

## PlaCE Committee – draft budget proposals 2023-24

Project	Budget 2022-23	Forecast expenditure 2022-23	Draft budget 2023-24	Commentary
Town in Bloom	£12,000	£12,000	£14,450	The draft budget proposals include provision for a rate of inflation increase to the cost of employing the project's contractor plus a contingency of nearly £1,500 to cover the costs of theft and vandalism as well as maintenance during the winter months outside the main Town in Bloom contract.
Town in Bloom community involvement	£2,500	£600	£3,550	The draft budget proposals include increased support for local community groups and individuals to adopt and maintain floral displays. If successful, it is envisaged that this form of funding will eventually replace much of the central Town in Bloom contract
Shop Local events and activities	£3,000	£250	£0	The budget for 2022-23 included ambitious plans for the Council to organise a number of stand-alone events and activities in Abertillery town centre. None of these events were progressed. The Committee proposes to support existing town centre events in 2023-24 rather than staging its own events and activities.
Halloween event	£5,000	£538	£0	
Car boot sales and Community Council town centre events	£10,000	£0	£0	
Community Council activities at town centre events	£2,000	£800	£3,000	
Grant funding to Ffrindiau Tyleri for town centre events	£2,000	£2,000	£2,500	The number of events organised by Ffrindiau Tyleri has increased from two to four per year.
Allotments	£600	£583	£650	The draft budget proposal takes account of increased lease fees for 2023-24.
Provision of two new community defibrillators	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000	The Council's Defibrillator Policy envisages the installation of two new defibrillators per year for the next four years.
Maintenance of community defibrillators	£2,000	£984	£3,500	Ten defibrillators will require replacement batteries in 2023-24. The warranty on ten defibrillator cabinets will expire in 2023-24. The draft budget proposal includes provision to purchase a replacement cabinet to act as a stand-by in case an existing cabinet malfunctions.
Environmental projects	£0		£10,000	Following the Council's decision to adopt a Community Asset Transfer Policy, the draft budget proposals include provision for the potential greening of small pieces of land, expenditure on and grant funding for other potential environmental improvements and the procurement of a feasibility study into the potential community asset transfer of a mosaic mural in Abertillery.
	<b>£43,100</b>	<b>£22,000- £26,000</b>	<b>£41,650</b>	

## People and Communities Committee – draft budget proposals 2023-24

Project	Budget 2022-23	Forecast expenditure 2022-23	Draft budget 2023-24	Commentary
Christmas lights central contract	£30,000	£14,400	£40,000	The current contractor for the Christmas lights central contract quoted an estimated price of £46,800 over three years (an average of £15,600 per year) for 2019-21. In the event, the total charged was £45,012 (an average of £15,004 per year). Their contract was extended by a year to cover 2022 but lights for Aberbeeg and Cwmtillery were removed from the contract. The Committee envisages moving to a new contractor from 2023 onwards. The proposed budget for 2023-24 includes the overhaul, repairs and maintenance of the current Christmas lights infrastructure.
Llanhilleth TRA Christmas lights	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	Six local community organisations now receive grant funding to arrange their own Christmas lights displays outwith the Council's central Christmas lights contract.
Brynithel Community Centre Christmas lights	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	
Swffryd Community Centre Christmas lights	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	
Bournville Community Centre Christmas lights	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	
Aberbeeg TRA Christmas lights		£1,500	£1,500	
Pentre Tyleri Christmas lights		£1,500	£1,500	
Christmas lights electricity costs	£1,800	£732	£1,800	The forecast expenditure for 2022-23 takes account of the Electricity Price Guarantee. Without the EPG (which is due to end in April 2023) the same amount of electricity would be forecast to cost nearly £1,700 by Christmas 2023.
Events and initiatives connected with Remembrance Sunday including wreath laying, support for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and the organisation and marshalling of parades	£2,500	£275	£3,000	Blaenau Gwent Council has agreed to organise Remembrance Sunday signage and road closures again in 2022. If ALCC takes over these responsibilities in 2023, the forecast cost would be around £2,850.
Development of the Abertillery War Memorial site	£5,000	£2,590	£0	No further development of the infrastructure of the War Memorial site is envisaged in 2023-24.
Maintenance of war memorial sites	£1,500	£2,000	£2,300	The 2022 heatwave meant that actual expenditure in 2022-23 is expected to be £500 more than the original £1,500 budget. After taking account of inflation, similar weather would lead to forecast expenditure of around £2,300 in 2023-24.
Loneliness Project	£5,000		£5,000	The first meeting of this project's partners and stakeholders did not take place until the end of September 2022, so expenditure in 2022-23 has been impossible to forecast. That initial meeting identified seven separate projects that could benefit from grant funding or other financial support and several other community

