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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Helen Morgan
(Tel: 01443 864267 Email: morgah@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 21st January 2015

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Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of **Council** will be held in the **Council Chamber, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 27th January, 2015** at **5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

Chris Burns
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

Pages

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Mayor's Announcements.
- 3 Presentation of Awards.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



- 4 Declarations of interest.
Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- 5 Council held on 18th November 2014 (minute nos. 1 - 12). 1 - 8
- 6 Special Council held on 17th December 2014 (minute nos. 1 - 6). 9 - 14

To receive and consider the following reports from meetings of Cabinet.

- 7 Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 - Amendment to Authorisation of Officers - 26th November 2014. 15 - 20
- 8 Collection of Dry Recyclables - Waste Framework Directive and Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 - 17th December 2014. 21 - 40
- 9 Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (First Review) up to 2013 - Draft Preferred Strategy - 21st January 2015. 41 - 146
- 10 Adoption of South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan - 21st January 2015. 147 - 274

To receive and consider the following reports: -

- 11 Notice of Motion - Tax Justice. 275 - 276
- 12 WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development. 277 - 296
- 13 Groundwork Wales Representation. 297 - 298
- 14 Amendment of Council's Constitution - Review of Terms of Reference of Council Scrutiny Committees. 299 - 304
- 15 Wales Audit Office Report - Follow Up of Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest. 305 - 350
- 16 Buy Out of Essential Car User and Annual Leave Entitlements. 351 - 366

To receive and to answer the following questions received under Rule of Procedure 10(2).

- 17 Residual Waste Stream Contract - to Councillor Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, from Councillor Mrs Blackman

- 1) On what date will the Council's residual waste stream Contract with Project Gwyrdd start?
- 2) What procedures and resources will the Council have in place to ensure that all of its residual waste stream will not contain any recycling materials such as cardboard, paper, cans, plastics and glass?
- 3) What will be the cost to the Council for these procedures/resources?
- 4) How much per ton/tonne of waste is the Council paying the Project Gwyrdd Contract?
- 5) How many tons/tonnes a year is the Council contracted for?
- 6) What are the financial consequences for the Council if it does not produce the tonnages agreed to in the Project Gwyrdd Contract?

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COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER 2014 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D.G. Carter - Mayor
Councillor L. Gardiner - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

Miss L. Ackerman, M. Adams, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, H.A. Andrews, A.P. Angel, Mrs K.R. Baker, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, L. Binding, D. Bolter, Mrs P. Cook, C.J. Cuss, H.W. David, W. David, H.R. Davies, D.T. Davies, R.T. Davies, K. Dawson, N. Dix, C. Elsbury, Mrs C. Forehead, Miss E. Forehead, Mrs J. Gale, N. George, C.J. Gordon, R.W. Gough, D.M. Gray, Mrs. P. Griffiths, D.T. Hardacre, D. Havard, C. Hawker, A.G. Higgs, G.J. Hughes, K. James, G. Johnston, Mrs B.A. Jones, G. Jones, Ms J.G. Jones, S. Kent, G. Kirby, A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan, Mrs R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, M.J. Prew, Mrs. D. Price, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, A. Rees, K.V. Reynolds, R. Saralis, Mrs. M.E. Sargent, S. Skivens, Mrs E. Stenner, Mrs J. Summers, J. Taylor, T.J. Williams, R. Woodyatt

Together with:-

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), D. Street (Corporate Director of Social Services), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer), G. Williams (Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), A. Price (Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

1. **BEREAVEMENT**

The Mayor informed those present that former Councillor Ken Snell had recently passed away. All present stood for a moment of silence as a mark of respect.

2. **WEB-CASTING FILMING AND ELECTRONIC VOTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Mayor reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed for training purposes in advance of the planned implementation of live web-casting of Council meetings. Members were also advised that the new electronic voting system would be tested at the meeting. It was also explained that during the course of the meeting, decisions would continue to be made by a show of hands. However, for testing and training purposes, each vote would be repeated using the electronic voting system.

During discussions arising within the course of the meeting, Members were pleased to note the formal implementation of the new arrangements in the near future, which will satisfy a number of the recommendations set out in the Wales Audit Office Report in the Public Interest dated 23rd April 2013.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G. Bevan, Mrs A. Blackman, C. Durham, J.E. Fussell, M.P. James, Ms P. Leonard, Mrs G. Oliver, D. Rees, J.E. Roberts and L.G. Whittle.

Members were advised that Councillors Mrs G. Bevan, Mrs G. Oliver and M. James are currently unwell and receiving hospital treatment. It was agreed that the Interim Chief Executive to write to them to convey the best wishes of Members for a speedy recovery.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor referred to the many events and visits that he and the Deputy Mayor have undertaken since the last meeting and made specific reference to a number of Remembrance Day Services and events held in schools across the county borough. Members were informed that school staff had excelled themselves in arranging commemorations for this important event.

5. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Dublin Declaration for Age Friendly Cities and Communities

Members were informed that on 22nd October 2014, the Commissioner for Older People launched the 'Ageing Well in Wales' programme and announced that all local authorities in Wales had signed the Dublin Declaration for Age Friendly Cities and Communities. The declaration is a public commitment to make Wales an Age Friendly Nation.

This is a five-year programme which supports the strategy for Older People in Wales around the key themes of Age Friendly Communities, Dementia Supportive Communities, Falls Prevention, Opportunities for Employment and New Skills, and Loneliness and Isolation.

Mandy Sprague (Development Officer for Older People) together with Iwan Williams and Alison Pritchard from the Office of the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, came forward to present the Council's Certificate of Commitment to the Mayor.

Wales Green Energy Awards

Members were advised that Caerphilly County Borough Council had recently won Best Use of Renewable Energy in the Public Sector at the prestigious Wales Green Energy Awards. This award was for the Oakdale Wind Farm situated within Oakdale Business Park, where the two wind turbines generate approximately 10 GWh of electricity per year, equivalent to the annual usage of around 2,400 homes. Annually, this would avoid 4,400 tonnes of CO₂ emissions being released into the atmosphere.

This award signifies the completion of a seven-year partnership (from conception to energy generation) with the Council's partners and developers, Partnerships for Renewables.

Pauline Elliott (Head of Regeneration and Planning) and Ian MacVicar (Group Manager for Operations, Asset Based Services) together with Stephen Ainger and John Mills from Partnerships for Renewables came forward to receive the award from the Mayor.

White Ribbon Status Plaque Presentation

White Ribbon Day is the United Nations International Day for the elimination of violence against women and falls on 25th November every year. The White Ribbon Campaign aims to prevent violence against women and girls and promote respectful relationships.

Members were informed that the Council were successful in obtaining White Ribbon Status in July 2014. The White Ribbon Campaign Towns Award is made to Councils demonstrating their commitment to the aims of the White Ribbon Campaign, which include; involving men and boys in prevention activities, addressing and altering social norms that lead to violent behaviour against women, increasing awareness on the issue and providing services aimed at reducing the incidence of domestic violence, and mobilising the entire community under the goal of ending violence against women and girls.

Lucy Farmer (HR Officer) and Natalie Kenny (Community Safety) together with Rebecca Haycock from Llamau, came forward to present the award to the Mayor.

Members were also pleased to note that the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service recently became the first fire service in the UK to be awarded the White Ribbon accreditation. It was agreed that a letter of congratulations be sent to the Service.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors L. Binding and Miss E. Forehead declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 8 (Welsh Government Invitation to Local Authorities to Submit Proposals for Voluntary Merger). Details are minuted with the respective item.

It was noted that with regards to Agenda Item No. 9 (Interim Corporate Management Team and Governance Arrangements), a number of Officers would be required to declare an interest and leave the meeting. Details are minuted with the respective item.

7. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader of Council, Councillor K.V. Reynolds, made reference to plans to withdraw junior doctors from Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr and raised concerns as to the possible impact this could have on the services available at the hospital. The comments of the Leader were endorsed by other Members, with it unanimously agreed that a letter be sent to the Chair of Aneurin Bevan Health Board to request an update on the situation.

8. COUNCIL - 29TH SEPTEMBER 2014 AND 7TH OCTOBER 2014

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

Special Council held on 29th September 2014 (minute nos. 1 - 7) and Council held on 7th October 2014 (minute nos. 1 - 15).

REPORTS REFERRED FROM CABINET

Consideration was given to the following reports referred from Cabinet.

9. DRAFT WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The report was presented to and endorsed by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 11th November 2014 and, subject to minor amendments, endorsed by Cabinet on 12th November 2014. A covering report detailing requested amendments to the policy and the recommendations of Cabinet was tabled at the meeting.

The report sought approval of a revised Whistleblowing Policy and informed Members of a proposed change to the administrative form used to record declarations of interests. In that the form is an appendix to the Code of Conduct which is contained within the Constitution, such a change requires approval from Council.

Officers summarised the report and Members were reminded that a Whistleblowing Commission was set up in February 2013 by the leading whistleblowing charity, Public Concern at Work, to review the effectiveness of whistleblowing in UK workplaces, and to make recommendations for change. In late November 2013 it published its findings, which included the recommendation that a Code of Practice be established that could be taken into account in whistleblowing cases before courts and tribunals. The Commission has published a draft Code which sets out clear standards for organisations across all sectors to enable them to have clear whistleblowing arrangements, and which was detailed in the appendices to the report.

Officers have worked with Public Concern at Work to access best practice guidance and support to develop a new draft Whistleblowing Policy reflective of current guidance and regulations. There is an ongoing facility provided for employees to access the confidential support helpline provided by Public Concern at Work, with the draft revised Policy written in plain English to encourage a wide understanding by employees.

At the Cabinet meeting, a number of minor amendments were suggested to ensure that it is clear who is covered by the Policy, and it was arranged for these to be incorporated into the final revised version of the Policy.

During the course of the ensuing discussion, Members welcomed the revised Policy as a measure to provide additional safeguards to the individual and the Authority as a result of whistleblowing. Assurances were sought that employees would not face retribution as a result of instigating whistleblowing proceedings. The Interim Chief Executive reiterated that the Council did not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern and that full support would be provided to individuals who made such disclosures of information in good faith.

The Interim Monitoring Officer clarified questions from Members in relation to the protection afforded to Elected Members in relation to anonymous complaints in relation to conduct issues and confirmed that this would not be covered by the new Policy.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) Subject to minor changes being made to ensure it is clear who is covered by the policy, the Whistleblowing Policy be adopted, and the Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution;
- (ii) the changes to the administrative form for the declaration of interests recorded by employees be noted, the declaration form be adopted and Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

10. WELSH GOVERNMENT INVITATION TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR VOLUNTARY MERGER

Councillors L. Binding and Miss E. Forehead declared a personal and prejudicial interest, in that they are employed by other local authorities referenced within the report, and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Consideration was given to the report which advised of the Welsh Government invitation to local authorities to submit proposals for voluntary merger, and sought to invite Members to agree whether or not to make such a submission.

The Interim Chief Executive summarised the report, with Members reminded that on 18th September 2014, the Welsh Government (WG) published an invitation for local authorities to submit a proposal for voluntary merger. This was reported at Council on 29th September 2014 and the Leader advised that a further report would follow. It is principally intended for authorities to submit proposals in accordance with the previously notified recommendations of the Williams Commission. In Caerphilly's case, this would be for a merger with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen councils. However, there is scope for alternative proposals involving merger with other authorities to be submitted provided certain criteria and conditions are met.

The benefit of a voluntary merger would be that the new authority would come into being two years earlier than is envisaged for the 'forced' mergers, from 2018, and that any benefits (including any cost savings arising from the merger) would therefore accrue earlier.

Council resolved on 29th September 2014 not to support the merger with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. It has been indicated publicly that Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen are considering a merger of those two authorities, but it is not clear if that would be supported by Welsh Government.

The report confirmed that Caerphilly County Borough Council had received an enquiry from Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council as to whether there would be any interest in Caerphilly pursuing a merger with that authority. They have written to all of their adjoining councils, including Merthyr, Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend. This letter seems to be intended to establish whether there would be any general interest in that option rather than indicating any express desire or policy by Rhondda Cynon Taff to do so at this stage.

The Council has also received an approach from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to open discussions towards a voluntary merger with that authority. It was explained that a voluntary merger proposal with Merthyr would raise a number of issues in that it crosses Local Health Board and Police and Crime Commissioner boundaries, together with issues relating to education consortium boundaries.

Proposals for voluntary mergers were required to be submitted to WG by 28th November 2014 with it explained that agreement would need to be received from all authorities involved in each of the proposed mergers. The report presented five options for consideration, with a decision required by Council as to whether the Authority:-

- (1) Wishes to review its position regarding the Williams Review recommendation for merger with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen and to seek, with those councils, to submit a proposal for voluntary merger;
- (2) Would prefer to seek to develop a bid with one or more other councils for an alternative proposal;

- (3) Would wish to pursue discussions with Rhondda Cynon Taff (and potentially others among their neighbouring authorities) for a merger, as per their letter;
- (4) To agree to open discussions with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council regarding their offer to explore options for voluntary merger;
- (5) Reaffirm the policy of preferring to remain as a standalone authority and to not submit any proposal for voluntary merger.

During the course of the ensuing discussion, Members expressed their concerns regarding the merger proposals for Caerphilly and reiterated their desire that Caerphilly CBC should remain as a stand-alone authority. Reference was made to the possibility of ward sizes increasing as a result of mergers and the subsequent impact this could have on Councillors' workloads and availability, particularly those who had employment elsewhere in addition to their constituency responsibilities. The Leader, together with other Members, referenced the strong financial management of the Authority, and praised the Council's track record in exceeding targets and delivering services.

Reference was made to the Special Council meeting of 29th September 2014 and consideration of the report which advised of the recently published Welsh Government response to the Williams Commission Report, and clarification was sought on the Council's position on revisiting previous decisions within a six-month period. It was explained by the Interim Chief Executive that this was a different decision to that presented to Members on 29th September 2014.

It was moved and seconded that Recommendation 5 of the report be approved. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report, Caerphilly County Borough Council reaffirm the policy of preferring to remain as a stand-alone authority and to not submit any proposal for voluntary merger.

11. INTERIM CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Nicole Scammell, Dave Street and Gail Williams declared an interest and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Consideration was given to the report which sought agreement for the continuation of the existing interim arrangements currently in place for Corporate Management Team and the Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer, until 31st August 2015.

At the Special Council on 12th March 2013, Members agreed interim arrangements for Corporate Management Team (CMT). Whilst the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive has been subject to change, the other decisions of Council remain in place i.e. the acting up arrangements which are: Sandra Aspinall as Acting Deputy Chief Executive (with responsibilities for the Directorate of the Environment) and Nicole Scammell as Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer.

Council agreed at the meeting held on 10th June 2014 to extend the interim arrangements in relation to Corporate Management Team for a further six months at which time they would be reviewed.

Members were reminded that the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Legal Services appeared at Bristol Crown Court on 3rd October 2014, for a plea hearing, but unfortunately the proceedings were adjourned once again. At this plea hearing concerns were expressed as to whether the 4-week trial period planned for January 2015 would provide

sufficient time for the case to be heard and it was felt that a trial period of 5-6 weeks would be more appropriate, with the trial therefore rescheduled for a later date. The next plea hearing has been scheduled for w/c 5th January 2015, with the possibility of a new trial date being set for April or May 2015 at the earliest.

As a result of these legal proceedings, it was proposed that the existing interim arrangements in respect of the Acting Deputy Chief Executive and the Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer be extended until 31st March 2015, with provision for the Interim Chief Executive to extend further to 31st August 2015, which is the end date of the appointment to the post of Interim Chief Executive. A further report will be presented to Members closer to that time should matters still be unresolved.

Members were advised that there may be some minor amendments to the operational responsibilities of Directors during this extended period of interim arrangements and that the Interim Chief Executive would inform Members of any such changes as they arise.

In relation to Corporate Governance arrangements, the report also proposed the extension of the appointment of the Interim Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer, Gail Williams, until 31st August 2015.

The Interim Chief Executive referred to the Council meeting of 7th October 2014, during which the Leader spoke of his intention to write to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to express his serious concerns about the financial impact to the Council caused by the deferral of the trial. It was confirmed that a reply had now been received by the CPS regarding the matter.

Members voiced their support for the recommendations and raised concerns in regards to the ongoing financial impact to the Council caused by the deferral of the trial. Queries were received in regard of the running costs to date as a result of the deferrals and costs arising from the suspension of those Officers involved in the legal proceedings.

It was confirmed that there were no additional costs arising from the interim arrangements as these are being met through the existing budgets for the substantive post holders. The costs of the suspensions are being funded through reserves to 31st March 2015, as previously approved by Council, with a combined total of approximately £400,000 per year. The 2015/16 budget report to be presented to Council in February 2015 will include a proposal to fund the ongoing cost of suspensions from 1st April 2015.

Concerns were raised regarding the impact of these arrangements on the wellbeing of those Officers acting up in an interim capacity. The Interim Chief Executive explained that support was afforded to these Officers and the situation was being kept under review, with the possibility of Director portfolio responsibility being reassessed and realigned in the near future.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands, this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) the existing interim Corporate Management Team arrangements be extended until 31st March 2015, with provision for the Interim Chief Executive to extend further to the 31st August 2015 if necessary;
- (ii) the appointment of the Interim Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer be extended to 31st August 2015.

12. QUESTIONS UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE 10(2)

There were no questions submitted under Rule of Procedure 10(2).

The meeting closed at 6.12 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2015 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR



SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2014 AT 5.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor D.G. Carter - Mayor
Councillor L. Gardiner - Deputy Mayor

Councillors:

M. Adams, H.A. Andrews, A.P. Angel, Mrs. A. Blackman, C.J. Cuss, H.W. David, W. David, H.R. Davies, D.T. Davies, R.T. Davies, C. Elsbury, J.E. Fussell, Mrs J. Gale, N. George, C.J. Gordon, R.W. Gough, D.M. Gray, D.T. Hardacre, C. Hawker, A.G. Higgs, G.J. Hughes, M.P. James, G. Jones, S. Kent, A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, C.P. Mann, S. Morgan, Mrs G. Oliver, Mrs R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, D.W.R. Preece, Mrs D. Price, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard, D. Rees, K.V. Reynolds, R. Saralis, S. Skivens, Mrs E. Stenner, Mrs J. Summers, T.J. Williams, R. Woodyatt

Together with:

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services), A. Price (Deputy Monitoring Officer), S. Harris (Acting Head of Corporate Finance), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. COUNCILLOR MARTIN JAMES

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Martin James to the meeting following his recent period of illness.

