol receipts cannot be added back into the revenue budget only into the capitol budget. To make a saving the Council has to remove the asset, closing and demolishing the building)
- Libraries should be maintained as much as possible at their current levels with existing staff numbers. They will become more of a necessity in the future and the Council should have more multiuse buildings/community hubs and use Schools for other activities.
- Are there many schools in the borough being used by local clubs?

Additional comments/questions

The budget papers show the impact low, medium, high but it doesn't show the impact of the budget proposals on the Well-being Plan. It should also show the impact that all these cuts per impact category have if added together.

The budget doesn't show which communities or geographical areas will be most affected by the cuts.

What impact will the cuts to the property have on the disabled under the DDA?

Does the Council have financial management targets such as a cost reduction system, taking cost out of each service and are you able to drill this down to individual employees. We can only spend what we can afford, can we start to take action now. Too much looking too far down the track

Group 3

Areas felt to have to most impact and suggestions to reduce impact

An awareness of the **cumulative impact** of even 'low' or 'nil' cuts throughout the group.

Do not cut preventative measures – honest conversation about what the public are prepared to pay for. Joint working.

Topics of most importance to Group *

*GAVO community hubs – isolation and loneliness

*Community Facilities

*Community Safety Wardens

*Public rights of way – exercise, health, environment.

*Rats charges – should not charge - A public health matter. If they have to pay they will not report a problem. Council can easily find £20,000 to cover this.

Public car parks – Why do you pay to park in Blackwood but not Bargoed? Charge everywhere to raise more revenue (Sean Morgan states that this is in progress). Sean Morgan also says this could effect trade for businesses, however some of VPP believe that if you didn't charge for parking this would create growth and therefore more shops to pay business rates to the Council.

Barnardos etc – If these are preventative services then they should not be cut. If you cut preventative services you may cost yourselves more money in the long run. Children's Services are already overspent and so Barnardos and CAB should not be cut.

Toilets – taking away someone's self-sufficient. Toilets particularly well used in Caerphilly Town. Can we ask businesses to open their toilets? (Council are doing this). Toilets – not just age related – children in nappies etc and those with illnesses such as Crohn's Disease will loose their independence.

*Libraries – Protect Libraries - not just looks and we need libraries for people to use online. However, older people (many) don't do online

*C.A. sites – cutting the wrong ones – understand cuts but wrong locations - Aberbargoed and Penallta tips – disagree – Keep Aberbargoed, Penallta, Rhymney. More fly tipping – Discussion around choice of CA sites for closure.

Community Centres – Phillipstown – Nothing else there and no transport after a certain time. Closing this could create isolation. Could change management of this, rather than closing however - Phillipstown Community Centre is not well used). Need volunteers and user groups and not shutting them. Management Committees should have a duty to increase usage if they have more for Caretakers etc. If Nelson works why doesn't the Management Committee of this community centre help others to be successful?

*Meals on Wheels – What about Wiltshire Farm Foods? Can't do this as some people need their food warmed and cut up (opinion of one person is that they will just have to get a carer for this). 17 jobs gone. We are happy to pay for Meals on Wheels, but would it be more cost effective for it to be delivered elsewhere? We need a social value impacts for the cuts, not just an equalities impact. Very strong feeling. Meals on Wheels employees act as a carer and check on people. Families know their loved ones are seen and fed. Also, helps with isolation. These are not true savings as costs of kitchen equipment will be taken on by Penallta House etc and so their bill will go up. Just diverting costs elsewhere £38,000

Savings Suggestions

- Need to do things differently – Can't continue to cut all services. Need a re-think of how Council does things. This may be unpopular. Cannot always lean on the voluntary sector to plug gap.
- Better to completely cut in one area and be unpopular if needed than to 'salami slice' everywhere.
- Reclaim monies owed - Have we tried to reclaim Iceland money? How many people have not even paid their council tax? (Cabinet addressed both of these issues (Iceland money recouped and high % of council tax is paid in the borough).
- Close Aberbargoed Library (there is another within 0.8 miles and has low usage).
- Saving on highways – not a saving if insurance claims go up.
- Maximising income – an area we can tap into – Get business into Local Authority to keep people employed (is it cheaper to go externally and to go to tender than to go in-house - Council does understand the value of in-house staff). A belief that we have been "top heavy" with the private sector. Liberty Care, Partnership Care and sleep-ins (discussion whether it costs a lot more privately. Is external always the most cost-effective? Also have to be careful about going cheap for Social Services as better to have a carer who spends 15 mins having a chat than 5 mins and just makes sure they have food.