				groups have since indicated an interest in being involved in the project. The draft budget amount for 2023-24 would enable the Committee to make twenty-or-more small grants or payments in support of activities for otherwise social-excluded members of the community.
Community Council website project	£10,000		£10,000 (tbc)	No progress has been made on this project so far in 2022-23 but the Committee is endeavouring to scope the work required for the project to be completed in 2023-24. It is currently working on the assumption that it would cost around £8,000 to develop a new Council website with a further £2,000 set aside for a launch event.
Community Fun Run	£5,000		£5,000	Some progress has been made to establish a local community fun run based in Soffryd. It is hoped that the inaugural event can be staged on St David's Day 2023.
Community summer cinema events	£10,021	£0	£10,000	It proved impossible to book suitable venues for two outdoor cinema events in the summer of 2022. Mindful of this, the Committee plans to organise a series of weekly indoor cinema events for children at The Met in 2023.
Party in the Park	£15,000	£15,150	£20,000	The Committee plans to expand the current event to include more participative activities for children and to employ an event organiser to book a greater range of acts for the main stage. The draft budget proposal includes provision for greater advertising to increase participation from families beyond Abertillery.
Musical concerts	£500	£1,000	£1,000	Until this year, a local community carol concert and a St David's Day concert have been hosted for free at St Michael's church. It remains uncertain as to when (or if) St Michael's will be able to host the events again, so the draft budget proposal includes provision for the hire of an alternative venue.
Grant funding to Abertillery Rock and Blues Festival	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£95,821</b>	<b>£50,000- £60,000</b>	<b>£110,600</b>	

## **Youth Engagement – draft budget proposal 2023-24**

Since May, the Youth Engagement Working Group members have been working hard to establish what the Council funds, what the Council-funded youth engagement projects do and how we can work better with them.

Some of the information about the projects' work that has been used by the Council up to now has turned out to be vague and insufficiently defined. The Youth Engagement Working Group has, therefore, been forced to go back to the beginning to re-establish the Council's original reasons for funding youth engagement work and its *raison d'être* for continued funding.

### **Evaluation**

As I'm sure the council is aware, the Youth Engagement Working Group is responsible for oversight of the biggest expense in the Council's entire budget at a time when inflation is putting increased strain on public spending and household budgets alike. We, therefore, embarked on our appraisal of Council-funded youth engagement work with a critical eye. But, as my fellow working group members and I have seen, without this Council maintaining, continuing, supporting and funding the detached youth teams, our area would be left with a massive void. As recent news from other areas has shown, cutting support for youth work is likely to fuel apathy, disenchantment and, quite possibly, unrest of our youth and our communities. The Council initially agreed to fund youth engagement work to combat the rife anti-social behaviour that had descended on the community council area. It is evident that, since the Council began funding this work – many years before my time as a Member of the Council – the projects have been toiling away in the background and have been successful in achieving substantial reductions in anti-social behaviour. From the depths of apathy and disenchantment, the groups we support have helped create a much-needed dialogue with many of the area's young people, who have felt somewhat forgotten, neglected and tarred with the brush of negativity associated with anti-social behaviour. Myself and fellow members of the Youth Engagement Working Group have been fortunate enough to have met some of the young people who have benefited from the Council-funded work and have seen first-hand the difference these projects make in our communities. Through closer liaison with the two detached teams, the Youth Engagement Working Group are working hard to empower and strengthen bonds between the Community Council and our young people. In addition, the Youth Engagement Working Group have been reaching out to local schools to raise awareness of the Council's work and the ways in which anyone can contribute to building brighter futures by getting involved in the work of our Community Council. A primary concern for Youth Engagement Working Group is to let the public know that the funding they provide, through the Community Council, provides such a vital project.

### **Evidence**

But it's not just the views of our working group that need to be taken into consideration. Since the Council started funding this work, anti-social behaviour in our area has dramatically fallen by more than fifty percent. When we met with the Blaenau Gwent detached team, they reported that local Police Community Support Officers have also noted a visible difference in the behaviour of young people. The Council's Town In Bloom contractor has also commented that there has been a reduction in vandalism and damage to floral displays.