2. WEB-CASTING FILMING AND ELECTRONIC VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Mayor reminded those present that the meeting was being filmed for training purposes in advance of the planned implementation of live web-casting of Council meetings. Members were also advised that the new electronic voting system would be tested at the meeting. During the course of the meeting, decisions would continue to be made by a show of hands but for testing and training purposes, each vote would be repeated using the electronic voting system.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miss L. Ackerman, Mrs E.M. Aldworth, Mrs K.R. Baker, Mrs G. Bevan, J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, L. Binding, D. Bolter, C. Durham, Mrs C. Forehead, Mrs P. Griffiths, D. Havard, K. James, G. Johnston, Mrs B.A. Jones, Ms J.G. Jones, M.J. Prew, J.E. Roberts, Mrs M.E. Sargent, J. Taylor, L.G. Whittle and S. Aspinall (Acting Deputy Chief Executive) and D. Street (Director of Social Services).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As tenants, or having relatives who are tenants in council properties, certain Members sought advice as to whether they were required to declare an interest in the report to be presented. They were advised that as this is a financial arrangement they were not required to declare an interest.

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

REPORT REFERRED FROM CABINET

Consideration was given to the following report referred from Cabinet held earlier in the day.

5. DECISION FOR THE AUTHORITY TO BUY OUT OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) SUBSIDY ARRANGEMENTS

Cabinet considered this report on 17th December 2014, and in endorsing its content, recommended its acceptance by Council.

Consideration was then given to the report which provided Members with the financial business case and background so that they can determine whether to borrow funds from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) to buy out of the HRA Subsidy arrangements.

The Acting Director of Corporate Services reminded Members that they had previously been advised that there was likely to be an opportunity to buy out of the subsidy arrangements, and in making the decision, they will also need to consider a borrowing cap in respect of the HRA and a change to the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy.

Mrs Scammell gave an overview of the report and explained how and why a negative HRA Subsidy arrangement currently exists. She confirmed that after lengthy negotiations, the Welsh Government and HM Treasury have reached an agreement that will allow the eleven Authorities in Wales with Council housing stock to exit from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy system and become self-financing from April 2015. These negotiations have been undertaken on the basis of the completion of individual voluntary agreements with the 11 landlord Authorities rather than waiting for the primary legislation to be enacted.

It was noted that the agreement has two parts, firstly Authorities will be required to buy their way out of the current HRA subsidy system with payment of a one off settlement figure to HM Treasury, and secondly Authorities will be subject to a cap on HRA borrowing. In noting that the new self-financing arrangements are planned to be in place from April 2015 and will increase revenue year on year for the eleven landlord Authorities it was explained that the annual negative subsidy payment of circa £73m from the eleven landlord Authorities in Wales to the HM UK Treasury will be replaced from April 2015 by a payment in the form of a Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan from the PWLB. This Authority's share of the total debt will be based on H M Treasury receiving a notional £40 m interest per annum from the eleven Welsh Authorities.

The Acting Director of Corporate Services gave an overview of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System and the HRA Reform in Wales and made reference to the settlement figure and the distribution of this figure between Authorities. She advised that the eleven Landlord Authorities currently make annual HRA negative subsidy payments to the HM Treasury. The settlement will effectively buy Authorities out of the requirement to make these payments from April 2015. However, HM Treasury requires that the settlement is “fiscally neutral over the long term” and this will require the eleven Authorities to take out loans from the PWLB to fund their share of the settlement figure. Under the terms of the agreement with the Treasury a notional £40m interest will be used to generate a total settlement value using the PWLB 30 year maturity rate.

A query was raised in relation to the distribution of the settlement figure between Authorities and Members were advised that whilst HM Treasury has agreed that the distribution of the aggregate settlement figure of approximately £920m between the eleven Authorities is a decision for Welsh Ministers, there is broad consensus that the distribution of the settlement should not result in any Authority being worse off. Following consultation with the eleven Authorities, the former Minister for Housing and Regeneration has agreed that it will be distributed between the eleven Authorities so all benefit by an equal percentage of their current negative subsidy payment. This approach is supported by all eleven authorities.

With regards to the 'borrowing cap', the HRA Exit Agreement with HM Treasury will impose an aggregate HRA borrowing cap of £1.85 billion on the eleven Authorities in Wales although this figure could fluctuate based on PWLB interest rates at the time of the “Buy Out”. This figure is based on the planned borrowing that Authorities included in the housing business plans submitted to Welsh Government with their applications for Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) in December 2012-13. Details of the latest draft figures for the breakdown of the Limit on Indebtedness were appended to the report. HM Treasury has also agreed that Welsh Ministers can decide how the borrowing cap is distributed between Authorities in Wales. The UK Government is in the process of passing the necessary legislation to make this possible.

The WLGA and representatives from the eleven Authorities have worked with the Welsh Government to identify credible distribution options for the borrowing capacity and three options were included in the Welsh Government consultation paper. The preferred option that all eleven Authorities could “live with” distributes some borrowing capacity to every authority, with a greater amount being allocated to those Authorities that indicated a need for borrowing for new build in their housing 2012-13 business plans.

Details were then given of the legislative changes that would be required should this arrangement proceed. The proposed introduction of the new self-financing arrangements, and how this would be achieved by making changes in which the Authority undertakes the landlord role, were also explained, although these would be subject to further reports and did not affect the decision required in the report.

With regards to the Treasury Management Strategy, the move to self-financing will require some changes to be incorporated in this strategy, including borrowing to fund the Authority's share of the settlement figure, other priorities and the management of the debt.

Once the Authority has bought itself out of the current HRASubsidy arrangement, it will need to put in place arrangements for the management of the HRA debt which will comprise of existing HRA debt, HRA settlement debt and new debt borrowed to deliver HRA capital schemes (WHQS). The Acting Director of Corporate Services referred to the options available to manage the HRA debt and Members noted the advantages and disadvantages of each, which were outlined in the report. The report concluded that option 2, a two-pool approach, which will include respective old and new debt, should be adopted.

It was confirmed that the introduction of the new rent policy should not impact on the buy out process. Similarly there would be no impact on the use capital receipts to fund capital expenditure or to repay debt (although it will be necessary to formally set out the treatment of HRA capital receipts), nor on any future requirement for de-pooling service charges.

During the course of the ensuing debate queries were raised in relation to the existing WHQS programme and it was explained that this proposal will not affect the agreed spend. With regards to borrowing cap calculations, the figures identified in the report are for illustrative purposes, and will be updated to reflect the PWLB interest on 31st March (the day that the final settlement value will be known). Reference was also made to the length of the loan and the repayment process and it was confirmed that this will be dependant on the number of short and longer-term investments that are subsequently taken.

A further query raised in relation to the proposed new rent policy and as to whether, as the Act introduces new powers for Welsh Ministers to set a rent standard and to issue guidance, there would be any potential to vary rents across Wales. It was noted that the policy will set a target rent band for each Authority and if the average weekly rent (excluding service charges) is below the target rent, the Authority will have to increase average rents, and if the average is above the target rent, average rents will increase at a lower rate. In that Authorities will be responsible for setting the rents of individual properties, a report will be presented to Cabinet/scrutiny committee in respect of decisions that will be required to comply with the new rent policy in due course.

Members were reminded that if the arrangements are not approved by all eleven local authorities retaining housing stock, the current HRAS system would remain in place until the primary legislation is enacted.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the report:-

- (i) it be agreed that the Authority exits the HRA Subsidy arrangements prior to 2015/16, to enable the HRA to become self-financing from April 2015;
- (ii) it be agreed to borrow this Authority's share of the total settlement value currently estimated to be £84.8m and it be noted that the final figure may be higher or lower;
- (iii) the Officer recommendation to use option 2 (as detailed in the report) to calculate the HRA share of debt after 1st April 2015 be endorsed;
- (iv) it be accepted that a borrowing cap will be applied to the HRA after March 2015 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (v) in relation to the Buy Out and subject to the Interim Head of Legal Services approving the terms of the Agreement, it be agreed that this Authority enters into the Voluntary Legal Agreement to ensure the Buy Out is achieved.

6. COUNCILLOR GERALD JONES - PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Members congratulated Councillor Gerald Jones on his selection as a labour candidate for the Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney constituency in next years general election.

In closing the meeting the Mayor wished those present the compliments of the season.

The meeting closed at 5.45pm.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2015 they were signed by the Mayor.

MAYOR

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COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

**SUBJECT: ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014 -
AMENDMENT TO AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 1.1 The attached report, which advises of changes to legal powers arising from the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, was presented to Cabinet on 28th November 2014. At that time it was noted that Officers within the Public Protection Division, Housing Services and Community and Leisure Services require additional authorisation under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in order to be able to enforce new legislative provisions to deal with anti-social behaviour that came into force on 20th October 2014.
- 1.2 The Act provides a new range of powers to tackle anti-social behaviour affecting communities and the ability of members of the public to enjoy public spaces through two new tools with enforcement responsibilities, Community Protection Notices and Public Space Protection Orders. There are a range of new provisions under the Act, however, the report deals with three areas only viz. Community Protection Notices - issue and fixed penalty notices; Public Space Protection Orders - enforcement and fixed penalty notices and Closure Notices/Orders - level of designation.
- 1.3 Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands it was unanimously agreed to recommend to Council that for the reasons contained in the officer's report:-
- (i) the implementation of this legislation be noted and the recommended changes to the Council's Constitution be referred to Council for determination. The Council's Monitoring Officer make the necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution.
 - (ii) The Council's Constitution and Terms of Reference be amended by adding the following:-

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- 1.4 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.
- Author: H. Morgan, Senior Committee Services Officer.
- Appendix 1 Report to Cabinet dated 26th November 2014.

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CABINET – 26TH NOVEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014 –
AMENDMENT TO AUTHORISATION OF OFFICERS**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of required changes to legal powers arising from the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for Officers of the Public Protection Division, Housing and Community and Leisure Services prior to the presentation of the report to Council.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Officers within the Public Protection Division, Housing Services and Community and Leisure Services require additional authorisation under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in order to be able to enforce new legislative provisions to deal with anti-social behaviour that came into force on the 20th October 2014.
- 2.2 The Act provides a new range of powers to tackle anti-social behaviour affecting communities, and the ability of members of the public to enjoy public spaces, through two new tools with enforcement responsibilities; Community Protection Notices and Public Space Protection Orders.
- 2.3 The Act further provides a fast, flexible remedy for the closure of premises associated with nuisance or disorder through the ability to issue Closure Notices for 24/48 hours. A decision is required on the designation of Officers able to issue Closure Notices.
- 2.4 The Act provides for fixed penalty notices to be issued for breach of Community Protection Notices and Public Space Protection Orders.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The new powers provide additional tools to tackle anti-social behaviour which contribute to the Safer Caerphilly priorities within the single integrated plan 'Caerphilly Delivers', Objective 1 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2012, and the Community Strategy aim for people to feel safe in their own homes, neighbourhoods and town centres.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 There are a range of new provisions under the Act, however, this report deals with three areas only:
- Community Protection Notices – issue and fixed penalty notices
 - Public Space Protection Orders – enforcement and fixed penalty notices
 - Closure Notices/Orders – level of designation.

- 4.2 Community Protection Notices (CPNs) can be issued by authorised local authority staff, police officers and registered social landlords (if designated by the local authority). As yet no registered social landlords have requested designation.

CPNs are intended to deal with anti-social behaviour affecting a community e.g. graffiti, litter or noise and can be issued against the person, business or organisation responsible, following an initial warning letter.

CPNs specify the matter to be resolved and the timescale to achieve it. Breach of a CPN is a criminal offence that may be dealt with by prosecution or fixed penalty notice. Should the work required not be carried out it may be undertaken by the local authority at the responsible person's cost. Alternatively a court may order that the work is done by the person responsible.

Categories of staff who would make use of CPNs under the appropriate circumstances are:

- The Community Safety Manager and Community Safety Wardens
- Environmental Health Officers and Enforcement Officers
- Tenancy Enforcement Officers
- Community and Leisure Services (Waste Management)

- 4.3 Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) replace Designated Public Place Orders, Gating Orders and Dog Control Orders with a three year subsistence period for existing orders in place across the Authority.

PSPOs can be used to deal with a wider range of anti-social behaviour issues than current orders.

Local authority staff may be authorised to enforce PSPOs and to issue fixed penalty notices to persons who contravene.

Categories of staff who would make use of PSPO's under appropriate circumstances are:

- Community Safety Wardens
- Environmental Health Officers and Enforcement Officers.

- 4.4 Closure Notices may be issued ordering that closure of premises, the use of which has, or is likely to, result in disorder or nuisance to members of the public.

The issue of a Closure Notice must be followed by application to the Magistrates Court for a proposed Closure Order within set timescales.

Closure Notices may be issued for up to 24 hours by a designated Local Authority Officer or Police Inspector.

Closure Notices may be issued for up to 48 hours by a designated Local Authority Officer or Police Superintendent.

The proposed designations for Local Authority Officers are:

- Up to 24 hours the Head of Public Protection, a Director, or the Deputy Chief Executive;
- Up to 48 hours a Director or the Deputy Chief Executive.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no potential equalities implications in this report and its recommendations on groups or individuals who fall under the categories identified in Section 6 of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan. There is no requirement for an Equalities Impact Assessment Questionnaire to be completed for this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None directly arising from the authorisation of officers under this Act since additional workload will be absorbed within existing staffing.
- 6.2 Local Authority costs may be incurred in
- Performing works in default for Community Protection Notices not complied with, however prosecution and court orders requiring works to be done are other options available.
 - Denoting Public Space Protection Orders by means of adequate signage of geographical areas
 - Securing, maintaining and repairing premises subject to Closure Notices/Orders, however a court may order that expenditure be reimbursed.
- 6.3 Some small revenue may be obtained from the payment of fixed penalty notices. However, these are punitive and not income generation measures.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None directly arising from the authorisation of officers under this Act since it will be used to supplement existing enforcement activities and absorbed into normal workload. The workload will be monitored and consultation with staff and their representatives will be undertaken as appropriate.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The report has been sent to the Consultees listed below, and there are no consultation responses, which have not been reflected in the body of the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Cabinet note the implementation of this legislation and refer the recommended changes to the Council's Constitution to Council for determination. The Council's Monitoring Officer make the necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution.
- 9.2 That the Council's Constitution and Terms of Reference be amended by adding the following:
Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 In order to ensure the proper and effective enforcement of the legislation and alleviate anti-social behaviour problems in communities.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The discharge of duties under the above legislation is a Cabinet function. The proposed change to the Council's Constitution is a Council function.

Author: Kathryn Peters, Community Safety Manager
Consultees: Councillor David Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services
Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive

Rob Hartshorn, Head of Public Protection
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services
Ceri Edwards, Environmental Health Manager
Tony White, Waste Strategy and Operations Manager
Graham North, Public Sector Housing Manager
Tim Stephens, Development Control Manager
David A. Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Sian Phillips, Human Resources Manager
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager



COUNCIL - 27TH JANUARY 2015

**SUBJECT: COLLECTION OF DRY RECYCLABLES - WASTE FRAMEWORK
DIRECTIVE AND WASTE (ENGLAND & WALES) REGULATIONS 2011**

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND S.151 OFFICER

- 1.1 The attached report was considered by Cabinet on 17th December 2014. The report provides an update on legislative changes that will come into effect on 1st January 2015 and seeks authorisation to continue with existing collection arrangements until further evidence is available on which to base long term future decisions.
- 1.2 The Separate Collection requirements of the Regulations comes into force on 1st January 2015. From this date Waste Collection Authorities will be required to provide separate collections of glass, metals, plastics and paper where doing so is 'Necessary' - to ensure waste undergoes recovery operations to facilitate improved recovery (the Necessity Test) and that it is 'Technically, Environmentally and Economically Practicable' (TEEP) to do so. The important part of the new legislation is the necessity test. If separate collection would increase the quantity or quality of material collected, this would generally indicate that it meets the necessity test and change from a co-mingled to a separate collection would be necessary.
- 1.3 Officers have reviewed the evidence available to date (customer satisfaction, high level costings, performance and limited end destination comparisons), which indicates that the Authority does not need to change its collection regime at present. However, there are significant gaps in the evidence base at present i.e. at least 6 months worth of MRF regulations data, WRAP's work on the end destinations of materials and WG not having published its final guidance and this information will be crucial in making a fully informed, robust decision on future service provision. It is important for Council to note that WG issued the statutory guidance to Welsh authorities after Cabinet considered the report on 17th December (copy attached). This new guidance sets out a number of principles relating to the collection of recyclables and is intended to inform decision making by waste collection authorities. In particular it states that, "It is important to recognise that the 2011 Waste Regulations do not prohibit the use of all co-mingled collections of the four waste materials from 2015. Rather they establish separate collection as the default position, and set out the conditions under which the relevant establishments or undertakings can deviate from that default position"
- 1.4 The guidance continues to focus on a robust evidence base and sites examples of evidence and bases for decision making such as, council papers, business cases for investment, tender specifications, assessment of current and historical collection methods, information about materials recovery facility performance, information about relevant technological changes, and economic and environmental assessments of options. Given this focus on evidence based decision making within the guidance it remains the case that there are still key pieces of evidence that the authority is still not in possession of and robust decision making would not be possible without this additional information.
- 1.5 Following consideration and discussion at the Cabinet meeting it was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the officer's report be approved subject to reports on the Authority's recycling levels being presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet on a quarterly basis in

order that Members can continue to monitor the situation. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report: -

1. The existing method of kerbside collection of dry recyclables be continued subject to further review in 2015 when additional evidence/information becomes available;
2. Officers of the Authority agree to continue to participate in the study being undertaken by the Welsh Government to gather further end destination evidence and to participate in the WG exercise to model various collection scenarios;
3. Reports on the Authority's recycling levels be presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet on a quarterly basis in order that Members can continue to monitor the situation.

1.5 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

Author: S.M. Kauczok, Committee Services Officer.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Welsh Government - Statutory Guidance on the Separate Collection of Waste Paper, Metal, Plastic and Glass

Appendix 2 Report to Special Cabinet dated 17th December 2014.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

Statutory Guidance on the Separate Collection of Waste Paper, Metal, Plastic and Glass

Statutory Guidance on Separate Collection of Waste Paper, Metal, Plastic and Glass

References

“the four waste materials” means paper, metal, plastic and glass;

“the Waste Framework Directive” means Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, as amended;

“the 2011 Waste Regulations” means the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, as amended by the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012;

“waste collection authorities” means for any county or county borough, the council of the county or county borough; and

“establishments and undertakings” include any organisation or sole trader (e.g. a business, company, partnership authority, society, trust, club or charity)¹.

