

**SUBJECT: Continuation of Funding Support to the Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee**

*Report written and submitted by: GSWAG Sub Group (led by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council)*

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*Consultees: Gwent PSB Partners (following June 22 GPSB meeting), GSWAG Partners and Local Authority Scrutiny Officers). This paper builds on the paper brought to Gwent PSB meeting in 2022/23.*

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| **1** | **Areas Affected** |
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| 1.1 | The full Gwent PSB is involved in the Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee with all areas of Gwent represented. |
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| **2** | **Purpose of Report** |
| **2.1** | The purpose of the report is to outline a proposed approach for the funding that supports the on-going development, operation, and administration of the Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee. |
| 2.2 | The report recommends that:   * The remaining funding held by Blaenau Gwent Council, provided by PSB partners for 2023, is carried over into 2024 and a move from a calendar year to a financial year process; * Blaenau Gwent Council utilises the remaining funding to cover the three months of financial year 2023/24 (1 Jan 2024 to 31 March 2024) and the whole financial year 2024/25 (up until 31st March 2025); and * PSB consider a further report on evaluation of the finance and outcomes of the scrutiny process as part of their work programme in the final quarter of 2024/25.   *There should be no requirement for funding from any partner until 2025/26 financial year.* |
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| **3** | **Background** |
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| 3.1 | The PSB agreed to establish regional scrutiny arrangements to review and scrutinise the work of the Gwent PSB. |
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| 3.2 | In June 22, the PSB received a paper outlining a series of recommendations for consideration for establishing regional scrutiny, taking into account the precedent already set by established arrangements of other joint committees such as: CCRCD / CJC; Regional Partnership Board; Cardiff and the Vale Partnership Board; and Cwm Taf Public Services Board Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee. |
| 3.3  3.4  3.5  3.6  3.7 | The Gwent PSB Scrutiny Committee was established in February 2023 and had held four meetings to date and one training session.  It was agreed for Blaenau Gwent Council to act as the lead organisation to facilitate committee support, with each other statutory partner organisation identifying a liaison Single Point of Conduct (SPOC) to interact with Blaenau Gwent.  The cost provided for 2023 was £15,000, shared equally by the seven remaining organisations (i.e., Caerphilly County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport City Council, Torfaen County Borough Council, South Wales Fire and Rescue, Natural Resources Wales, and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board). The cost is based on existing models in place for CCRCD scrutiny, hosted by RCTCBC.  To date, the financial costs of running the committee have been £4,233 with £10,767 remaining.  Costs for operating the scrutiny committee are monitored by BGCBC as the lead organisation and considered for fairness and sustainability as part of regional scrutiny arrangements. It was originally planned for the evaluation to take place after one full year of operation, however, owing to delays in Committee papers and the need to move or postpone a number of meetings, the evaluation will now take place after year 2 of full operation. |
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| **4** | **Recommendation to the PSB** |
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| 4.1 | **Recommendation** |
| 4.1.1  4.1.2 | Agreement for BGCBC to carry over the remaining funding to support payments up until 31st March 2025.  For each statutory partner organisation (excluding the lead organisation, BGCBC, who will provide support in-kind) to continue to provide a nominal financial contribution to support the further development and operation of the scrutiny committee from 1 April 2025/26. |

*Report Date: November 2023*

*Appendix 1 - Draft Terms of Reference – Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee*

**DRAFT Terms of Reference – Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee**

The Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee will have the strategic oversight of the PSB and will hold the Regional PSB and Partners to account for the delivery of the Well-being Plan and supporting projects.

The Regional PSB Scrutiny Committee will:

* Perform the Overview and Scrutiny function for the Regional PSB on behalf of the five local Authorities of Gwent.
* Develop a forward work programme reflecting its functions.
* Review, scrutinise and challenge the performance, decisions made or actions taken by the Board;
* Review and scrutinise the Board’s governance arrangements and function;
* Review and scrutinise the performance of the PSB projects including delivery and outcomes
* Make reports or recommendations to the Board regarding its functions or governance arrangements;
* Promote public engagement and participation;
* Consider matters relating to the Board as Welsh Ministers may refer to it and report to the Welsh Ministers accordingly; and
* Carry out other functions in relation to the Board that are imposed on it by the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. c).
* Review or scrutinise the progress of any joint project.
* Refer any matter to the Regional Gwent PSB which is relevant to its functions:
* The matter relates to one of the functions of the authority and is relevant to the functions of the Regional scrutiny committee; and
* It effects the electoral area of the member or it effects any person who lives or works there.

When considering whether to refer a matter to the Regional Scrutiny Committee a member should first consider if it falls within the remit of a single overview and scrutiny committee within the member’s local authority, and if that is the case the member should raise the matter there. ***Members should only refer a matter to a Joint scrutiny committee if it falls clearly within the responsibilities and terms of reference of the Regional Scrutiny Committee and if there is no scrutiny of the issue in the local authority to which the member belongs.***

It is acknowledged that the establishment of a Regional Scrutiny Committee shall not serve to exclude a local authority’s right to carry out its own individual Scrutiny of any decision of the Regional Gwent PSB.

In addition to these functions the Regional Scrutiny Committee’s lines of Inquiry can include (but not be limited to), the following:

* The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Assessment;
* The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Plan;
* The effectiveness of performance measurement arrangements;
* The level of commitment from individual partners to the work of the Regional Gwent Public Services Board;
* The effectiveness of the Regional Gwent Public Services Board in communicating its work, objectives and outcomes to its stakeholders; and,
* The effectiveness of the Regional Gwent Public Services Board in addressing the issue of pooled funding to tackle priorities

The WBFG act allows for scrutiny of the PSB as a ‘collaborative body’, not the individual partners comprising the PSB. Paragraph 180 of the Future Generations guidance states that; ‘The committee can require any member of the board to give evidence, but only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as a member of the board under this Act.’ This includes any person that has accepted an invitation to participate in the activity of the Regional Gwent PSB. The Regional Scrutiny Committee will therefore scrutinise the work of the Regional Gwent PSB and **not** the individual activities of partners.