### **Additional provision**

I have included below the draft proposals from both detached teams for 2023-24 as well as a proposed additional provision that would be earmarked for youth-led projects. The proposals

include additional provision for the youth-led projects to provide experiences and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to many of the young people that the Council-funded youth projects work with, leading many of the young people to be excluded from or denied the opportunities available to their peers. When we discussed with the young people about improvements they would like to see in the local area, a very popular idea was establishing a designated safe space for young people, such as a skate park – something that they currently lack access to. The Youth Engagement Working Group see the potential in this, and would like to use some of the proposed budget to explore this by, for instance, organising fact-finding site visits to other skate parks.

Blaenau Gwent has seen a lot of investment over the past couple of years in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) industries and many high-end television series and film productions are now being filmed and produced in Wales. The Youth Engagement Working Group would intend to use some of these funds for educational visits to expand the young people's knowledge of avenues and opportunities available to them.

Some young people also expressed the need to have their voices heard in a forum where they felt listened to. The funds for the youth-led projects would also be used in establishing our own local youth forum.

Thanks to the Council-funded Blaenau Gwent detached team, we now have new links into Abertillery Learning Campus. This could enable us to broaden our platform and audience for youth engagement, which would also aid us in the creation of a local youth forum. Even if only a handful of young people were to relay information about the Community Council's back home, I feel that it would help further our own reach within the community – as well as painting the Council in a positive light – and, in so doing, highlight a lot of the other positive work that we do.

The Youth Engagement Working Group proposes adding £2,000 to the Council's youth engagement budget for this additional provision.

### **Draft budget proposals**

Below are the reports we have received from the Council-funded detached teams, as well as their funding requests, and tables showing our draft budget proposals for 2023-24.

The working group is swaying more towards Option 2, which would see the Council revert back to the level of youth-engagement work put forward before the Covid pandemic.

#### **Option 1**

	COSTINGS 2021/2022	COSTINGS 2022/2023	PROPOSED 2023/24
BG DETACHED TEAM	£54,000	£35,000	£41,500
OFF THE STREETS	£40,000	£44,000	£44,244
YOUTH LED PROJECTS			£2000
TOTAL	£94,000	£79,000	£87,744

### Option 2

	COSTINGS 2021/2022	COSTINGS 2022/2023	PROPOSED 2023/24
BG DETACHED TEAM	£54,000	£35,000	£54,500
OFF THE STREETS	£40,000	£44,000	£44,244
YOUTH LED PROJECTS			£2000
TOTAL	£94,000	£79,000	£100,744

Josh Rawcliffe  
October 2022



### **Off The Streets Detached Project Proposal 2023-2024**

**Off The Streets** has seen a huge increase in the number of children and young people attending our provision this financial year. We have been working with children as young as 3 and up to the age of 18 as well as members of the wider community in the Southern Ebbw Fach Valley. We have been able to provide a huge host of activities and events and support in arranging larger events.

It has been a case this year of remodelling our program to suit the needs within the community and working, not as just youth workers, but also as play workers and community development officers. The people we have worked with have reported positive impact back to us and would like us to continue working in this way going forward.

Our proposal this year is similar to last year in the sense that there will still be three members of staff working across the South Ebbw Fach Valley, but we would like to add into the proposal this year that we not only support young people but children, young people and their families. This will allow us to work with children on early intervention and provide preventative measures.

We have both gained and lost key partners. Such is the case with community work as we establish every year where we best sit within communities. This year we have continued our work with local police, Clwb Llan, Soffryd Community Centre and Ffin Dance, but have also gained a number of other key partners including Soffryd Primary School, Victory Church Soffryd, Llanhilleth RFC, Llanhilleth Bowls Club and Brynithel Welfare and Community Centre. Our sessions this year will run from, Llanhilleth, Soffryd and Brynithel and we plan to work on developing further key partners going into 2023-24 and beyond.

This year we will continue to focus on reducing the risk-taking behaviours within the communities, as well as working on skills such as listening and social interaction, mental health and wellbeing, building positive communities and community cohesion and development in all three areas.

We are looking for the Community Council to provide us with the funding to be able to continue this much needed work within the communities from April 2023-March 2024. We have continued to keep dialogue open with the children, young people and families we are working with and they feel the programme is working and hope that you can support in keeping the project going for the next twelve months.