Introduction

1. This guidance is intended to inform decisions that establishments or undertakings that collect, transport or receive the four waste materials (“relevant establishments or undertakings”) or, in the case of Waste Collection Authorities, if they arrange for the collection of waste, make from 1 January 2015, in order to assist in properly discharging their duties relating to the four waste materials.
2. This guidance covers regulations 13 and 14 of the 2011 Waste Regulations. These provisions transpose articles 10 and 11(1) of the Waste Framework Directive into domestic law.
3. It is important to recognise that the 2011 Waste Regulations do not prohibit the use of all co-mingled collections of the four waste materials from 2015. Rather they establish separate collection as the default position, and set out the conditions under which the relevant establishments or undertakings can deviate from that default position. However, the regulations set a high bar.
4. There is no expiry date for this guidance. The guidance will be reviewed if there are major legal changes, for example if the underlying European law changes or new case law emerges.

Legal Background

5. This document is statutory guidance to relevant establishments or undertakings in Wales and is made using the Welsh Ministers’ powers under regulation 15 of the 2011 Waste Regulations. The Regulations in turn implement part of the Waste Framework Directive.

¹ The Welsh Government does not consider that the term applies to private individuals acting in a personal capacity.

6. Under Article 11(1) paragraph 2 of the Waste Framework Directive the UK must take measures to promote high quality recycling, and to accomplish this shall set up separate collections of waste².
7. Under Article 11(1) paragraph 3 of the Waste Framework Directive, by 2015 the UK is required to set up separate collection for at least the four waste materials subject to two tests being satisfied:
 - (a) it is necessary to ensure that waste management is carried out in accordance with Article 4 and Article 13 of the Waste Framework Directive, and to facilitate or improve recovery; and
 - (b) it is technically, environmentally and economically practicable.
8. In Wales these obligations are transposed through the system created by the 2011 Waste Regulations (namely regulations 13 to 14). From 1 January 2015 onwards, this system places duties on all establishments and undertakings that collect, transport and receive the four waste materials and on waste collection authorities when they make arrangements for their collection.
9. All reasonable measures must be taken to ensure that waste streams that have been collected separately are not then mixed with other waste or other material with different properties³. This duty applies to all relevant establishments and undertakings that collect, transport or receive the four waste materials which have been separately collected⁴.
10. The 2011 Waste Regulations refer back to Articles 4 and 13 of the Waste Framework Directive.
11. Article 4 sets out the waste hierarchy. The hierarchy is a way of classifying waste management priorities, putting the most important first, in order to promote the best overall environmental outcome. The hierarchy is: (a) prevention; (b) preparing for re-use; (c) recycling; (d) other recovery, e.g. energy recovery; and (e) disposal. To assist establishments and undertakings in their waste management decisions, the Welsh Government has produced guidance on applying the hierarchy⁵.
12. Article 13 requires the UK to take necessary measures to ensure that waste management is carried out without endangering human health or harming the environment and, in particular:
 - (a) without risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals;
 - (b) without causing a nuisance through noise or odours; and
 - (c) without adversely affecting the countryside or places of special interest.

² This is subject to the pre-requisites of being 'technically, environmentally and economically practicable and appropriate to meet the necessary quality standards for relevant recycling sectors.'

³ This is subject to the pre-requisite of being necessary to ensure waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with Article 4 and 13 of the Waste Framework Directive and to facilitate and improve recovery.

⁴ Regulation 14(1) of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011.

⁵ http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/waste_recycling/publication/hierarchyguide/?lang=en

13. The waste management obligations (e.g. separate collection) are regulated by Natural Resources Wales through compliance, stop and restoration notices (under Regulations 38, 39 and 40 respectively of the 2011 Waste Regulations), and ultimately by way of criminal proceedings for breach of such notices (under Regulation 42 of the 2011 Waste Regulations)⁶.

Key Principles

14. The primary aim of the 2011 Waste Regulations, in line with the aim of the Waste Framework Directive (“the Directive”), is to deliver the best overall environmental outcomes and the protection of the environment and human health.

15. Prioritising recycling over disposal is also an aim of the 2011 Waste Regulations, as seen in the waste hierarchy and is the most likely means of achieving the higher objective of the best overall environmental outcome⁷.

16. Another principle is that of high quality recycling. Under the Directive, Member States have a duty to promote high quality recycling and to this end are to set up separate collections for waste where technically, environmentally and economically practicable (TEEP) and appropriate to meet the necessary quality standards of the relevant recycling sectors.

17. Where the four waste materials have been separately collected they are required to be kept separate if necessary to:

- (a) ensure that waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with Article 4 (the waste hierarchy) and Article 13 (protection of human health and the environment) of the Directive, and
- (b) to facilitate or improve recovery.

18. Where relevant establishments or undertakings collect any of the four waste materials or arrange for them to be collected, they should collect them in a way so as to maximise the amount of materials that can be recycled.

19. The relevant establishment or undertaking should ensure that the four waste materials are collected separately from each other and from other sources of waste, where necessary to facilitate or improve recovery⁸ (e.g. the quality of recyclate) and where technically, environmentally and economically practicable (TEEP)

20. In order to facilitate and improve recovery, and to support the requirement of the Directive for the UK to promote high quality recycling, relevant establishments and undertakings should aim to not only increase the quantity but also the quality of the four waste materials. This is explained further on in this guidance.

⁶ Enforcement provisions are provided for in Part 10 of the 2011 Waste Regulations.

⁷ However, the Directive and likewise the 2011 Waste Regulations recognises that the best overall environmental outcome may not necessarily follow the priority order of the hierarchy and provides for departure from the waste hierarchy where it is necessary to achieve the best overall environmental outcome.

⁸ In addition to it being necessary to ensure that waste management is carried out in accordance with Article 4 and Article 13 of the Waste Framework Directive.

21. The requirement for separate collection does not mean that a separate bin is needed for each material. Separate collection can be carried out, for example, through a mixture of household/business sort and kerbside sort as well as from bring sites and civic amenity sites. In determining a suitable collection method, waste collection authorities should note that nothing in the 2011 Waste Regulations detracts from the basic duty set out in section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to arrange for the collection of household waste, and of commercial waste by request.
22. The terms “necessary”, “practicable”, and “all reasonable measures” are value judgements. The relevant establishment or undertaking will need to consider local conditions and look at what can be achieved in comparable situations elsewhere in Wales or the rest of the UK.
23. These judgements should not be taken lightly. Where separate collection is considered necessary in accordance with Regulation 13(4) and 14(2) of the 2011 Waste Regulations, the assessment of “practicability” then has to be made robustly. Relevant establishments or undertakings should consider not just whether separate collection is practicable by 2015, but also when it may become practicable, for which streams it would be practicable, and in which neighbourhoods or locations it would be practicable. The requirements do not require an all or nothing approach. Relevant establishments or undertakings should seek to deliver the best overall environmental outcome that is practicable.
24. Every relevant establishment or undertaking that does not separately collect waste paper, metal, plastic or glass should actively consider how much collection is practicable and whether separate collection would improve the quantity of material that could be recycled or reused, and the quality of recyclate. Separate collection would most likely achieve a better environmental outcome as a result of providing higher quality recyclate but these considerations must be taken on a case by case basis.
25. Each waste stream should be assessed in turn. Some relevant establishments or undertakings may conclude that a hybrid approach is appropriate: separately collecting some streams, such as glass, whilst co-mingling others such as plastics and metals, provided that the quality produced would be similar to that resulting from separate collection.
26. There are no specific requirements on how decisions should be documented. However, it is best practice for relevant establishments or undertakings to audit their decision-making processes, identifying the evidence used and the timetable for review. This will enable them to justify decisions to residents and, where necessary, to the regulator Natural Resources Wales, and provide an evidence base for any legal challenge to those decisions. A suitable evidence base could include for example: the council papers about relevant decisions; the business case for an in-house investment or the specification for any tendered collection service; assessment of the current and historical collection method; information about materials recovery facility performance; information about relevant technological changes; information about economic assessments of options and information on environmental impact of options etc. Under regulations 38, 39 and 40 respectively of the 2011 Waste Regulations, Natural Resources Wales may issue a compliance notice, a stop notice or a restoration notice to an establishment or undertaking which collects waste paper, glass, plastic or metal

in contravention of regulation 13(2) of the 2011 Waste Regulations. Failure to comply with any of these notices may result in criminal proceedings being taken, and on summary conviction, can face a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum⁹ and on conviction on indictment, to a fine.

Detail

Carrying out the assessment

27. All relevant establishments or undertakings will need to consider how the new duty affects them before 1st January 2015. Where, in the opinion/judgment of the relevant establishment or undertaking it is not necessary or, if necessary it is not technically, environmentally or economically practicable, for the relevant establishment or undertaking to separately collect at that time, this decision should be reviewed from time to time, and action taken accordingly. There is a natural life-cycle to investment decisions in waste services and infrastructure. The separate collection duty should be considered during early discussions about service changes, for example: renewal or extension of existing contracts, vehicle fleet renewal, entry into waste management partnerships with other authorities, or potential investment in new infrastructure or working practices. Over time, changes in technology will also affect both necessity and practicability.

Assessing what is “necessary”: does separate collection facilitate or improve recovery?

28. In addition to separate collection being necessary to ensure waste undergoes recovery operations in accordance with articles 4 and 13 of the Waste Framework Directive, it must also be necessary to facilitate and improve recovery. Recycling is a specific case of recovery and so facilitating and improving recovery includes the aim of enhancing and making easier recycling (e.g. increasing the quality of the four waste materials).
29. Two or more of the waste streams may be collected using a co-mingled system if the system produces recyclate of a quality similar to that of separately collected waste which is intended to facilitate or improve recovery. The bench-mark should be that the recyclate is similar in both quality and quantity to that achieved with good separate collection. Examples of potential uses of recyclate from a good separate collection system are:
- The use of recovered glass in re-melt applications;
 - The separation of recovered plastic into individual polymers to produce, for example, new food and drinks containers;
 - The use of recovered paper for the production of new paper products.
30. Subject to available separation technology, the co-mingled collection of certain dry recyclates (e.g. metal and plastic) may be possible, if these materials can subsequently provide materials of the quality of those provided by separate collection - typically materials of a high standard. However, it is unlikely that the co-mingled collection of bio-waste and other ‘wet’ waste streams with dry streams such as paper will lead to high quality recycling. This has been

⁹ Note: Section 85(1) of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 removes the maximum fine for summary convictions. At the time of issue, this provision was not yet in force.

discussed and considered in the European Commission's guidance (paragraph 4.3.4, para 4)¹⁰. Technology for separating glass from other waste components varies significantly across the country and will continue to develop. However co-mingling glass will not usually lead to high-quality recycling of all of the glass component. In addition it often leads to contamination of other streams.

31. Co-mingled collection of glass together with paper or plastic may produce an acceptable standard of recyclate where the relevant establishment or undertaking can demonstrate that a similar tonnage of:
- recycled glass cullet is suitable for use as feedstock in the glass producing industry or other re-melt applications;
 - recycled paper is suitable for use as feedstock in the paper producing industry; and
 - recycled plastic is suitable for use as feedstock in the plastic producing industry

as is achievable through separate collection.

32. In order to assess whether separate collection is necessary, relevant establishments or undertakings will be able to access data on the quality of input and output from all Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) that deal with over 1,000 tonnes of materials a year. Relevant establishments or undertakings should use and document this new information as one of their considerations in deciding on the necessary collection system. This data will be available under amendments to the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 dealing with MRFs¹¹, which came into force in October 2014, with the first quarter's data expected to be available from spring 2015.
33. Relevant establishments or undertakings can compare the standard of recyclate so obtained with the standard of recyclate that can be achieved via separate collection in comparable locations. They can also assess whether the recyclate produced is of a quality that will facilitate or improve recovery.

Assessing what is "Practicable"?

34. Where separate collection is "necessary" as discussed above the relevant establishment or undertaking should adopt the best environmental outcome that is technically, environmentally and economically practicable for the area it covers.
35. In a recent case¹² which concerned a challenge to the legal duty placed on relevant establishments and undertakings to separately collect waste, the court interpreted the meaning of 'practicable'. It stated 'in common parlance, practicable means more than merely convenient, useful or even practical; but rather feasible or capable of being done'.

Technical, environmental and economic practicability considerations

¹⁰ Guidance on the interpretation of key provisions of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/guidance.htm>

¹¹ See new Schedule 9A to the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010

¹² 'R (on the application of UK Recyclate) v Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Welsh Ministers [2013] EWHC 425 (Admin); see paragraph 18 of the judgment.

36. When considering what is practicable the relevant establishment or undertaking should aim for the best environmental outcome and consider what is technically, environmentally and economically practicable. In this context “practicability” has a specific meaning which is set out in paragraph 4.4 of the European Commission’s guidance¹³.

- ‘Technically practicable’ means that the separate collection may be implemented through a system which has been technically developed and proven to function in practice.
- ‘Environmentally practicable’ means the added value of ecological benefits justifies possible negative environmental effects of the separate collection (e.g. additional emissions from transport).
- ‘Economically practicable’ refers to a separate collection which does not cause excessive costs in comparison with the treatment of a non-separated waste stream, considering the added value of recovery and recycling and the principle of proportionality.

37. The preference of waste producers (for example, householders or businesses) for different methods of waste collection will not be a relevant consideration unless it identifies technical, economic or environmental impracticabilities.

38. Relevant establishments and undertakings, including Waste Collection Authorities, may wish to consider the following (non-exhaustive) list of issues when assessing practicability:

a. Differences in capital and running costs between separate collection and co-mingled collection methods

A consideration for moving to separate collection on 1 January 2015 is likely to be the costs associated with changes to existing contracts and infrastructure. The cost of altering contracts is a consideration in determining practicability; however, subsequent savings (derived from increased income for higher quality recyclate) may result in a relatively short pay-back period for the costs of the change.

Where waste collection is contracted out, the pre-qualification criteria and specification for tenders should normally be flexible enough to allow for separate collection where this is necessary in order to secure high quality recycling. This will enable the market to feed into the economic assessment of what is technically, environmentally and economically practicable.

In making a determination about practicability, relevant establishments and undertakings who have entered into contracts since the 2011 Waste Regulations were introduced need to be mindful that in itself this is not a justification for continuing to co-mingle. The costs of switching from a co-mingled recycling service to a separate collection recycling service should be considered on its own merits and separately from contractual or other obligations that the undertaking has entered into since the introduction of the 2011 Waste Regulations. The European Commissions’ guidance at paragraph 4.4 provides some helpful commentary. It states “*economically practicable*”

¹³ Guidance on the interpretation of key provisions of Directive 2008/98/EC on waste. At: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/guidance.htm>

refers to a separate collection which does not cause excessive costs in comparison with the treatment of a non-separated waste stream, considering the added value of recovery and recycling and the principle of proportionality."

Relevant establishments and undertakings are advised to consider very carefully pending actions that may impede their ability to comply with the new duty from the start of January 2015, e.g. when considering entering into any new or extended contract with MRF operators.

b. Congested streets, flats and houses of multiple occupation.

Full kerbside sort or other types of separate collection systems may not be practicable for waste collection in some congested streets, although there are examples where kerbside sort local authorities have found a solution to this. Where space for containers is at a premium, or where rubbish chutes are used, this may also limit opportunities for household or business separate collection.

In such circumstances relevant establishments or undertakings should consider the practicability of careful timing of collections, on-street recycling points and the partial separation of recyclate, for example, separating glass from other waste streams.

The relevant establishment or undertaking should also consider the practicability of different collection options in different parts of the area they serve, and changes that can be made to the timing of collections.

c. Very dispersed communities

It may not be economically or environmentally practicable to collect fully separate waste streams from very dispersed communities or businesses with existing vehicles and infrastructure. However, more opportunities are likely to arise as vehicles are replaced with newer models that enable different material streams to be collected on a single pass.

d. Technically capable of being recycled

As the extent of recycling has increased, new markets for recyclate have opened up. This trend is expected to continue. This in turn will make it practicable for relevant establishments and undertakings in more areas to recycle a wider variety of plastic such as pots, tubs, trays and film.



CABINET – 17TH DECEMBER 2014

SUBJECT: COLLECTION OF DRY RECYCLABLES – WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE & WASTE (ENGLAND & WALES) REGULATIONS 2011

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet and Council with an update on legislative changes which come into effect on 1st January 2015 and its potential impact on the recyclable collection regime employed by Caerphilly County Borough Council.
- 1.2 To seek Member authorisation to continue with existing collection arrangements until further evidence is available on which to base long-term future decisions.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report sets out the basis of the legislation, complexities over its interpretation and implementation and the many complex issues surrounding the Authority's collection regime such as performance and user satisfaction.
- 2.2 The report then considers the various aspects of "TEEP" (Technical, Environmental, Economical & Practical) and the evidence that the Authority has available.
- 2.3 Finally, the report asks Cabinet to consider all of these aspects and to reach a decision on the current situation and any future review.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Caerphilly County Borough Council currently operates a collection system that involves:-
 - Weekly co-mingled kerbside recycling (the term "co-mingling" means that dry mixed recyclables (metal cans, glass jars & bottles, plastic bottles & trays, newspaper, magazines & junk mail) are placed in a single collection container (predominantly a brown wheeled bin).
 - Weekly food waste collection (food caddy)
 - Weekly garden waste collection (re-usable bag)
 - Fortnightly residual waste (green or black wheeled bin)
- 3.2 This service mix has operated since October 2009 when it was introduced following significant public consultation, consideration by the "Caerphilly Waste Forum" and endorsement by Scrutiny and Cabinet.
- 3.3 Caerphilly was fairly unique as the Authority had previous experience of delivering recycling services via the kerbside sort system (initially fortnightly then weekly) and the change

introduced in 2009 has dramatically improved the Authority's recycling performance (this is discussed later in this report).