- Are we maximising volunteers, is this a viable option? Vols in social care, comm centres etc can help, but not be all and end all. Not as simple. Volunteers are not free, need training and investment. (One person comments that training given by Council for volunteers is fantastic).
- The Wigan Deal – Are we looking at other LA's for ideas on how they are doing things? The Food Shed (social enterprise for Meals on Wheels). Contracted to deliver Meals on Wheels (cheaper than Local Authority).
- Ystrad Mynach – a 'no go' area on weekends. 40 50 60 children. If they are on benefits for doing nothing, why can't they go volunteering? Can't they have somewhere to go? They cost Council money in damages e.g. park furniture.
- Heads of Service maximising income – contact community cllrs and tell them there is a special deal for luncheon club which will save meals on wheels and save community centres.
- Social care – invest to save, joint commissioning, preventative

Other comments/questions

Why can't local members go into community and ask about the savings proposals at a grassroots level?

PDF file too small on website, struggled to see proposals. Not everyone uses online. Not all of group received proposals/ were sent too late..... not enough time. Cabinet have had months on these proposals and VPP are asked to reinvent the wheel in an hour.

Have been given the equalities impact assessment for all proposals, what about the impact on future generations/social wellbeing impact?

Council too insular about delivering services.

Cut Cllrs – why save Cllrs but not meals? Reduce Cllrs by ½ by reorganising boundaries (outside CCBC remit)

We accept that we may have to pay more to keep certain services.

Group 4

WELSH	ENGLISH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant heb gyfrifiaduron adref ac yn dibynnu ar fynediad i lyfrgelloedd i ddefnyddio'r cyfrifiaduron ond mae'r arbedion i'r gwasanaeth yn cael effaith ar bobl ifanc i ddefnyddio'r cyfrifiaduron i wneud gwaith cartref e.e. • Yn lle cau llyfrgelloedd – dylid agor caffis o fewn nhw i wneud nhw'n adnodd gymunedol – buddsoddiad wrth y byd busnes e.e. banciau, Swyddfa Bost • Ysgol yn cynnig cyfle i blant heb gyfrifiaduron adref i fynychu clwb gwaith cartref • 'Poverty Trap' – pobl dan anfantais os nad ydynt yn gallu fforddio technoleg e.e. • Llyfrgell yn adnodd i gymdeithasu • Does dim opsiynau ar sut i wneud arian? • Oes unrhyw un wedi gofyn i'r bobl sy'n derbyn gwasanaeth pryd ar glud os ydynt yn bodlon talu'r pris llawn am brydau? • Dylid canolbwyntio ar effeithlonrwydd yn lle arbedion • Mesuriadau i greu incwm yn lle torri! • Beth am yr holl wasanaethau yn mynd yn ddigidol? • Prydau ysgolion yn ddrud dros £20 yr wythnos ond yn rhoi pobl yn y 'poverty trap' mae'n anheg • 'Outsourcing' • FSM – £2.25 sy ddim yn ddigon i dalu am vbryd o fwyd • YGCRh – Cwmni arlwygo preifat ac mae'r costau ar fwyd yn rhy ddrud – mae hyd yn oed y plant sy'n cael FSM yn methu fforddio pryd o fwyd llawn yn yr ysgol. • Asesu'r angen i gael hebryngwyr croesi'r priffordd os oes croesfan â goleuadau yn gweithredu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children without computers at home and rely on access to libraries to use the computers but the savings to the service have an impact on young people to use the computers to do homework e.g. • Instead of closing libraries – cafes should be opened within them to make them a community resource – investment from business e.g. banks, Post Office • School offering children without computers at home the opportunity to attend a homework club • 'Poverty Trap' – people are at a disadvantaged if they cannot afford technology e.g. • Library is a resource to socialise • There are no options on how to make money? • Has anyone asked people who receive a meals on wheels service whether they are happy to pay the full price for meals? • Focus on efficiency instead of savings • Measures to generate income instead of cutting! • What about all services going digital? • School meals are expensive over £20 a week but put people in the 'poverty trap' it is unfair • Outsourcing • FSM – £2.25 which isn't enough to pay for a meal • YGCRh – a private catering company and food costs are too expensive – even the FSM children cannot afford a full meal at school. • Assess the need for highway crossing patrols if there is a crossing with lights operating