Below you will find the costing for a 12-month program run within the South Ebbw Fach Valley.

## Requirement

12 Months April 2023-March 2024

Staffing including;

- 1 x Senior Worker
- 1 x Lead Worker Practitioner
- 1 x Youth Worker

= £31,824 approx £10,608 each, £884 per month, £221/week (9hr/week £24.55/hr) or (6hr/week £36.83)

- Training = £1000
- Activity = £5400
- Insurance = £540
- Car Insurance Business Add-On = £280
- Food Budget = £3120
- Venue hire = £2080

= £12,420

Total = £44,244

You will notice an increase in cost this year, as we have needed to add in a further food budget. With the cost-of-living increase and the fact that we feed all children and young people at each session, we have noticed that it is eating into a large part of our activity budget. Our average spend on food is roughly £60 per week now so we feel we need to add a cost-of-living increase in order to ensure our programme can still run to the high standard it has been running at for the last few years.

You will also notice that venue hire has been added, as part of our initial work after losing the youth café and going out into a detached programme. We discussed with the Youth Engagement Working Group that we would work with communities in order to find indoor venues to run our sessions. We have now found both an indoor venue in Soffryd and in Brynithel and the increase in venue hire is to be able to cover the cost within these setting so that we can safely run sessions

We hope as a team this provides an overview of the work we wish to carry out 2023-24 and please feel free to ask questions if required.

Many thanks

Off The Streets Youth Team



## **Blaenau Gwent Youth Service proposal report to Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide information and costings to Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council regarding the proposal for Blaenau Gwent Youth Service to continue to be commissioned to provide Detached Youth Work within the area.

### **Background**

Due to increased incidents of youth related anti-social behaviour within Abertillery town centre and surrounding areas in 2019/20, Blaenau Gwent Youth Service along with other organisations were approached to work through a multi-agency approach in addressing concerns and provide increased services for young people.

It was mutually agreed by all members to initiate a detached youth work model as it would not only complement existing provision, but enhance opportunities to engage more young people who did not attend any youth provision, while also having a visible presence on the streets to act as a deterrent from anti-social behaviour.

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service, upon receiving funding from the Community Council were commissioned to provide a detached youth service for five evenings a week.

### **Current position**

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service have successfully delivered the agreed work commissioned and will continue to do so until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, when current funding stops.

Since its initiation, the service has worked continually throughout, initially utilizing temporary staff until a permanent solution was recruited. The service now employs, on a twelve-month fixed term contract, three members of staff specifically for the roles.

### **Proposal**

The proposal is for Blaenau Gwent Youth Service to continue to be commissioned to deliver a detached youth service within the Abertillery area.

It is also worthy to note while commissioning Blaenau Gwent Youth Service to deliver detached youth work that there are many additional beneficial factors to consider that are not directly funded by any grant. These include management structures in place to support staff, supervision, appropriate mechanisms to ensure all staff are qualified at appropriate level and registered with the Education Workforce Council, on-going Continuing Professional Development, access to other professionals such as psychologists, all policies and procedures including safeguarding, linked into various partnerships and the ability to draw upon additional staff, resources and funding if required. The above list is not exhaustive with many other beneficial factors to consider.

Based on current demand and need, it has been identified that the current level of service (three evenings a week with three staff per evening) is recommended to continue. However, if possible and viable, it is suggested to develop the 18-hour post into a full-time post

Below is a table of costings along with different options. Further options can be explored such as a reduction in the level of service e.g., 6 hours (2 x evenings a week) for current staff levels if required.

### **Costings**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Number of Staff</b>	<b>Total Cost for 12 Months</b>
1	2 x 9 hours per week 1 x 18 hours per week	Currently costed at a Total £35,111.80 but we are aware of negotiations between Unison and the local authority regarding a cost-of-living increase for staff at approx. 3% which needs to be taken into account for 2023/24.  Estimated costs £40,000
2	2 x 9 hours per week 1 x 37 hours full time post	£53,000 (taking increase of 3% on current salaries into consideration).
	Resource budget	£1500

### **Recommendations**

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service preferred option is option 2 along with a resource budget. The additional hours for one post would provide a greater link to the work carried out in the evening to be continued into the day, attend meetings and a greater level of preparation. However, it is understood that it is a larger amount of funding requested and may not be possible.