- 3.4 The Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2011 implement certain aspects of the EU revised Waste Framework Directive, with regard to the collection and processing of certain recyclable materials. The aim is to ensure that materials collected as recyclables are in fact recycled and not disposed of in a certain way. The Directive is concerned with the quality of materials collected and the ability of materials processors to sort materials and provide high quality materials for subsequent reprocessing and use.
- 3.5 The interpretation of the Directive & England & Wales Regulations has been the subject of significant debate within the waste industry with the result that the Welsh Government (WG) consulted on potential draft statutory guidance on the separate collection of recyclables in the summer of 2014. The Authority responded to this consultation after receiving joint legal advice (from a specialist waste lawyer) with the other authorities in Wales that collect recyclables in a similar manner to Caerphilly. However, at the time of writing this report WG have not issued any guidance or its response to the consultation (in comparison, DEFRA in England have decided not to issue any guidance). The Authority's response to the consultation was retorted to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 16/9/14.
- 3.6 The Separate Collection requirements of the Regulations come into force on 1st January 2015. From this date Waste Collection Authorities will be required to provide separate collections of glass, metals, plastics and paper where doing so is:-
 - (i) **NECESSARY** - to ensure waste undergoes recovery operations to facilitate improved recovery (the so called **NECESSITY TEST**) and,
 - (ii) it is **TECHNICALLY, ENVIRONMENTALLY AND ECONOMICALLY PRACTICABLE (TEEP)** to do so
- 3.7 In addition to the legislation described above, WG's policy preference is for separate or kerbside sort collections and may or may not use fiscal measures (such as conditioning the Sustainable Waste Management Grant) to drive forward this policy preference in the future.
- 3.8 For clarity, "separate collections" means the gathering of waste, including the preliminary sorting and storage of waste for the purposes of transport to a waste treatment facility where a waste stream is kept separately by type and mixture so as to facilitate a specific treatment. There has been significant debate over what constitutes separate collection and the matter has been the subject of legal argument in the UK.
- 3.9 The important aspect of the new legislation is the necessity test. If separate collection would increase the quantity or quality of material collected, this would generally indicate that it meets the necessity test and change from a co-mingled to a separate collection would be necessary.
- 3.10 The over-riding aim of the legislation is to ensure that collection authorities produce recyclate capable of being used by reprocessors to process the materials into a product of similar quality to the original.
- 3.11 Co-mingling is therefore allowed where separate collection is determined not to be necessary to provide higher quality recyclates or where separate collection is not technically, environmentally and economically practicable.
- 3.12 At this stage, what is important is to review the evidence available for the purposes of the necessity test; to consider the robustness of that evidence and any gaps and to make an informed decision that a collection system change is or is not necessary at this time. This decision will also need to be reviewed in the future (particularly as there are gaps in the evidence base).

4. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 4.1 Maximising re-use and recycling has been at the heart of many of the Authority's strategies for a number of years, including the corporate plan and various service improvement plans. The positive effect that re-use and recycling can make to the management of natural resources is also recognised as part of the cleaner and greener agenda of the Local Service Board.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 **Performance of the current Caerphilly Collection System**

- 5.1.1 Since the current collection regime was introduced in October 2009, the Authority's recycling performance has continued to increase. This is demonstrated below:-

Year	Tonnage of Dry Recyclables	Recycling % (PI)
2008/09	9,621	32%
2009/10	16,286	44% (<i>WG Target 40%</i>)
2010/11	17,635	51%
2011/12	20,106	55%
2012/13	22,283	57% (<i>WG target 52%</i>)

- 5.1.2 In terms of comparison with others, WG categorises Local Authorities based on topography, demographics, settlements, etc. Consequently, Caerphilly is categorised as a "Valley Authority". For a number of years, Caerphilly has been the best performing Valley Authority for recycling and has consistently been amongst the top performing recycling authorities in Wales.

- 5.1.3 In 2013/14, Caerphilly was again the top performing Valley Authority and the 5th best performing Authority in Wales. Worthy of note is the fact that in 2013/14, the 5 best performing Welsh Authorities all provide a co-mingled or twin stream recycling collection service. These "top" performers were as follows:-

Authority	2013/14 Recycling Performance	Collection System
Denbighshire	63.20%	Fully Co-mingled
Monmouthshire	63.00%	Twin Stream Co-mingled
Pembrokeshire	60.30%	Co-mingled + Separate Glass
Ceredigion	58.40%	Co-mingled (no glass)
Caerphilly	57.60%	Fully Co-mingled

5.2 **Customer satisfaction with Caerphilly Collection System**

- 5.2.1 In addition to the Authority's general bi-ennial household survey, the Community & leisure Services division undertakes a summer bi-ennial Customer Survey for its front-line services. Public satisfaction with recycling has shown an upward trend since 2007:-

Year	Public satisfaction with Recycling
2007	84%
2009	88%
2011	94%
2013	95%

- 5.2.2 In addition to measuring public satisfaction, the last 2 survey's respondents have been asked for their views on changing back to a kerbside sort collection system. On average, 66% of residents surveyed would not take part in recycling if they had to revert back to separating

materials, 81% would not purchase carrier bags and 79% would not participate if they had to change back to a box or bags. Whilst it is accepted that changing the collection system would probably have a detrimental effect on participation and performance it is difficult to reach an exact assessment.

5.3 **Likely future performance**

- 5.3.1 The WG statutory recycling target for 2015/16 is 58% recycling/composting rising to 70% by 2024/25.
- 5.3.2 In recent weeks, Local Authorities have met (via the CSS – County Surveyors Society) to discuss concerns relating to changes in the regulatory position over certain materials that have previously counted towards recycling (wood & leaf sweepings). The CSS has raised concern with WG that this change in position could affect achievement of statutory recycling targets across Wales and have requested a consequential review of the statutory targets.
- 5.3.3 Wood has generally contributed circa 5% towards Caerphilly's recycling performance and it is likely that unless this position is addressed, the Authority's performance in 2015/16 (the 58% statutory target year) could reduce with the target not being achieved. Not achieving statutory recycling targets could result in fines of £200 per tonne being levied by WG.
- 5.3.4 In addition to the issues relating to wood and leaf sweepings, the mix of waste arriving at the Authority's civic amenity sites is changing with an indication that waste for recycling is falling. This may be due to the new van and trailer restrictions although it is too early to predict whether this will have a detrimental effect on the Authority's recycling performance.
- 5.3.5 Once the full Project Gwyrdd contract commences (April 2016) the Authority will benefit from its share of the plant's incinerator bottom ash and metal recycling which is likely to add 4-6% to the recycling performance.

5.4 **The Necessity Test**

- 5.4.1 In accordance with the Necessity Test, the Authority must consider whether it actually needs to separate materials further in order to achieve high quality recycling. A simple benchmark for this test is comparing the quality of Caerphilly's materials, at the point that they are recycled with "good" kerbside sort authorities. Unfortunately terms such as "high quality" and "good kerbside sort authority" are not defined in the legislation or the draft WG statutory guidance. Officers consider these to be fundamental points when considering whether the Authority should switch from what is a highly affective high performing, efficient service which enjoys high levels of public satisfaction.
- 5.4.2 WG have determined that authorities should seek to achieve the best overall environmental outcome, and that, where possible, "Closed loop" recycling should be achieved. This, for example, would mean a glass bottle being re-melted to produce another glass bottle rather than grinding to form road aggregate.
- 5.4.3 There is a degree of confusion among local authorities that collect recyclables with co-mingled systems on how to address the necessity question, and what to compare collections to. As a starting point officers have compared the destinations for Caerphilly's recycling to those used by Welsh kerbside sort authorities and given the level of information and knowledge obtained to date, the comparison would suggest that the end destination are comparable with kerbside sort authorities for a number of materials. This comparison has been collated and forms part of the Authority's file of evidence available to date.
- 5.4.4 Although the above is fairly compelling, it is important that the Authority has a full understanding of the quality of its recyclable materials before a full conclusion can be made on the Necessity Test.

- 5.4.5 The Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) regulations which came into force in October 2014 will assist with the necessity test. These regulations require MRF's to undertake detailed sampling of material as it is received and again after it has been through the sorting process. This will enable the Authority to ascertain the true quality of its material, and how it is, or isn't, affected by the MRF process. The Authority will then be in a better position to compare the quality of the material it provides to reprocessors to that of kerbside sort authorities, in addition to providing robust, accurate data on reject/contamination levels.
- 5.4.6 As stated above the MRF Regulations have only been in place since October 2014 and a full assessment is likely to require at least 6 months of data. Consequently, it is not anticipated that the reports required from the MRF Regulations will be available before June/July 2015.
- 5.4.7 In addition to the above, the Waste Resources Action programme (WRAP) consultancy has been commissioned by WG to undertake an end destinations study which will complement the MRF data. Caerphilly has agreed to take part in this study but it is unlikely that it will report until the first quarter of 2015.

5.5 **The TEEP Test**

- 5.5.1 If it is found that it is necessary for the Authority to collect certain materials separately, it will also need to be considered whether it is TEEP to do so. The TEEP consideration will need to look in detail at 3 key issues although failure to pass any of the TEEP elements individually will result in a justifiable argument for no change.

- (a) **Technically Practicable** – Given that separate collections operate in County Boroughs similar to Caerphilly (eg: Torfaen, Bridgend), it is likely to be concluded that such collections, would be technically practicable within Caerphilly County Borough. An interesting factor to be considered will be the experience of two of Caerphilly's immediate neighbours (Merthyr & Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's) who are currently in the process of changing from co-mingled to kerbside sort recyclable collections with WG funding support. The practicality of this change and effect on their recycling performance will be interesting to observe over the coming months.
- (b) **Economically Practicable** - The benchmark for whether collections are economically practicable is that they must not be "excessive" in comparison to non-separate collections. Officers from Community & Leisure Services and Corporate Finance have undertaken an initial piece of work to model the costs of change. Obviously, this modelling is heavily reliant on assumptions such as different levels of reduction in public participation, various levels of material income and the different levels of kerbside sorting undertaken. The modelling suggests that the best case scenario (separating glass only) is likely to incur additional annual revenue costs of circa £210,000 while this rises to £1.2m in the worst case scenario (full kerbside sorting). It should be noted these are annual revenue costs only but change (particularly in the worst case scenario) would also require large capital investment to change and increase the size of the collection fleet. This capital investment could be as high as £3m - £4m.

Two of our immediate neighbours have been awarded circa £2m each in WG Capital Grant to facilitate a change to kerbside sort and it is likely that each Authority will need to add circa £1m of their own funds. Both of these Authorities are considerably smaller than Caerphilly so these costs would be elevated if applied to a larger authority.

- (c) **Environmentally Practicable** – If change is deemed necessary then the Authority would need to model the environmental consequences of change. This modelling would need to examine such issues as vehicle emissions and fuel usage as well as the carbon resource efficiency benefits of each collection system.

5.6 The Local Government Measure 2009

5.6.1 In addition to the necessity and TEEP tests, the Authority is subject to the requirements under Schedule 2 of the Local Government Measure 2009. Under the measure, the Authority must “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions”. In doing so, the Authority must have regard in particular to the need to improve the exercise of its functions in terms of:-

- Strategic effectiveness
- Service quality
- Service availability
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Efficiency
- Innovation

5.6.2 Any decision to change the current collection arrangements must also be justified when considering the above points. Further consideration will therefore need to be given to how the Authority would apply those 7 requirements to any new collection regime. Examples include:-

- **Strategic effectiveness** – where does the service sit within Corporate priorities and is it currently meeting its performance targets? Is there a major strategic case for investment in change compared to other council priorities?
- **Service quality** – does the service meet the needs of its residents, satisfaction ratings, participation levels, etc?
- **Efficiency** – in the current financial climate, is it a prudent and efficient use of public funds to invest heavily in changing a service that may be performing well when other services are either ceasing or being reduced?

5.7 The Overall Evidence Base

5.7.1 As the body of the report outlines, this is a complex area with a higher level of ambiguity and uncertainty than is normally the case with new legislation.

5.7.2 Officers have reviewed the evidence available to date (customer satisfaction, high level costings, performance and limited end destination comparisons) which indicates that the Authority does not need to change its collection regime at present. However, it has to be accepted that there are significant gaps in the evidence base (as the information is not available to the Authority) and that this information will be crucial in making a fully informed, robust decision on future service provision. In summary, these significant “gaps” include:-

- At least 6 months worth of MRF regulations data
- WRAP’s work on the end destinations of materials
- WG not having published its final guidance.

5.7.3 Consequently, it is not possible to make a fully informed, long-term decision on whether or not the Authority needs to change its collection regime until this additional evidence is gathered (probably the summer of 2015). Even where change is deemed necessary, WG accepts that the ability to change may be delayed for a number of operational reasons (eg: vehicle life cycles, contractual timescales, etc.).

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No equality impact assessment has been undertaken to date. However, this will need to form part of any future consideration in respect of changing the collection service.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As outlined in section 5.5.1 (b) above there is a range of annual revenue costs between £210,000 and £1.2m dependant on the type of change and assumptions relating to public participation and income for recyclables. This annual revenue cost would be in addition to capital costs for changes to the vehicle fleet which could be as high as £3m - £4m.
- 7.2 Additional costs noted in paragraph 5.5.1b and 7.1 are indicative estimates based on a set of assumptions that will impact on the cost of collection & treatment from source separating. Further work will be required to firm up on the possible financial impact. This work will be undertaken when additional evidence/information becomes available during 2015.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report at the present time. However, if the Authority moves to a full kerbside sort (WG collections blue-print) service, then it is likely that the number of recycling collection drivers and operatives would need to increase 3-fold.

9. CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The Authority is in a very fortunate position with its recycling service. It has been one of the highest performers for recycling in Wales. Often services are changed because of a failure in performance. The Authority is not in that position and therefore it has to be recognised that a very strong case for change would need to be evidenced.
- 9.2 The EU Directive calls for quality and also quantity in recycling. Whilst further investigation is required in relation to quality, it cannot be argued that the Authority does not achieve quantity given that is such a high performer. The draft WG guidance does not answer how to reconcile the quality v quantity debate.
- 9.3 In addition, feedback from public consultation previously reported to Members demonstrated that the recycling service is well regarded by the citizens of the County Borough. It can therefore be foreseen that the public would question why the Council was embarking on a major investment for change when the current service was performing well and is well regarded. Moreover, the Authority is managing the most challenging financial times in the history of modern local government so investment in wholesale service change would be difficult to justify to the public, although the issue would need to be carefully considered based on the necessity and TEEP tests and legal compliance.
- 9.4 At the time of writing this report there remain gaps in the evidence base which will need further consideration and a further decision on the recyclable collection regime. It is the view of officers that change now is not required but this will need a future review in light of additional evidence. In this further review, it will be important that the future service:-
- Is sustainable and environmentally efficient;
 - Is affordable and maximises economic benefit and value;
 - Produces high quality recyclates;
 - Is supported by the public, businesses and wider communities;
 - Is periodically reviewed to ensure that it meets its legal obligations.
- 9.5 It is important for Members to note that there is a risk that the Authority may be legally challenged for its decision to continue with its current practices. In particular, it may be challenged in relation to the interpretation of the separate collection obligations and/or the obligation not to mix waste of a specific type or nature with other waste or other material with different properties. However, to mitigate this risk the Authority has followed a process based on the evidence and data currently available. If the recommendations in section 11 are

agreed, the Authority will have also committed to keep the issue under review in light of additional evidence and to bring more information forward for consideration at the appropriate time in 2015.

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 The report reflects the views of the listed consultees.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet agrees and recommends to Council:-

11.1 That the existing method of kerbside collection of dry recyclables is continued subject to further review in 2015 when additional evidence/information becomes available.

11.2 That officers of the Authority agree to continue to participate in the study being undertaken by the Welsh Government to gather further end destination evidence and to participate in the WG exercise to model various collection scenarios.

12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 To ensure that the Authority operates a high performing, economically effective, legally compliant recycling service.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Acts, Environmental Protection Act 1990, Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2011, Local Government Measure 2009

Author: Mark S. Williams, Head of Community & Leisure Services
e-mail: willims@caerphilly.gov.uk Tele: 01495 235070

Consultees: Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services
Gail Williams, Principal Solicitor, Monitoring Officer
Tony White, Waste Strategy & Operations Manager
Hayley John, Principal Waste Management Officer
Councillor David Poole, Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure Services
David A. Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities & Welsh Language)
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager

Background Papers:-

- (1) Report to Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee 16/9/2014 - Various Waste Management Issues
- (2) Report to Cabinet 28/10/2008 – Waste Less Recycle More; Compulsory weekly kerbside recycling
- (3) Report to Living Environment Scrutiny Committee 16/10/2008 – Waste Less, Recycle More; Compulsory weekly kerbside recycling
- (4) Welsh Government Consultation Document – Consultation on Draft Statutory Guidance on Separate Collections of Waste Paper, Metal, Plastic and Glass



COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(FIRST REVIEW) - DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.1 The attached report was presented to Cabinet on 21st January 2015.

1.2 The recommendations of Cabinet will be reported at the meeting.

Author: H. Morgan, Senior Committee Services Officer

Appendix 1 Report to Cabinet dated 21st January 2015.