Syniadau

- Pobl yn gwirfoddoli rhedeg gwasanaeth pryd ar glud (Cyngor Dinbych)
- Cyflogi pobl i wneud clwb brecwast > glanhau > goruchwylio amser cinio/chwarae > hebrwng ar draws y briffordd > glanhau
- Beth am y toriadau eraill sy wedi cael eu cynnig sy ddim wedi cyrraedd y rhestr terfynol?
- Cnnydd yng nghostau Treth y Cyngor dros y blynyddoedd wedi bod yn gymharol isel i gynharu ag awdurdodau eraill yng Nghymru
- Rheoli gwastraff – syniad da – gwasanaeth electronig ✓ – angen mwy o hyn ☺

Ideas

- People volunteer to run meals on wheels service (Denbigh Council)
- Employ people to do breakfast club > clean up > supervise lunchtime/playtime > crossing patrol across the highway > clean up
- What about the other cuts that have been proposed that have not reached the final list?
- Increase in Council Tax costs over the years has been relatively low compared to other authorities in Wales
- Waste Management – good idea – electronic service ✓ – need more of this ☺

Group 5 (Youth Group)

Education

Reduction in School Improvement Initiatives

Visually Impaired Service

Schools should share good practice – offering peer support to schools by sharing good practice and teaching methods to help schools which need it. This should not have a cost.

Better management – take away the back expenditure

Libraries – a lot of people read e-books now so reduction in book budget will not have a massive impact on young people. Visit charity shops – to restock library books - Take the money away from fiction not educational books - Should be more availability of electronic books (NOTE Caerphilly Libraries use Borrow Box) Cafes in libraries so they have a revenue

GAVO Summer Scheme - Will have an impact on service users but not the young people who are involved in the Youth Service directly, as the youth service runs its own activity programme in school holidays.

Schools

Schools managing their own budgets – should be good as they know their schools best and how they need to prioritise the funding to meet the needs of the pupils. Need to set money aside for music this opportunity is not open to all young people as it should be

Increase in cost of school meals - Feel that this is not a LOW impact but a HIGHER impact.

Communities

Meals on Wheels - The group STRONGLY disagree with this cut. Make it a voluntary service. Have volunteers in the community to make the meals. It would be a valuable experience and they get something out of it for their CVs. More support from care services

Community Safety - More neighbourhood watch programmes set up. More street based Youth Workers (less building costs) this would reduce ASB in young people on the street. Train volunteers so that they are skilled to do this work for free.

Closing down family projects is a bad thing as there is less for families to do together. They will have fewer opportunities to build strong respectful relationships. Closing down family projects this will have an impact on ASB in communities which the community safety wardens deal with.

Raise awareness of the harm street crime causes

More education on the consequences

Events

Reduction in events can have a positive impact on the amount of litter dropped – get others to pay for events carried out. Reduce amount spent on fireworks

Cleansing

Encourage public to take more responsibility for the litter they drop – stop drains getting blocked

Public Toilets

Encourage shops to open their toilets – has to be some incentive for local businesses to support this from the authority. You usually have to buy something to have a code for the toilet. This is not fair if there are no public toilets

Social Services

Barnardo's – should not be stopped because offer a lot of support to those in most need. They are a great service with members of the group having used the service provided by the money.

Other comments/suggestions

- For all services to be able to do some sort of enterprise/business/fundraising where they can fund or have extra funding for their projects to continue running.

- Make savings with Christmas lights
- Reduce the amount spent on statues – all the young people felt this was wasted money. Very strong feeling the council should not spend money here.
- Make projects more self sufficient so they pay for themselves
- Nets on the ends of drains to catch waste/litter this will help with street cleaning