## Draft budget proposals 2023-24 – Responsible Financial Officer

	Budget 2022-23	YTD 2022- 23 (end Sept 2022)	Forecast 2022-23	Budget proposal 2023-24	Notes
<b>Total salary costs (including National Insurance and pension)</b>					
<b>Post</b>					
1 Town Clerk NJC Spine Point 33 (25 Hours per week)				£38,640.00	Includes 3% estimated salary increase 2023-24
1 Deputy Town Clerk NJC Spine Point 23 (23 Hours per week)				£27,531.00	Includes 3% estimated salary increase 2023-24
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£54,453.00</b>	<b>£36,569.00</b>	<b>£69,817.00</b>	<b>£66,171.00</b>	2022-23 forecast incl 3 x backdated pay increases
<b>Training and subscriptions</b>					
2 Memberships of Society of Local Council Clerks	£400.00		£449.00	£449.00	Costs for two staff in SLCC
Training Budget for Officers Including Conference Attendance	£500.00	£300.00	£528.00	£500.00	Includes Chapter 8 training x 2
Training Budget for Members	£2,000.00	£558.00	£4,687.00	£500.00	Includes Chapter 8 training x 6 & Member Training Plan
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£2,900.00</b>		<b>£5,664.00</b>	<b>£1,449.00</b>	
<b>Administration</b>					
Upgrade of IT equipment	£0.00	£279.00	£279.00	£0.00	
IT equipment: councillors	£13,900.00		£2,195.00	£0.00	
IT Support	£0.00		£114.00	£200.00	
Zoom	£175.00		£120.00	£120.00	
Vimeo - Video Hosting Site	£70.00	£83.00	£290.00	£290.00	
Rialtas Accounting System	£250.00	£189.00	£861.00	£1,000.00	
Hosting of Cloud Based Accounting System - 3 Users	£360.00				Included in line above
Bank Charges	£400.00	£177.00	£321.00	£400.00	
Insurance	£800.00	£785.00	£1,000.00	£1,150.00	Includes estimated increase for War Memorial & TiB
Professional Fees	£10,000.00	£1,740.00	£3,240.00	£0.00	Includes estimated £1,500 for Tomlin Order
One Voice Wales Membership	£0.00				
Printing and photocopying usage	£700.00	£226.00	£605.00	£700.00	
Internet and Phone (BT)	£500.00	£249.00	£367.00	£400.00	
Web Hosting - Vision ICT	£250.00		£250.00	£285.00	
Stationary and Postage	£750.00	£342.00	£651.00	£740.00	

Accountants	£600.00		£3,000.00	£0.00
Information Commissioner's Office	£50.00	£35.00	£35.00	£35.00
Electricity from British Gas (Factory Unit)	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00
Internal Audit	£1,000.00		£1,000.00	£1,200.00
Travel and Mileage	£250.00	£59.00	£138.00	£250.00
External Audit (Audit Wales)	£1,000.00		£1,000.00	£1,200.00
Welsh Water (Factory Unit)	£155.00	£52.00	£156.00	£180.00
Marketing and Publicity (Well Being, leaflets)	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00
Elections Costs	£5,000.00		£0.00	£0.00
Other		£244.00	£244.00	£250.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£36,210.00</b>		<b>£15,866.00</b>	<b>£8,400.00</b>

<b>Grants and Members Allowances</b>				
Council Grants	£10,000.00	£2,613.00	£6,250.00	£17,000.00
£200 per Councillor - Ward Grants	£3,800.00	£400.00	£3,800.00	£3,800.00
Chairman's Allowance (IRP Determination 49)	£1,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,500.00
Deputy Chair's Allowance (IRP Determination 50)	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
Specific Responsibilities Allowance (IRP Determination 43) 5*£500	£2,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,500.00
Members Allowance (19*£150)	£2,850.00	£0.00	£650.00	£2,850.00
Attendance Allowance £30 per member per meeting	£11,400.00	£0.00	£0.00	£12,060.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£32,550.00</b>		<b>£10,700.00</b>	<b>£40,210.00</b>

£7,000 + 2 x £5,000

These five budget lines are mandatory

**Overall budget**

**£126,113.00**

**£116,230.00**

**Discretionary budget**

**£52,910**

**£30,649**

Excludes salary costs and Members' allowances