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CABINET – 21ST JANUARY 2015

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(FIRST REVIEW) UP TO 2031: DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY**

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

- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2014. It seeks the views of Cabinet before it is referred to Council for determination.
- 1.2 The report outlined stakeholder engagement undertaken to date for the first review of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2031 and how this work has influenced the Draft Preferred Strategy up to 2031. The report sought Members' views on the Draft Preferred Strategy, as a basis for the first statutory consultation stage of the plan process scheduled for early 2015.
- 1.3 The report also outlined the next stage of the Local Development Plan Review Process, together with an extract from the Review Report (attached at Appendix 2 to the report) which detailed the consideration given to undertaking a joint review of the LDP with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Councils.
- 1.4 Detailed discussion of the report ensued and Officers responded to queries raised regarding the contents of the Draft Preferred Strategy (attached as Appendix 1 to the report). The report referenced a need for improvements to the strategic transportation infrastructure within the county borough, and Members' comments regarding these were noted by Officers. Queries were also received regarding the Authority's forthcoming Local Transport Plan, with Members redirected to the appropriate Officer for further information. The impact of the Local Development Plan on town centre regeneration was discussed, together with land allocation processes and the use of greenfield and brownfield sites.
- 1.5 Following consideration of the report, including the Draft Preferred Strategy and the position statements from each of the three local planning authorities as contained in the Review Report, the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet and Council that for the reasons contained therein, the Authority's commitment to progress with a single review of the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan be reconfirmed.
- 1.6 Members are asked to consider the recommendation.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2014
– Agenda Item 11

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REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(FIRST REVIEW) UP TO 2031: DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform elected members of the stakeholder engagement undertaken to date for the first review of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to 2021 and outline how this work has influenced the Draft Preferred Strategy up to 2031.
- 1.2 To seek elected members views on the Draft Preferred Strategy as a basis for the first statutory public consultation stage of the plan review process, which is scheduled to take place early 2015.
- 1.3 To outline clearly for elected members the next stage of the Local Development Plan Review process.
- 1.4 To draw elected members attention to the Review Report which has been prepared at the request of Welsh Government. The Review Report outlines what consideration has been given to undertaking a joint review of the LDP with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Councils.
- 1.5 To consider the position statements from each of the three local planning authorities as contained in the Review Report and reconfirm (or otherwise) a commitment to a single review of the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021.
- 1.6 To make recommendations to Cabinet and thereafter Council in respect of 1.1 to 1.4 above

ABBREVIATIONS

Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021	Adopted LDP
Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (First Review) up to 2031	LDP (1 st Review)
Caerphilly County Borough Council Delivery Agreement (Feb 2013)	DA
Annual Monitoring Report	AMR
Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA
Sustainability Appraisal	SA

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare and review a Local Development Plan for its area to provide the policy framework for the development and use of land within the County Borough. On 23 November 2010, the Council formally adopted the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 and has since been monitoring the progress of the plan through its Annual Monitoring Reports.

- 2.2 Following the recommendations of the 2013 AMR, the Council resolved on 8 October 2013, to roll forward the LDP to cover the plan period up to 2031 and to commence work on the review of the plan. A full review of the plan in line with Local Development Plan Regulation 41 is being undertaken.
- 2.3 Throughout the review, a full appraisal of the sustainability of the plan will be undertaken i.e. a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations) which will be fully integrated into the plan making process.
- 2.4 The First Review Delivery Agreement (Agreed February 2014) outlines how the Council intends to engage with stakeholders in a meaningful and cost effective way learning lessons from the work undertaken in respect of the Adopted LDP.
- 2.5 The Welsh Government has requested that the Council prepares a Review Report (July 2014). This Report has been prepared and is available in the Members Resource Centre. The Report:
- Explains what consideration has been given to the preparation of a Joint Review with neighbouring planning authorities, specifically Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen;
 - Explains why having regard for the position statements of each local planning authority the local planning authority has chosen to pursue a single LDP review;
 - Draws upon the Annual Monitoring Reports and set out clearly those parts of the plan that require only minor modification due to their effectiveness; and
 - Draws upon the Annual Monitoring Reports to identify those parts of the plan that require significant modification.
- 2.6 The Council is committed to involving as many people as possible in the review process. Participation and public consultation is essential for effective community and stakeholder engagement and the Draft Preferred Strategy represents a key stage in plan review and production and is the first significant opportunity for the public to get involved.
- 2.7 The Draft Preferred Strategy outlines the main issues to be addressed in the LDP (Review), identifies the alternative spatial strategies that have been considered and provides an early indication of those areas that are likely to be identified for growth in the Revised Deposit Plan. As such it represents the first statutory stage of the plan review process, building on earlier informal stages including the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA) Scoping Report published for consultation in May / June 2014.
- The Draft Preferred Strategy is underpinned by the following scenarios:
 - Population & Household Growth Scenario M – Moderate Average Household Size Change and SE Wales Migration (10 years) (**Agreed by a resolution of Council 07.10.2014**);
 - Employment Growth Scenario 1 - Historic Land Take-Up (**Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014**); and
 - Spatial Option 5: Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connection Corridors (**Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014**).
- 2.8 It sets out the guiding principles for the future development and conservation needs of the county borough up to 2031, in line with national, regional and local strategies. Notably the Draft Preferred Strategy promotes a change to the existing development strategy that underpins the Adopted LDP.
- 2.9 This report seeks the views of elected members in respect of the Draft Preferred Strategy (attached as Appendix 1) in advance of progressing to public consultation early in 2015.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The Single Integrated Plan Caerphilly Delivers has been prepared by the LSB and represents a determined commitment by all partners to accelerate change, strengthen partnership working, multi-agency collaboration, and accountability for delivery.

3.2 Caerphilly Delivers has been developed based on 4 key principles of:

- Sustainable development where we promote social justice and equality of opportunity and enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits
- Equalities and Welsh language where we all promote and mainstream equalities and the Welsh language in accordance with our legislative requirements and strategic equality objectives.
- Early intervention and prevention goals with the aim of either preventing matters from getting worse or occurring in the first place, by identifying those in greatest need from their vulnerability, their risk of becoming vulnerable or from otherwise becoming disadvantaged.
- Community cohesion where people from different backgrounds enjoy similar life opportunities, understand their rights and responsibilities and trust one another and are trusting of local institutions to act fairly.

3.3 The Local Development Plan is the statutory framework for the development and use of land within the County Borough. It provides the policy framework for the development and conservation needs of the County Borough and is used by the Council to guide and control development. In order to realise the long term Strategic Vision for the county borough the LDP (1st Review) will facilitate the delivery of the land use elements of the five key outputs of Caerphilly Delivers, as follows:

- Prosperous Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Review) will seek to increase the economic prosperity of the people and communities of the county borough through the provision of land for employment opportunities, supported by appropriate housing and ancillary facilities and services (including community and health facilities, recreation, leisure etc). Further it will seek to facilitate the provision of a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and protects the environment; where public transport, walking and cycling provide real travel alternatives.
- Safer Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Review) will seek to make Caerphilly County Borough a clean, green, safe and pleasant place to live and work with decent public services. It should enhance the vibrancy and diversity of local communities, in order to ensure good health and social cohesion. It will facilitate the creation of new developments, which help to enhance social cohesion so that people feel safe and secure and it should deliver high quality design that deters opportunities for crime and anti social behaviour.
- Learning Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Review) will recognise the importance of modern education facilities and the role that they play in up skilling the population. It will therefore need to protect existing facilities and make adequate provision for sufficient land to be released to enable the improvement of education facilities throughout the county borough.
- Healthier Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Review) will contribute to improving public health, by promoting land use developments that contribute to healthy lifestyles and well-being. The plan will therefore make provision for a transportation network that increases the opportunities for walking and cycling and provide a policy framework for the protection and enhancement of recreation and leisure facilities to ensure that they are accessible for all.
- Greener Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Review) will protect the environment as a whole whilst balancing the need for new development with the need to conserve valuable resources. Further it will underpin all development with the principle of good design, that meets a diversity of needs; which uses resources efficiently; and which makes adequate provision for recycling and waste management and ensure that new development minimises emissions of greenhouse gases as far as is practically possible in order to mitigate the effects of climate change. Finally it will seek to ensure that resources are used efficiently making the best use of our valuable assets.

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare and review a Local Development Plan for its area to provide the policy framework for the development and use of land within the County Borough. On 23 November 2010, the Council formally adopted the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021(LDP) and has since been monitoring the progress of the plan through its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 4.2 Following the recommendations of the 2013 AMR, the Council resolved on 8 October 2013, to roll forward the LDP to cover the plan period up to 2031 and to commence work on the review of the plan.
- 4.3 An important feature of the development plan review process is the emphasis on identifying and testing realistic strategy options to deliver the Vision and Objectives of the plan over the plan period.
- 4.4 As the Council already has an adopted plan, there is a need to assess whether the existing Development Strategy for the county borough remains appropriate within the context of the revised plan period up to 2031, and also remains robust within the changing regional context.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.5 Participation and public consultation is essential for effective community and stakeholder engagement in this process. Early discussion on the updated evidence base, alternative strategic options, preferred strategy and related proposals is critical for building consensus in respect of how the plan should be reviewed to meet the county boroughs future development needs.
- 4.6 The Delivery Agreement, Agreed February 2014 (DA) outlines how the Council intends to engage with stakeholders throughout the review of the plan. In line with the DA, a series of targeted stakeholder events have taken place throughout 2014, as follows:
- 29 April 2014 LDP Focus Group
 - 9 May 2014 Event with Members of Standing Conference
 - 9 June 2014 Stakeholder Event - Developer Workshop
 - 23 June 2014 General Consultation Bodies – Workshop
 - 23 September 2014 Heads of Service (Directorate of the Environment)
 - 4 November 2014 LDP Focus Group
 - Ongoing and iterative SA/SEA Working Group
- 4.7 The purpose of this work was to:
1. Test the existing Adopted LDP development strategy against alternative scenarios to determine if it remains appropriate moving forward;
 2. Obtain targeted stakeholder views in respect of the alternative scenarios for population and household growth;
 3. Obtain targeted stakeholder views in respect of the development of alternative strategic options; and
 4. Inform the Draft Preferred Strategy that is the subject of this report
- 4.8 A series of elected member meetings has also been arranged for the week commencing 12 January 2015 in Pontllanfraith House, to enable officers to outline the potential implications of the Draft Preferred Strategy to members in more detail. Further these sessions will provide an opportunity for elected members to ask detailed questions in advance of the consideration of the Draft Preferred Strategy by Council on the 27 January 2015.

Review Report

- 4.9 As a consequence of early engagement with Welsh Government, Caerphilly County Borough Council has been advised that appropriate consideration should be given to preparing a Joint review of the Adopted LDP with neighbouring authorities, particularly in light of the proposals contained within the Williams Commission and also in the emerging Planning (Wales) Bill which provides for joint planning boards to be set up.
- 4.10 Consideration has been given to the preparation of a joint review with Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils reflecting the recommendations contained within the Williams Report. This indicates that Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen could be merged into a single local planning authority.
- 4.11 At its meeting on the 29 September 2014, the Council resolved that Caerphilly County Borough Council does not support the idea of a merged authority covering Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. Conversely Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen Councils have decided to explore the possibility of a voluntary merger. Council at its meeting held on 18th November 2014 resolved to reaffirm the policy of preferring to remain as a standalone Authority and not submit any proposal for voluntary merger with any of its neighbouring Authorities.
- 4.12 The preparation of a joint review of the Adopted LDPs does not however require the formal merger of the Councils in question to enable this work to be undertaken. There remains the potential for the three local planning authorities to work together on a joint review of their respective local development plans.
- 4.13 All three local planning authorities have considered the benefits, or otherwise, of a joint review and all three are of the view that there does not appear to be a robust planning or business case at this time to progress a joint review. A position statement from each local planning authority is contained within the Review Report, however this is attached for ease of reference at Appendix 2. Elected Members are therefore requested to consider these statements and reconfirm a commitment to a single review of the Adopted LDP.

The Draft Preferred Strategy

- 4.14 An important feature of the development plan process is the emphasis on identifying and testing realistic strategy options to deliver the Vision and Objectives of the plan over the plan period. As the Council already has an Adopted LDP the existing Development Strategy for the county borough has been assessed alongside alternative strategies in order to determine whether or not it remains appropriate within the context of up to date National and Regional Policy and Guidance and having regard to the changing regional context for development.
- 4.15 The Adopted LDP Strategy (1) has therefore been tested against four alternative spatial options (2 to 5) as follows:

Spatial Option 1: Continuation of the Adopted LDP Preferred Strategy

Spatial Option 2: Targeting Growth to the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area

Spatial Option 3: Targeting Growth to the Northern Connections Corridor

Spatial Option 4: Targeting Growth to the Southern Connections Corridor (Caerphilly Basin)

Spatial Option 5: Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connection Corridors.

(Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014)

- 4.16 The five alternative spatial options provide clearly different spatial development scenarios in respect of future new housing and employment development; each of which will have different environmental, social and economic outcomes for Caerphilly County Borough up to 2031. Therefore each of the strategy options have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in order to determine which would deliver the most sustainable outcome. **SEA/SA Part 1 - Document 3: The Assessment of the Preferred and Alternative LDP Strategies (2014)** forms part of the SA/SEA and is available separately.

- 4.17 Many of the component parts of the spatial options are common to each of the strategies, specifically the future direction for the Principal Towns and Local Centres, the need for the school rationalisation process to be reflected and the need to ensure that the strategic infrastructure to support any new development is fit for purpose.
- 4.18 In particular all options considered the Council's need for improvements to the strategic transportation infrastructure, in particular the:
- Opportunities to maximise the use of public transport to improve connectivity throughout the county borough;
 - Opportunities for the reopening of rail lines, specifically: the Caerphilly Machen / Newport rail line; and a passenger service on the Cwmbargoed line to Dowlais;
 - Provision of new stations, in particular at Crumlin/Nelson;
 - Improvements to the rail network to improve frequency and improvements to the Ebbw Valley Line to link Lower Islwyn to Newport;
 - An increased provision of Park & Ride where practicable, in particular at Ystrad Mynach.
 - In terms of the Strategic Highway infrastructure all options consider the need, or otherwise for:
 - A strategic highway corridor for the Upper Rhymney Valley to link New Tredegar and Pontlottyn;
 - A Maesycwmmmer Bypass; and
 - A SE Bypass for Caerphilly.
- 4.19 The Draft Preferred Strategy for the LDP up to 2031 represents a combination of the best elements of the alternative strategies discussed in **Background Paper 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy** (August 2014). This paper sets out the alternative scenarios that have been considered in consultation with partner organisations and key stakeholders through the review process to date in respect of levels of: A) Population & Household Growth, B) Employment Growth and Alternative Spatial Options for the distribution of development sites that arise from the consideration of A and B.
- 4.20 The Draft Preferred Strategy which is attached at Appendix 1 is therefore based on:
- The functional analysis that has been undertaken of the county borough as part of the review;
 - Identification of key trends from the existing and emerging evidence base;
 - Consideration of alternative population and household growth scenarios;
 - Consideration of different employment growth scenarios;
 - Feedback from the consultation with partner organisations and key stakeholders as an integral part of the review process;
 - Consideration of the cumulative impact of development on infrastructure;
 - Consideration of the issues raised through the annual monitoring of the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021;
 - Availability of land proposed for development;
 - SA/SEA Scoping exercise and consequent assessment of Alternative Strategic Options; and
 - Consideration of neighbouring local planning authorities development strategies
- 4.21 Having regard to the above the following are considered to be the most desirable, realistic and robust options to be used to underpin the Preferred Strategy for the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (First Review) up to 2031:
- Population & Household Growth Scenario M – Moderate Average Household Size Change and SE Wales Migration (10 years) (**Agreed by a resolution of Council 07.10.2014**);
 - Employment Growth Scenario 1 - Historic Land Take-Up (**Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014**); and

- Spatial Option 5: Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connection Corridors (*Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014*).

- 4.22 In combination, these options provide for a strategy that promotes a moderate level of population and household growth together with an appropriate level of economic development. It promotes a balance between: small scale organic expansion of existing urban settlements serving to sustain Local Centres and services, and contributes to regeneration initiatives throughout the county borough; with larger scale mixed-use developments targeted to key transportation and growth corridors, that expand the extent of the Principal Towns, and that are of a sufficient size to facilitate new and improved infrastructure provision to support the planned level of growth and effectively link the county borough to the Cardiff Capital Region. By targeting development to a limited number of growth corridors this will prevent the proliferation of larger developments in the open countryside and limit pressure on other environmentally sensitive areas.
- 4.23 The Draft Preferred Strategy sets out the guiding principles for the future development and conservation needs of the county borough up to 2031, in line with national, regional and local strategies. Notably the Draft Preferred Strategy promotes a change to the existing development strategy that underpins the Adopted LDP.
- 4.24 The Draft Preferred Strategy is referred to as: **The Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy** (strategy). The strategy identifies key areas of change and of protection, which will deliver the aims and objectives of the Strategic Vision up to 2031. The geographical extent of each of the strategy areas is illustrated in Figure 1 of Appendix 1. The three broad strategy areas are based on an up to date functional analysis of the county borough and are defined as follows:
- **THE HEADS OF THE VALLEYS REGENERATION AREA (HOVRA)**
 - **THE NORTHERN CONNECTIONS CORRIDOR (NCC)**
 - **THE SOUTHERN CONNECTIONS CORRIDOR (SCC)**
- 4.25 As a consequence of comments made at the LDP Focus Group Meeting on the 4 November, the strategy areas are to be renamed as follows:
- **THE HEADS OF THE VALLEYS REGENERATION AREA (HOVRA)**
 - **THE MID VALLEYS CORRIDOR (MVC)**
 - **THE SOUTHERN CONNECTIONS CORRIDOR (SCC) – Caerphilly Basin & Lower Islwyn**

Note: These reference changes have yet to be made to the attached documentation.

- 4.26 The key assumptions underpinning the strategy are outlined in a series of background papers and reports that are listed at the end of this report. All of these documents are available on the Council's web site and have been made available on the Members Portal.

Key Components: The Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy

- 4.27 Ten component parts form the Development Strategy and underpin the Strategy Policies. They are to:
- Target development to reflect the role and function of individual settlements;
 - Target new development to the Northern Connections Corridor and the Southern Connections Corridor;
 - Allow for the urban expansion of settlements within the Northern Connections Corridor and the Southern Connections Corridor on greenfield sites;
 - Improve the strategic highway infrastructure within the Southern Connections Corridor through the development of the first phase of a south east bypass for Caerphilly Town;

- Explore opportunities to improve the strategic rail network to facilitate the reopening of the Caerphilly-Machen-Newport disused rail line;
- Reallocate suitable surplus employment sites for housing use across the Northern Connections Corridor;
- Reduce the scale and number of new housing allocations in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area to more closely align with market activities and market demand;
- Exploit opportunities afforded by the Valleys Regional Park and identify sites that are suitable for tourism;
- Minimise the impact of development on the countryside in the Southern Connections Corridor whilst allowing for appropriate planned levels of growth;
- Reduce the impact of development on the countryside in the HOVRA and the NCC.

Next Stage

- 4.28 The Council is committed to involving as many people as possible in the review process. Participation and public consultation is essential for effective community and stakeholder engagement and the Draft Preferred Strategy represents a key stage in plan review and production as the first significant opportunity for the public to get involved.
- 4.29 Subject therefore to formal approval by Council, the Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy will form the basis for the first formal statutory six-week public consultation stage of the first review of the Adopted LDP, which is scheduled to take place in early 2015.
- 4.30 The stakeholder feedback obtained through the consultation exercise will serve to inform elected members of the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the Council's Draft Preferred Strategy. It will also help to determine the scale of future population and household growth and employment growth that would result in the most sustainable future for Caerphilly County Borough up to 2031.
- 4.31 All responses returned within the six-week consultation period, will be considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the vision, objectives, strategic policies and strategy to be included in the Revised Deposit Local Development Plan up to 2031.
- 4.32 The Revised Deposit LDP will be the subject of a future report for consideration by Council and will include more detailed policies and land allocations. Further to consideration by full Council the Revised Deposit LDP will be subject to a statutory six-week public consultation exercise in the Autumn / Winter of 2015 before being subject to independent examination.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken in line with the Agreed DA, which has full regard for the Citizens Engagement Strategy and the Equalities Strategy of the Council.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no new financial implications

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All comments received have been incorporated in the report

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To consider the position statements from each of the three local planning authorities as contained in the Review report (Attached at Appendix 2) and reconfirm to Cabinet (or otherwise) and thereafter Council a commitment to progress with a single review of the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan.
- 9.2. Members are asked to consider and made comment on the Draft Preferred Strategy attached at Appendix 1 as a basis for the first statutory public consultation stage of the plan review process.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 In order to demonstrate to Welsh Government that due consideration has been given to the potential for a joint review of the LDP with neighbouring local planning authorities.
- 10.2 In order to progress to the first statutory six-week public consultation stage of the plan review process, which is scheduled to take place early 2015.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Part 6 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 11.2 Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan)(Wales) Regulations 2005

Author: Rhian Kyte, Team Leader Strategic & Development Plan Team
Consultees: C Burns, Acting Chief Executive
S Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
G Williams, Interim Head of legal Services/ Monitoring Officer
P Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning
T Shaw, Head of Engineering Services
R Hartshorne, Head of Public Protection
M Williams, Head of Community & Leisure Services
B Hopkins, Assistant Director, Education
C Jones, Head of Performance and Property Services
S Couzens, Chief Housing Officer
Cllr K James, Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Sustainability
Members of the LDP Focus Group

Appendices:
Appendix 1: The Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (First Review) Up to 2031: Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy (October 2014)
Appendix 2: Extract of Review Report – Position Statement on Joint Review

Background Papers:
BR 1: Functional Analysis Caerphilly County Borough, April 2014
BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014
BR 3: Population and Housing Growth Options Background Paper, October 2014
BR 4: Employment Background Paper, September 2014
BR 7: Transport Background Paper, October 2014

R1: Review Report, August 2014
R2: Caerphilly County Borough Employment Site Supply and Market Appraisal, June 2014

SEA/SA Part 1:

Document 1: The Scoping Report (2014)

Document 2: The Review of Relevant Plans, Programmes and Policies (2014)

Document 3: The Assessment of the Preferred and Alternative LDP Strategies (2014)

Candidate Site Register August 2014

Appendix 1

**Caerphilly County Borough
Local Development Plan
(First Revision)**

Up to 2031

**Sustainable Urban Network
Growth Strategy**

October 2014

**DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY
FOR
CONSULTATION PURPOSES**

**Ms P Elliott, Head of Regeneration & Planning, Directorate of the
Environment, Pontllanfaith House, Pontllanfraith NP12 2YW.**

ldp@caerphilly.gov.uk

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FOREWORD

In November 2010, Caerphilly County Borough Council became the first Unitary Authority in Wales to adopt its Local Development Plan. The Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (LDP) allocates land for essential new development that meets the social and economic needs of residents and business within the area and balances this with the need to conserve and protect those features of the natural and built environment that are important to us. Moreover, it helps to inform key investment decisions of business, industry and of utility providers and the infrastructure priorities of both local and national government.

As Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Sustainable Development I am responsible for ensuring that the Council maintains an up to date adopted local development plan to provide the statutory framework for these important decisions to be made.

This Draft Preferred Strategy represents a key stage in the revision of the existing adopted LDP. It outlines the main issues to be addressed through the revision of the LDP, which will cover a revised plan period up to 2031. It identifies the alternative spatial strategies that have been considered and provides an early indication of those areas that are likely to be identified for growth in the future.

Importantly the publication of the draft strategy represents the first statutory stage of the revision process where residents, business, landowners, developers and other key stakeholders with an interest can get involved and contribute to the debate on the location for new development.

This is your chance to have a say on the future of the county borough and I would urge you to get involved and have your say on where our residents and children will live and work in the future.

Councillor K James

Cabinet Member, Regeneration, Planning & Sustainable Development

Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to 2031 (First Revision) October 2014

SUSTAINABLE URBAN NETWORK GROWTH STRATEGY

BACKGROUND TO REVIEW PROCESS

The town and country planning system is designed to regulate the development and use of land in the public interest. It seeks to reconcile the development needs of the population with the wider environmental concerns for the conservation of the man-made and natural environment. It also seeks to ensure that the most sustainable use is made of limited resources, whilst at the same time stimulating the local economy, for the benefit of present and future generations.

Within the planning system the Local Development Plan (LDP) sets the framework for the control of development proposals. The Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to 2021 (LDP) is the statutory framework for the development and use of land within Caerphilly County Borough. It was prepared using prescribed statutory procedures and was formally adopted by Caerphilly County Borough Council on 23rd November 2010.

Following the adoption of the LDP, the Council has a statutory obligation, under section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. In order to do this, the Council produces an Annual Monitoring Report to assess if the LDP is being implemented effectively. To date the Council has prepared three Annual Monitoring Reports, the most recent of which was the 3rd AMR for 2014.

As a consequence of the Council's consideration of the 2nd Annual Monitoring Report in October 2013 it resolved to roll forward the LDP to cover the plan period up to 2031. When adopted, the ***Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to 2031 (First Revision)*** will supersede the existing Adopted ***Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to 2021*** for the Caerphilly County Borough area.

Review stages

There are 3 important stages in the plan making process – plan preparation, plan production and plan scrutiny. Plan preparation has already resulted in an approved Delivery Agreement.

Delivery Agreement (2013)

The Delivery Agreement (DA), which has been formally agreed with Welsh Government (February 2013), includes the Community Involvement Scheme and Project Management Timetable for the review of the LDP. The DA provides an indicative date for adoption for the revised plan as 2017.

The Review Report (2014)

R1: Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (First Revision) Up to 2031 - Review Report (August 2014) forms an integral part of plan scrutiny and draws upon the three Annual Monitoring Reports prepared to date. It sets out clearly those parts of the plan that require only minor modification due to

their effectiveness and those parts of the plan that require significant revision. On balance, the Review Report indicates that there is a need to review the Development Strategy that underpins the Adopted LDP as an integral part of the full revision of the plan. Therefore alternative strategy options need to be explored in consultation with stakeholders through the review process.

It is important to note that the Review Report indicates that a full review of the plan in line with Local Development Plan Regulation 41 is being undertaken which will lead to the preparation of a Replacement LDP.

Alternative Strategy Options

As monitoring has indicated the need to review the existing development strategy, there will therefore be a need to test realistic alternative strategy options (including the existing Adopted Development Strategy) for inclusion in the plan going forward. **Background Paper 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy** (August 2014), sets out the alternative scenarios that have been considered through the review process in consultation with stakeholders in respect of: A) Population & Household Growth, B) Employment Growth and Alternative Spatial Options for the distribution of development sites that arise from the consideration of A and B.

Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal

An important feature of the review process is also the testing of each of the alternative strategy options through the process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). These assessments are contained in the **SEA/SA Part 1 - Document 3: The Assessment of the Preferred and Alternative LDP Strategies (2014)**

Baseline information outlining the current state of the environment together with a review of relevant policies, plans and programmes is included in the **LDP Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal: Scoping Report (2014)**. The Scoping Report (available separately) will be used to assess the effects of the detailed development management policies and land allocations of the Deposit LDP.

Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2031 - Draft Preferred Strategy (2014)

The Draft Preferred Strategy represents a key stage in the revision of the plan and in plan production. It outlines the main issues to be addressed in the Replacement LDP, identifies the alternative spatial strategies that have been considered and provides an early indication of those areas that are likely to be identified for growth through the review. As such it represents the first statutory stage of the plan review process, building on earlier informal stages including the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (SA/SEA) Scoping Report published for consultation in May / June 2014.

The Draft Preferred Strategy is underpinned by the following scenarios contained in Background Paper 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy:

- Population & Household Growth Scenario M – Moderate Average Household Size Change and SE Wales Migration (10 years);
- Employment Growth Scenario 1 - Historic Land Take-Up; and
- Spatial Option 5: Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connection Corridors.

It sets out the guiding principles for the future development and conservation needs of the county borough up to 2031, in line with national, regional and local strategies.

Notably this consultation document promotes a change to the existing development strategy that underpins the Adopted LDP.

What Happens Next?

A series of consultation questions are contained within **Background Paper 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy** that seek to gauge stakeholders views on the alternative strategy options that have been considered.

The stakeholder feedback obtained through the Draft Preferred Strategy Consultation exercise will serve to inform the Council of the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the Council's Preferred Strategy. It will help to determine the scale of future population and household growth that would result in the most sustainable future for Caerphilly County Borough up to 2031.

All responses returned within the six-week consultation period, will be considered and, where appropriate, incorporated into the revised vision, objectives, strategic policies and strategy to be included in the revised Deposit Local Development Plan up to 2031. The Deposit LDP will include more detailed policies and land allocations and will be subject to a further public consultation exercise in the Autumn of 2015 before being subject to independent examination.

The Broad Structure of the Draft Preferred Strategy is as follows:

Introduction

National and Regional Context

Local Policy Context

Key Land Use Issues

The Vision for Caerphilly County Borough

Key Aims and Objectives

The Draft Preferred Strategy

Strategy Policies

Key Diagram

Strategy Implications

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal of Alternative Strategy Options

Appendices

Monitoring Strategic Policies: Monitoring Indicators

Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2031: Draft Preferred Strategy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Spatial Context

1.1 Caerphilly county borough covers an area stretching from Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north, to Cardiff and Newport in the south. It is bordered to the west, by Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf and to the east by Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen and thus it lies in the heart of the South Wales Valleys and the Cardiff Capital Region.

1.2 Caerphilly county borough is made up of 3 valleys, the Rhymney, Sirhowy and Ebbw, covering an area of approximately 28,000 ha with a mixture of urban, semi-urban and rural communities. The county borough has one of the highest populations in Wales of approximately 178,800 (2011 Census), notwithstanding this 75% of the county borough is used for agriculture and forestry (countryside/rural). It has both an expanding economy and an attractive environment and benefits from excellent transport links with good access to the public transport network, whilst the south of the county borough has good links to the M4 motorway.

2.0 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT: DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

National Context

2.1 Since the ground-breaking duty in the Government of Wales Act put Sustainable Development at the heart of devolution, Wales has taken a distinctive path to development. In the time since devolution in 1999, sustainable development has grown in strength, with increasingly widespread recognition and growing numbers of successful examples of its application in all sectors.

2.2 The Welsh Government's *Programme for Government* reinforces the importance of sustainable development's place as the core principle in defining the best development path for Wales. In addition, it commits to ensuring that all the Government's policies and programmes reflect this central commitment to sustainable development.

2.3 The Welsh Government is committed to further strengthening sustainable development's place in the Welsh constitution by bringing forward legislation to embed sustainable development as the central organising principle of the wider public service in Wales. The Welsh Government considers that enshrining sustainable development as the central organising principle, not just of the Welsh Government, but of the wider public service in Wales through the Sustainable Development Bill, will further reinforce this commitment. The aim is to ensure that in pursuit of a better long term future, the best possible decisions are made that achieve the maximum possible long term benefits to the economic, social *and* environmental wellbeing of Wales, within environmental limits.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2.4 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Local Planning Authority, in this case, Caerphilly County Borough Council, to prepare a Local Development Plan (LDP) for the whole of the County Borough. The development plan should provide a positive framework for sustainable and quality development, which enables the provision of homes and economic investment, whilst protecting all that is best in the local environment. The Council must therefore exercise its strategic planning function with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.

2.5 In line with statutory requirements, the Council formally adopted the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan Up to 2021 (LDP) on the 23 November 2010. This document forms part of the review of the Adopted LDP to prepare a Replacement LDP that will cover the period up to 2031.

Planning (Wales) Bill

2.6 On the 6 October 2014 the Minister for Natural Resources Wales introduced the Planning (Wales) Bill to the National Assembly. The Bill outlines the Welsh Government's proposals to streamline the planning system in Wales drawing upon the key conclusions from Welsh Government research into the planning system.

2.7 With regard to planning policy, the Bill recognises that some planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of a single local planning authority and need to be tackled at a sub-regional level, through a strategic development plan, prepared by a strategic planning panel.

2.8 Although Welsh Government propose to set the geographical focus for SDPs, they do not specify the precise physical extent of the area to be covered by the SDP. It is suggested that a nominated lead local authority will be required to work collaboratively with other local authorities within the area of focus to identify the boundary of the plan area based on robust evidence which must be submitted for approval by Welsh Ministers.

2.9 Within a Caerphilly context it is assumed that the SDP area would cover the Cardiff Capital Region. This would reflect the collaborative work that has already been undertaken to date, by the 10 LPAs in the region through the SE Wales Regional Board, South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Group (SEWDERG) and South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG). A formal discussion and thereafter decision will need to be taken by the Council and its neighbouring Local Planning Authorities in order to enable the SDP for the area to be prepared at a future date.

2.10 In future the LDP will be required to be in conformity with the relevant SDP. Where an SDP covers an LDP area, the LDP will need to be rationalised so that it only focuses on local matters, particularly site specific allocations, in accordance with the scale and location of growth set out in the SDP. Issues such as the overall level of housing, employment, retail provision and strategic sites will have already been addressed in the SDP and will not need to be repeated. In future that will result in a much slimmer LDP in both scope and content and it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in the time associated with plan preparation and review.

2.11 Welsh Government has indicated that a pre-requisite for the preparation of SDPs will be comprehensive coverage in the region of adopted LDPs. This is likely to take time given that a number of authorities in the region, most notably Cardiff, have yet to adopt their development plan. In the interim, it is important that Caerphilly County Borough continues to ensure that there is an up to date planning policy

framework against which to take informed decisions on planning matters in order to stimulate economic growth and afford certainty to stakeholders and the development industry.

National Planning Policy & Guidance

2.12 In producing the LDP (1st Revision) the Council must have regard to national planning policies. The Welsh Government's national land use planning policies are set out in Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Planning Policy Wales supplemented by Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Minerals Technical Advice Notes (MTANs) and Circulars. Taken together these national planning policies set out the planning framework to help achieve sustainable development.

People and Places: The Wales Spatial Plan

2.13 The Wales Spatial Plan, approved by the Welsh Assembly in 2004 (Updated in 2008), provides a broad strategic framework for development and other plans.

2.14 The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) divides South East Wales functionally into three zones. The City and Coast zone includes the M4 corridor and the cities of Cardiff and Newport, just south of Caerphilly County Borough. The central zone, termed the Connections Corridor, links the prosperous City and Coast zone to deprived communities in the Heads of the Valleys Plus zone.

2.15 The bulk of the County Borough, containing over 80% of the population, lies in the Connections Corridor, with the remainder in the Heads of the Valleys zone. The Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan carries this sub-division further by defining a 'Southern Connections Corridor' (SCC) comprising Caerphilly Basin and Lower Islwyn in which development pressures from Cardiff and Newport are strongest where the environment is under particular pressure, and a 'Mid Valleys Corridor' (MVC) where the County Borough's major conurbation is situated and where the capacity for economic growth is greatest.

2.16 The WSP identifies 'Key Settlements' in each of the six areas of Wales. These key settlements are seen as locations for growth and for the provision of services and employment for the wider catchment areas they serve. Unlike the other five areas of Wales, the South East Area section of the WSP does not identify all the key settlements in the region but only the 14 'primary' key settlements. These include Caerphilly and Blackwood, which are referred to in the LDP as Sub Regional Principal Towns.

2.17 The Caerphilly LDP develops the WSP strategy in more detail by identifying a further three important Key Settlements (Bargoed, Ystrad Mynach and Risca) in addition to Caerphilly and Blackwood. For the purposes of the LDP, these settlements have been termed 'Sub Regional Principal Towns' and 'Principal Towns'. The Plan also identifies four other centres, equivalent to WSP 'Local Centres,' namely Newbridge, Nelson, Bedwas and Rhymney.

2.18 The other five area sections of the WSP also grouped related and complementary Key Settlements into 'hubs' offering a wider range of facilities and greater economic potential than the individual settlements on their own. The Caerphilly LDP identifies such a 'hub' in the Mid Valleys Corridor that encompasses Blackwood, Ystrad Mynach, Bargoed and Newbridge, together containing a population of approximately 75,000.

Turning Heads - A Strategy for the Heads of the Valleys (2006)

2.19 The Heads of the Valleys Strategy sits firmly within the context of the Wales Spatial Plan and has provided the broad framework for change within the Heads of the Valleys Area. The Strategy was developed around five priority themes:

- An attractive and well-used natural historic and built environment
- A vibrant economic landscape offering new opportunities
- A well-educated, skilled and healthier population
- An appealing and coherent tourism and leisure experience
- Public confidence in a shared brighter future

2.20 The Heads of the Valleys Strategy Area includes the Upper Rhymney Valley and the Upper Sirhowy Valley areas encompassing the settlements of Princetown, Rhymney, Abertysswg, Pontlottyn, Fochriw, Deri, New Tredegar, Bargoed, Aberbargoed, Gilfach, Argoed, Markham and Hollybush. The development strategy for the Plan harnesses and exploits the opportunities afforded to the north of the County Borough brought about by the Heads of the Valleys Strategy.

Vibrant and Viable Places (2013)

2.21 Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP) sets out the Welsh Government National Regeneration Framework that seeks to establish a more integrated way of reversing economic, social and physical decline throughout Wales. Its vision for the future is that:

“Everybody in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life.”

2.22 It promotes amongst other things a place-based approach to regeneration to create successful physical and environmental improvements to an area. It recognises that settlements are key to regeneration and that there is a growing need for town centre regeneration to create developmental hubs that can have a wider economic impact, providing a place of employment, leisure activity and the location of public services, the promotion of cultural activities, the nurturing of civic identity, to provide the community and visitors with an enriched town environment. The vision is for diversified town centres in which retailing constitutes a key element of the offer but is supported by learning, health and leisure facilities providing multiple reasons for town centre footfall.

2.23 The Caerphilly LDP develops this strategy by identifying five Principal Towns (Blackwood, Caerphilly, Bargoed, Ystrad Mynach and Risca) and four Local Centres (Newbridge, Nelson, Bedwas and Rhymney) based on their functions as major employers, retail centres, providers of services and centres of population.

2.24 The VVP recognises that transport plays a central role in terms of influencing where people live and work, their leisure options, and their opportunities to interact with friends, family and the wider community. An effective, accessible and affordable transport system therefore is identified as a key building block of the Welsh Government regeneration framework.

2.25 The Caerphilly LDP develops and builds on the excellent work undertaken over the last decade to enhance the connectivity and efficiency of the transportation network. It will identify and safeguard land to enhance and facilitate the provision of

a networked transportation system through the Metro Concept that will increase the connectivity of the area to the Cardiff Capital Region and beyond.

Regional Policy Context

Delivering a Future with Prosperity: SE Wales Regional Strategic Framework (October 2013)

2.26 The publication of the SE Wales Regional Strategic Framework entitled *Delivering a Future with Prosperity*, represents a critical stage in regional working, and as well as taking forward the collaborative agenda of the local authorities, it sets out priorities to complement and support key Welsh Government policies and initiatives, for example in relation to tackling poverty, implementing regeneration initiatives, securing economic development, effective planning, affordable housing, efficient and accessible transport (The Metro) and excellent connectivity in its widest sense. The LDP provides the development strategy and policy framework for the necessary developments associated with the delivery of the agreed strategic priorities for the region in terms of Place, Business Support and & Development and People and Skills.

Strategic Development Plan – Cardiff Capital Region

2.27 In future the LDP will be required to be in conformity with the relevant SDP. Where an SDP covers an LDP area, the LDP will need to be rationalised so that it only focuses on local matters, particularly site specific allocations, in accordance with the scale and location of growth set out in the SDP. Issues such as the overall level of housing, employment, retail provision and strategic sites will have already been addressed in the SDP and will not need to be repeated. In future that will result in a much slimmer LDP in both scope and content and it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in the time associated with plan preparation and review.

2.28 Welsh Government has indicated that a pre-requisite for the preparation of SDPs will be comprehensive coverage in the region of adopted LDPs. This is likely to take time given that a number of authorities in the region, most notably Cardiff, have yet to adopt their development plan. In the interim, it is important that Caerphilly County Borough continues to ensure that there is an up to date planning policy framework against which to take informed decisions on planning matters in order to stimulate economic growth and afford certainty to stakeholders and the development industry.

Regional Transport Plan

2.29 The South East Wales Regional Transport Plan (RTP) was published in March 2010 and included a 5-year programme of projects and a 15-year strategy to deliver an integrated transport system for the region. The RTP's long term vision, objectives and priorities for transport in SE Wales remain current and forms the basis of the Local Transport Plan. The RTP's 5-year programme of schemes is to be reviewed and updated to reflect progress and priorities

2.30 In line with the Welsh Government guidance, the LTP does not include rail or trunk road schemes i.e. schemes that are not within the Local Authority's remit. In future such schemes will be prioritised, progressed and delivered directly by Welsh Government in consultation with the Cardiff Capital Region Board. It is expected that these strategic schemes will be included in the National Transport Plan (NTP) and will form part of the Metro programme.

South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party – Regional Technical Statement

2.31 Minerals Planning Policy Wales (2000) has set out the overarching policy guidance for all types of mineral extraction in Wales. The guidance provides positively for the working of minerals resources to meet society's needs and advocates identifying areas for future working where practicable and by safeguarding mineral resources from permanent development that would prevent their future working.

2.32 The South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP) is charged with producing the Regional Technical Statement (RTS). A first review of the Regional Technical Statement (RTS) originally published in October 2008 was issued in 2014. The RTS sets out a strategy for the provision of aggregates within Wales until 2036, developing national mineral planning policy and providing apportionments and allocations for each local planning authority (LPA) which will be carried through the policies contained within the LDP.

Local Policy Context

Caerphilly Delivers (Single Integrated Plan) 2013

2.33 The Caerphilly Local Service Board (LSB) is a partnership of equals comprising the Aneurin Bevan Health Board, Gwent Police, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations, Caerphilly County Borough Council and Welsh Government. The Single Integrated Plan **Caerphilly Delivers** has been prepared by the LSB and replaces a number of existing plans that were previously required, such as the Community Strategy, the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategy, Children and Young People's Plan, and the Community Safety Plan, it represents a determined commitment by all partners to accelerate change, strengthen partnership working, multi-agency collaboration, and accountability for delivery.

2.34 **Caerphilly Delivers** has been developed based on the following principles of:

- **Sustainable development** where we promote social justice and equality of opportunity and enhance the natural and cultural environment and respect its limits.
- **Equalities and Welsh language** where we all promote and mainstream equalities and the Welsh language in accordance with our legislative requirements and strategic equality objectives.
- **Early intervention and prevention goals** with the aim of either preventing matters from getting worse or occurring in the first place, by identifying those in greatest need from their vulnerability, their risk of becoming vulnerable or from otherwise becoming disadvantaged.
- **Community cohesion** where people from different backgrounds enjoy similar life opportunities, understand their rights and responsibilities and trust one another and are trusting of local institutions to act fairly.

2.35 In order to realise the long term Strategic Vision for the county borough, Caerphilly Delivers identifies 5 key outcomes as follows:

Prosperous Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Revision) will therefore seek to increase the economic prosperity of the people and communities of the county borough through the provision of land for employment opportunities, supported by appropriate housing (including affordable housing and homes for the elderly) and ancillary facilities and services (including community and health facilities, recreation, leisure etc). Further it will seek to facilitate the provision of a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and

protects the environment; where public transport, walking and cycling provide real travel alternatives.

Safer Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Revision) will seek to make Caerphilly County Borough a clean, green, safe and pleasant place to live and work with decent public services. It should enhance the vibrancy and diversity of local communities, in order to ensure good health and social cohesion. It will facilitate the creation of new developments, which help to enhance social cohesion so that people feel safe and secure and it will deliver high quality design that deters opportunities for crime and anti social behaviour.

Learning Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Revision) will recognise the importance of modern education facilities and the role that they play in up skilling the population. It will therefore protect existing facilities and make adequate provision for sufficient land to be released to enable the improvement of education facilities throughout the county borough.

Healthier Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Revision) will contribute to improving public health, by promoting land use developments that contribute to healthy lifestyles and well-being. The plan will make provision for a transportation network that increases the opportunities for walking and cycling and provide a policy framework for the protection and enhancement of recreation and leisure facilities to ensure that they are accessible for all.

Greener Caerphilly - The LDP (1st Revision) will protect the environment as a whole whilst balancing the need for new development with the need to conserve valuable resources. Further it will underpin all development with the principle of good design, that meets a diversity of needs; which uses resources efficiently; and which makes adequate provision for recycling and waste management and ensure that new development minimises emissions of greenhouse gases as far as is practically possible in order to mitigate the effects of climate change. Finally it will seek to ensure that resources are used efficiently making the best use of our valuable assets.

3.0 KEY LAND USE ISSUES

Introduction

3.1 In order to ensure a robust basis for the development strategy, a review has been undertaken of the social, economic and environmental data available for issues affecting the County Borough. A detailed discussion of the broad issues that are relevant to the LDP up to 2031 are outlined in the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report- 2031'.

Spatial Context

3.2 Caerphilly County Borough is located in the heart of the South East Wales Capital City Region. The county borough occupies some 28,000 ha of the Valleys area of South East Wales. It stretches over 40 kms between the coastal belt of the Cities of Cardiff and Newport in the south and the Brecon Beacons in the north, taking in the valleys of three rivers: the Rhymney, Sirhowy and Ebbw.

3.3 The county borough is well positioned within South East Wales with easy access to the M4 Corridor and so the rest of the UK. The A465 Heads of the Valleys Road runs through the extreme north of the County Borough and offers good road links to the west to Merthyr Tydfil, Swansea, West Wales and Ireland, and to Ebbw Vale and the Midlands to the east.

3.4 Caerphilly's position between the Capital City of Cardiff and the Heads of the Valleys area gives it a strategic importance as a gateway to the valleys and a link between the relative wealth of the Capital, and the deprived valley communities.

3.5 The county borough and the surrounding valleys sub-region do not presently function as a connected city region, but as a loose network of settlements. There is a strategic desire to address this however through the creation of the Cardiff Capital Region supported by a Metro Transport System to improve the connectivity within the region and to other parts of the country.

Settlement Strategy

3.6 Caerphilly County Borough comprises three valleys, namely Rhymney, Sirhowy and the Lower Ebbw. The topographical constraints associated with valleys communities presents significant challenges in terms of the inter-relationship between towns and villages and the way in which they function. As a consequence there tends to be a strong north south influence.

3.7 Very few areas within the county borough are capable of being self sufficient. As a consequence, settlements within the area enjoy a close relationship with a cluster of other villages and towns.

3.8 The functional analysis of the county borough identified five Principal Towns within the county borough, namely Blackwood, Risca, Bargoed, Ystrad Mynach and Caerphilly, supported by four Local Centres at Newbridge, Rhymney, Nelson and Bedwas. These main centres perform as the principal areas for employment and retail provision and are generally where services can be accessed. Blackwood and Caerphilly are also important as sub regional centres.

3.9 The remaining settlements in the county borough are mainly residential urban areas. There are also a number of more remote valleys settlements that are rural in nature.

Healthier Caerphilly – Social Characteristics

Population

3.10 Towards the end of the 20th Century the population of the County Borough remained relatively stable. The Census indicated that there had been remarkably little variation in population between the 1981 Census at 171,700 and the 2001 Census at 169,500. However the 2011 Census indicated that the population of Caerphilly was considerably higher than had previously been estimated, at 178,806 people. This was over 5,400 higher than the LDP projections had assumed for 2011 and nearly 5,000 higher than the Welsh Government 2008 based projections indicated for 2011. Notably Caerphilly had one of the highest differences in Wales in the anticipated population (as per the MYE) and the actual Census figures.

3.11 The 2011 Census also indicated that there has been significant change in the distribution of the population within the County Borough, and significantly, the population decline in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area has generally been halted, with a slight increase in the population from 30,626 in 2001 to 31,087 in 2011.

3.12 Despite the generally held view that Britain is culturally diverse, 80.5% of the resident population indicate that they are of Welsh National Identity compared to 65.9% of residents in Wales.

3.13 In terms of the Welsh Language, 84% of the population of the county borough however indicate that they have no knowledge of the Welsh language compared to 73% overall in Wales. 8.5% of residents in the county borough indicate that they can speak, read and write Welsh compared to 14.6% in Wales (Census 2011).

Households and Housing

3.14 The number of houses required for residents has increased because of the long-term trend towards slightly smaller households, which is caused by several factors. There has been a long-term trend for families to have fewer children compared to past rates. The break up of households due to divorce, and the increasing numbers of single-parent families, has led to smaller households. There has been a significant increase in elderly households, reflecting both increased longevity and relative decline in the provision of institutional care (Office for National Statistics). It should be noted however that the household size between 2001 and 2011 did not reduce by the levels envisaged over that period.

3.15 A comparison between the 2001 and 2011 Census indicates that there has been a decline in the number of older person households compared to other household compositions, but the number of one person households not containing an older person has increased.

3.16 There has been small changes in the proportion of households where all the children are non-dependent, indicating that more children are living with their parents for longer. This is likely to indicate that there are issues with young people entering the housing market due to affordability issues.

3.17 Average house prices in the County Borough have fallen steadily since the economic downturn, with the average house price falling from £133,000 in 2008 to £97,811 in 2013. There are substantial differences in prices across the County Borough, with prices in the south of the County Borough significantly higher than in the north (Land Registry).

3.18 The Local Housing Market indicates the need for 526 affordable houses to be built per annum to meet housing need.

3.19 Welfare reform requires an increase in the provision of 1 and 2 bedroom

houses to meet the need of smaller households. At present there is a mismatch between housing supply and demand.

3.20 69.6% of households in the county borough own their own home slightly higher than the national average of 67.8%. However this is a drop from the 2001 Census when 72.6% of households in the county borough indicated that they owned their own home.

3.21 There has been a marked increase in the number of households relying on private landlord accommodation in the county borough, rising from 4.3% of households in 2001 to 9.6% in 2011 (Census).

3.22 Viability continues to be a major issue in the county borough, particularly in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area where land values are low.

Health & Well Being

3.23 Nearly a third (31%) of adults in the county borough report having a life-limiting long-term illness (compared with 27% for Wales), whilst 60% of adults aged 65 and over report that they have a life-limiting long-term illness (compared with 56% for Wales)

3.24 Life expectancy in the county borough is increasing. The average number of years a man in the county borough can expect to live healthily is 60 years, whilst a woman can expect to live healthily for 61.1 years. However, there are inequalities within the county borough. Men living in the most deprived areas can expect to live over 19 years less healthily than those in the least deprived areas; for women the difference is 17 years. (Public Health Wales Observatory, using ADDE/MYE (ONS), WIMD/WHS (WG))

3.25 The causes of health inequities are multifaceted and include lifestyle factors, e.g. smoking, alcohol intake, diet and physical activity. Wider determinants such as poverty, housing and education also play an integral part, along with access to appropriate healthcare.

Prosperous Caerphilly – Economic Characteristics

Deprivation

3.26 14 of the 110 statistical areas in Caerphilly County Borough are in the top 10% of the most deprived areas in Wales (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011).

3.27 The highest overall concentration of deprivation in the County Borough is located in the Upper Rhymney Valley and the Upper Sirhowy Valley areas (Heads of the Valleys Regeneration area), although there are pockets of deprivation in the MID Valleys Corridor and Southern Connection Corridor (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2011).

Economic Activity

3.28 The manufacturing sector remains the largest employment sector in the County Borough with 16.2% of the workforce being employed in manufacturing compared to 10% in Wales (Census 2011). The sector remains over-represented in the County Borough when compared to Wales thereby increasing the significance of these declines to the Caerphilly economy. The sector however is in long-term decline in the UK and its significance to the Caerphilly economy in terms of employment is likely to gradually decrease over the coming years. However the structure of the manufacturing sector in Caerphilly has been changing. Those in

decline have been the traditional/basic manufacturing activities, whilst more high-value activities have been growing, particularly small and medium size operations.

3.29 The retail sector is second to manufacturing in the county borough, with 15.1% of the workforce being employed in retailing compared to 12.8% in Wales (Census 2011). The Principal Towns and Local Centres continue to perform well with relatively low vacancy rates. Footfall has remained fairly consistent within each town centre, but slight reductions have been seen throughout the recession, which is consistent with the rest of the UK. However the decline in the retail sector is clearly a cause for concern.

3.30 The outstanding natural beauty of the county borough, coupled with the intensely rural nature of many communities, makes Caerphilly an ideal place to benefit from the growth in the low-carbon economy and the increasing links between economic development, regeneration and the environment.

3.31 Only 70% of working age men (16 to 64) and 59.9% of working age women (16 to 59) are economically active in the county borough (Census 2011). 38.3 % of the economically active population are in full-time work whilst, 13.2% are in part-time work. Notably 5% of the workforce are unemployed (Census 2011).

3.32 Over 9% of the population of Caerphilly were unemployed in 2012 (higher than the 8.3% figure for Wales). Male unemployment was 9.5% and female unemployment was 8.5%. Unemployment figures for both Caerphilly and Wales were higher than the UK average (7.9%) (NOMIS 2013).

3.33 Local Planning Authorities are required by national guidance to support economic and employment growth alongside social and environmental considerations within the context of sustainable development.

Transport and economic activity

3.34 In June 2012 central government announced an extension of the electrification of the railways programme to include the main line to Swansea and the valleys railways as well. Electrification of the rail lines will enable and facilitate future expansion and improvement in rail services throughout the county borough and the SE Region affording improved access to job opportunities within the region.

3.35 32,200 Caerphilly residents commute outside of the County Borough to work. Overall, there is a net out-commuting of 18,100 workers to jobs outside of Caerphilly.

3.36 The largest commuting destination is Cardiff, which accounts for over 10,900 of out-commuters, closely followed by Newport at 7,700. Cardiff is also the largest source of in-commuting, with a total of 3,300 people working in Caerphilly, closely followed by Blaenau Gwent at 2,300 and Rhondda Cynon Taf at 2,200. This shows that whilst the most obvious commuting flows between Caerphilly and Cardiff are strong, there is also a high level of lateral commuting across the Valleys. Significantly 80% of people that commute can get to work within 30 minutes. (Statistics on Commuting in Wales, 2010)

3.37 Congestion problems combined with Government policies to limit car usage and car parking as well as the growing emphasis on the environment means that access to public transport will become an increasingly important element in the viability of employment sites. Different modes of transport (private and public) as well as reliable transport links will therefore be key to the success of future employment sites.

3.38 73% of households in the County Borough have access to a motor vehicle compared to 76% of the Welsh Average (Welsh Transport Statistics 2006).

3.39 When travelling to work, 80% of residents travel by car, compared to 10% by public transport with the remainder travelling by foot or by bicycle. (Statistics on Commuting in Wales, 2010)

3.40 Travel distance to job opportunities is an important factor in determining access to employment. Two factors play a significant role, namely travel costs and public transport availability.

3.41 Rail improvements will need to continue, particularly if the Metro concept is to be implemented, as new rail routes will need to open. Continued frequency and capacity improvements will need to continue to further enhance improvements already made.

3.42 Rhymney Valley Line has been subject of major improvements to allow 4 trains per hour frequency and accommodate 4 carriage trains. Further improvements are required to increase the capacity to six carriage trains in the future

3.43 Whilst the transportation strategy for the County Borough is very much focused on measures to encourage the greater use of the public transport system, there remains parts of the county borough that also require investment in the highway infrastructure, and this is particularly the case in the Rhymney Valley which is overly reliant on the A469 for access.

Learning Caerphilly

3.44 The proportion of the Caerphilly population with no qualifications is 31.4% (Census 2011). This is a significant improvement when compared to 39.8 % in 2001 and is to be welcomed. However when compared to the Wales figure of 26% the lack of qualifications is a matter of concern.

3.45 Similarly the proportion of the Caerphilly work force qualified to degree level or equivalent (18.7%) is considerably lower than that of Wales (24.5%).

3.46 The number of schools over subscribed in terms of the school rolls has increased.

3.47 There is a need to identify land for schools for the Council's ambitious 21st Century Schools Programme.

Greener Caerphilly – Environmental Characteristic

Natural Heritage

3.48 Maintaining and enhancing the natural heritage of Caerphilly is important as it contributes to our quality of life, a healthier environment, attracts tourism and benefits the local economy. There are a variety of statutory (local, national and international) designations and non-statutory designations in the county borough. The weight to be attached to nature conservation interests is dependent on the relative significance of the designation.

3.49 Caerphilly has one European designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) within the County Borough, namely Aberbargoed Grasslands. This grassland area is of importance for the Molinea Meadows and Marsh Fritillary Butterfly. This area is also designated as a National Nature Reserve, the only one in the county borough.

3.50 The County Borough has 11 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific

Interest (SSSI), 6 have been designated for their biological interest and 5 for their geological interest. There are also 4 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and 190 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

3.51 Furthermore, 6 Special Landscape Areas (SLA) have been designated in order to protect those areas considered to be important to the overall landscape, history, culture, biodiversity and geology of the County Borough, along with 4 Visually Important Local Landscapes (VILLS), designated to protect the visual and sensory landscape of the County Borough.

3.52 The potential loss of significant areas of woodland, forestry and individual trees in both the rural and urban environment as a result of disease poses a serious threat to the landscape and biodiversity of the county borough. A more subtle consequence would be the impact upon the soil quality and carbon sink stores, both of which have now been identified in PPW as key drivers within a development plan.

3.53 The County Borough has 16 Conservation Areas and 411 Listed buildings. There are 47 scheduled ancient monuments and 4 historic parks and gardens, whilst Gelligaer Common is a Historic Landscape.

3.54 There are 68 buildings at risk within CCBC and an additional 52 buildings that are considered vulnerable. However, buildings at risk can be restored, adapted and reused and the active promotion of these buildings as an asset should be seen as a priority and encouraged accordingly.

Air Quality

3.55 The main sources of air pollution today arise from heavy traffic flow in and around the town centres, particularly in the Caerphilly area, where there is frequent queuing and congestion. As such, an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been declared in Caerphilly Town through the Local Air Quality Management Process. The measures required to deliver tangible air quality improvements in Caerphilly are likely to involve road infrastructure changes. A second AQMA has also recently been designated at Hafodyrynys.

Waste

3.56 CCBC are currently exceeding the national targets set for recycling, which are 52% of all waste to be recycled/ composted by 2012/13. CCBC recycling rate for household waste in 2011-12 was 63.9%, for municipal recycling was 59.1% and for local authority municipal waste was 55.9%).

Minerals

3.57 Within the County Borough there are resources of coal, sand and gravel and other minerals that need to be identified and safeguarded in the LDP.

3.58 The Upper Rhymney Valley offers the most significant potential in terms of energy production within the county borough due to the presence of coal resources at Nant Llesg.

3.59 A planning application has been lodged with the Council to seek consent to mine approximately 6 million tonnes of coal from Nant Llesg Surface Mine using surface mining methods. If successful the proposed Restoration Strategy for the site will be of fundamental importance in mitigating the impact of the development in the medium to long term.

3.60 The County Borough has potential in terms of coal bed methane extraction and a considerable proportion of the county borough has been licensed. The license

has no basis in planning however and planning consent needs to be given to enable any exploration of the resource.

Land contamination

3.61 Given the industrial legacy associated with the past development and use of land there is the potential for some brownfield sites to be contaminated. Land contamination has the potential to cause significant harm to ecosystems, humans, property and pollution of controlled waters (including groundwater, lakes, ponds, coastal waters and surface watercourses) because of the presence of particular substances in, on, or under the ground. In proposing the development of brownfield land for future development, it is important to ensure that all risks associated with potential land contamination have been addressed so that the land is suitable for use.

3.62 Planning legislation and guidance places the responsibility on owners and developers to determine the extent of any contamination on their site. The Local Planning Authority's duty is to ensure that owners and developers carry out the necessary investigations and proposals for dealing with any land contamination in a responsible and effective manner.

Safer Caerphilly

Crime and Fear of Crime

3.63 The crime rate in the county borough has generally been falling year-on-year over the last 10 years and the current crime rate is at an historic low level. The crime rate fluctuates at slightly above or slightly below the crime rate in Wales, but has followed a similar trend over time. The scale of the reduction over this time is significant with 3494 (-25%) fewer victims of crime and 9970 (-49%) fewer victims of anti-social behaviour in 2012, compared to 2008.

4.0 THE STRATEGIC VISION FOR CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH

4.1 It is important that a Strategic Vision of what the County Borough should look like in fifteen/twenty years time is formulated. This has already been achieved with partners through the development of the Community Strategy and the Adopted Local Development Plan. More recently this Strategic Vision has been refined through the work undertaken by the Local Service Board in respect of the Single Integrated Plan entitled ***Caerphilly Delivers***. The overall Strategic Vision therefore reflects and draws upon this earlier work and looks ahead to 2031.

Strategic Vision for 2031

The Development Strategy for Caerphilly County Borough will capitalise on our strategic location at the heart of the Cardiff Capital Region. It will ensure that by 2031 the social and economic needs of all residents and business are met through the:

- ***Provision of a wide range and diversity of sites that will deliver high quality and appropriately located homes, jobs and services supported by modern integrated transport provision; and***
- ***Sustainable regeneration of the historic environment and our unique towns and villages.***

Access to the surrounding countryside and our natural environment will be exploited where appropriate, and will complement the provision of a strategic network of recreation, leisure and community facilities that: are easy to access; encourage healthy active lifestyles; and promote the well being of residents and visitors alike.

4.2 In order to achieve the 5 key outcomes identified in Caerphilly Delivers, the LDP translates the Strategic Vision into a series of social, economic and environmental objectives. These objectives are at the centre of the LDP and will form the basis for future policy development.

Key Aims and Objectives

4.3 The Key Aims of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2031 are therefore to:

- A. Protect the environment as a whole whilst balancing the need for development with the need to conserve valuable resources.
- B. Ensure that new development minimises emissions of greenhouse gases as far as is practically possible in order to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- C. Underpin all development with the principle of good design that meets a diversity of needs; which uses resources efficiently; and which makes adequate provision for recycling and waste management.
- D. Make Caerphilly County Borough a clean, green, safe and pleasant place to live and work with decent public services.

- E. Enhance the vibrancy and diversity of local communities, in order to ensure good health and social cohesion.
- F. Ensure equal opportunities for all to proposed and existing facilities and services within and outside the County Borough.
- G. Provide a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and protects the environment; where public transport, walking and cycling provide real travel alternatives.
- H. Increase the economic prosperity of the people and communities of the County Borough through the provision of land for employment opportunities, supported by appropriate housing, ancillary facilities and services (including community and health facilities, recreation, leisure etc).
- I. Contribute to improving public health, by promoting land use developments that contribute to healthy lifestyles and well-being.
- J. Use resources efficiently making the best use of our assets.
- K. Improve education facilities to 'up skill' the population.
- L. Promote Caerphilly County Borough as an area with a distinctive identity and as an area in its own right.
- M. Facilitate the creation of new developments that help to enhance social cohesion so that people feel safe and secure.
- N. Deliver high quality design that deters opportunities for crime and anti social behaviour
- O. Promote the Principal Towns and Local Centres as hubs of enterprise through the provision of land for new commercial and mixed-use development to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of these important centres.
- P. Encourage the sensitive restoration and redevelopment of important historic assets that contribute to the rich urban fabric of the county borough and which serve to define the unique sense of place of individual towns and villages.
- Q. Facilitate the development of modern, well-designed, accessible and affordable housing that meets the needs of all sections of the community through the identification of appropriate land for housing in sustainable locations.

4.4 Each of the **Key Objectives** outlined below contribute to the achievement of one or more of the aims of the Plan and also serve to realise the Vision.

1. Accommodate sustainable levels of population growth (Objectives A, B, C, H, M, and Q)
2. Ensure that the County Borough is well served by accessible public open space and accessible natural green space. (Objectives A, C, E I and H)

3. Ensure the effective and efficient use of natural and built resources while preventing the unnecessary sterilisation of finite resources through inappropriate development. (Objectives A, C, J, and P)
4. Ensure that the environmental impact of all new development is minimised. (Objectives A, B, C and J)
5. Improve energy, waste and water efficiency while promoting environmentally acceptable renewable energy to maintain a cleaner environment and help reduce our impact on climate change. (Objectives A, B, C, D and J)
6. Encourage waste management based on a hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recovery (including material recycling, energy recovery and composting) and safe disposal. (Objectives A, C, D and J)
7. Encourage the re-use and / or reclamation of appropriate brownfield and contaminated land and prevent the incidence of further contamination and dereliction. (Objectives A and D)
8. Concentrate new development in appropriate locations along existing and proposed infrastructure networks that are accessible to pedestrians, cyclists and to public transport in order to sustain and complement the role and function of individual settlements. (Objectives A and G)
9. Ensure an adequate and appropriate range of housing sites are available across the County Borough in the most suitable locations to meet the housing requirements of all sections of the population. (Objectives C, E, I, M, N and Q)
10. Ensure that all new development is well designed and has regard for its surroundings in order to reduce the opportunity for crime to occur. (Objectives C, D, M and N)
11. Identify, protect and, where appropriate enhance, valuable landscapes and landscape features and protect them from unacceptable development. (Objectives A, D and J)
12. Identify, protect and enhance sites of nature conservation and earth science interest and ensure the biodiversity of the County Borough is enhanced. (Objectives A, D and J)
13. Create appropriate new landscape and ecological features and habitats as an integral part of new development wherever appropriate. (Objectives A and J)
14. Manage, protect and enhance the quality and quantity of the water environment and reduce water consumption. (Objectives A, C and D)
15. Reduce the impact of flooding by ensuring that highly vulnerable development is directed away from areas of risk wherever possible. (Objectives A and C)
16. Reduce congestion by minimising the need to travel, promoting more sustainable modes of transport and making the most efficient use of existing transport infrastructure. (Objectives B, D, F, G and H)
17. Capitalise on Caerphilly's strategic position further developing its role as a commercial and employment centre in the heart of the Cardiff Capital Region with strong links to the Heads of the Valleys area and as the smart alternative for locating development to Cardiff and Newport. (Objectives C, D, G, H, K and O)

18. Provide and protect a diverse portfolio of employment land for a variety of employment uses, focusing in particular on higher value employment opportunities and sites to meet local need, including waste management facilities. (Objectives C, D and H)
19. Encourage the development of high quality, all season tourist attractions and tourist accommodation that complements the natural and built environment of the County Borough. (Objectives B, E, G, I, L, M, O and P)
20. Maximise the efficient use of the existing infrastructure and encourage the necessary improvements to the network to sustain necessary levels of development at appropriate locations across the County Borough. (Objectives A, B, D and G)
21. Protect and provide a wide range of community and health facilities which are appropriately located and easily accessible, and which meet the needs of all sections of the population. (Objectives D, E, F, G, H, I, L M and N)
22. Maintain the vitality, viability and character of the County Borough's town and village centres and re-establish them as a focus for economic activity and community pride. (Objectives D, E and O)
23. Maintain, enhance and develop a hierarchy of town and village centres which are easily accessible, and which meet the needs of all sections of the population. (Objectives D, E and O)
24. Protect and enhance the overall quality of the historic natural and built environment of the County Borough. (Objectives A, E, L, P and Q)

5.0 THE PREFERRED STRATEGY

Introduction

5.1 An important feature of the development plan process is the emphasis on identifying and testing realistic strategy options to deliver the Vision and Objectives of the plan over the plan period. As the Council already has an adopted LDP the existing Development Strategy for the county borough has been assessed alongside alternative strategies in order to determine whether or not it remains appropriate within the context of up to date National and Regional Policy and Guidance and having regard to the changing regional context for development.

5.2 The Adopted LDP Strategy (1) has therefore been tested against four alternative spatial options (2 to 5) as follows:

- **Spatial Option 1:** Continuation of the Adopted LDP Preferred Strategy
- **Spatial Option 2:** Targeting Growth to the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area
- **Spatial Option 3:** Targeting Growth to the Northern Connections Corridor
- **Spatial Option 4:** Targeting Growth to the Southern Connections Corridor (Caerphilly Basin)
- **Spatial Option 5:** Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connection Corridors.

5.3 The five alternative spatial options provide clearly different spatial development scenarios in respect of future new housing and employment development; each of which will have different environmental, social and economic outcomes for Caerphilly County Borough up to 2031. Therefore each of the strategy options have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in order to determine which would deliver the most sustainable outcome. **The Assessment of the Alternative LDP Strategies** forms part of the SA/SEA and is available separately. However for ease of reference a summary of the findings is contained in Section 9.0.

5.4 Many of the component parts of the spatial options will be common to each of the strategies, specifically the future direction for the Principal Towns and Local Centers, the need for the school rationalisation process to be reflected and the need to ensure that the strategic infrastructure to support any new development is fit for purpose.

5.5 In particular all options considered the Council's need for improvements to the strategic transportation infrastructure, in particular the:

- Opportunities to maximise the use of public transport to improve connectivity throughout the county borough;
- Opportunities for the reopening of rail lines, specifically: the Caerphilly Machen / Newport rail line; and the proposed passenger service on the Cwmbargoed line to Dowlais;
- Provision of new stations, in particular at Crumlin/Nelson;
- Improvements to the rail network to improve frequency;

- An increased provision of Park & Ride where practicable in particular at Ystrad Mynach and Llanbradach.

5.6 In terms of the Strategic Highway infrastructure there is a need to consider the need, or otherwise for:

- A strategic highway corridor for the Upper Rhymney Valley to link New Tredegar and Pontlottyn;
- A Maesycwmmer Bypass; and
- A SE Bypass for Caerphilly.

5.7 What follows is the Preferred Strategy for the LDP up to 2031. This represents a combination of the best elements of the alternative strategies discussed in **Background Paper 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy** (August 2014). This paper sets out the alternative scenarios that have been considered in consultation with partner organisations and key stakeholders through the review process to date in respect of levels of: A) Population & Household Growth, B) Employment Growth and Alternative Spatial Options for the distribution of development sites that arise from the consideration of A and B.

5.8 The Preferred Strategy is therefore based on:

- The functional analysis that has been undertaken of the county borough as part of the review;
- Identification of key trends from the existing and emerging evidence base;
- Consideration of alternative population and household growth scenarios;
- Consideration of different employment growth scenarios;
- Feedback from the consultation with partner organisations and key stakeholders as an integral part of the review process;
- Consideration of the cumulative impact of development on infrastructure;
- Consideration of the issues raised through the annual monitoring of the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021;
- Availability of land proposed for development;
- SA/SEA Scoping exercise and consequent assessment of Alternative Strategic Options;
- Consideration of neighbouring local planning authorities development strategies; and
- Consideration of the up to date evidence base.

5.9 Having regard to the above the following are considered to be the most desirable, realistic and robust options to be used to underpin the Preferred Strategy for the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (First Revision) up to 2031:

- Population & Household Growth Scenario M – Moderate Average Household Size Change and SE Wales Migration (10 years) (*Agreed by a resolution of Council 07.10.2014*);
- Employment Growth Scenario 1 - Historic Land Take-Up (*Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014*); and

- Spatial Option 5: Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connection Corridors (*Refer to BR 2: Development of Alternative Strategic Options and Preferred Strategy, August 2014*).

5.9 In combination, these options provide for a strategy that promotes a moderate level of population and household growth together with an appropriate level of economic development. It promotes a balance between: small scale organic expansion of existing urban settlements serving to sustain Local Centres and services, and contributes to regeneration initiatives throughout the county borough; with larger scale mixed-use developments targeted to key transportation and growth corridors, that expand the extent of the Principal Towns, and that are of a sufficient size to facilitate new and improved infrastructure provision to support the planned level of growth and effectively link the county borough to the Cardiff Capital Region. By targeting development to a limited number of growth corridors this will prevent the proliferation of larger developments in the open countryside and limit pressure on other environmentally sensitive areas.

5.10 The Preferred Strategy is henceforth referred to as: **The Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy** (strategy). The strategy will identify key areas of change and of protection, which will deliver the aims and objectives of the Strategic Vision up to 2031.

5.11 An integral part of this Strategy is an emphasis on the development of sustainable and appropriate roles for each settlement that will provide the context for managing the scale and type of development that will be permitted in different locations.

5.12 Within the County Borough there are very few settlements that are capable of being self sufficient in terms of comprising an adequate range and mix of land uses. As a consequence most settlements enjoy a close relationship with a network of other villages and towns in order to provide the range of services that are needed to sustain them.

5.13 In order to understand this relationship a functional analysis¹ of the County Borough has been undertaken as an integral part of the review process based on five broad geographical areas:

1. Upper Rhymney Valley – incorporating Bargoed
2. Mid Valleys West
3. Mid Valleys East
4. Lower Sirhowy Valley and
5. Caerphilly Basin

5.14 Whilst this functional analysis has informed all Strategy Options it is particularly pertinent to the **Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy**, with the role and function of each settlement being a significant consideration in the identification of sites for new development.

5.15 It is important that the roles and functions of settlements throughout the county borough are considered not only in terms of their location within the County Borough but also in terms of their relationship to the wider area and in particular the Cardiff Capital Region.

¹ BR 1: Functional Analysis Caerphilly County Borough April 2014

5.16 The Wales Spatial Plan divided SE Wales (broadly the Cardiff Capital Region) into two spatial zones based on their functionality. Specifically the **Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area**, comprising the Upper Rhymney Valley and Upper Sirhowy Valley and the **Connections Corridor**, which extended to the remainder of the county borough.

5.17 The Adopted LDP further distinguished the Connections Corridor by dividing the area into the **Northern** Connections Corridor (Mid Valleys East and Mid Valleys West) and the **Southern** Connections Corridor (Caerphilly Basin and Lower Islwyn) where the influence of Cardiff and Newport is much more marked. The updated functional analysis of the area confirms that this division remains valid to inform the review of the plan.

5.18 The three broad strategy areas are thus defined as follows:

- **THE HEADS OF THE VALLEYS REGENERATION AREA (HOVRA)**
- **THE NORTHERN CONNECTIONS CORRIDOR (NCC)**
- **THE SOUTHERN CONNECTIONS CORRIDOR (SCC)**

5.19 As a consequence of comments made at the LDP Focus Group Meeting on the 4 November 2014, the strategy areas are to be renamed as follows:

- **THE HEADS OF THE VALLEYS REGENERATION AREA (HOVRA)**
- **THE MID VALLEYS CORRIDOR (MVC)**
- **THE SOUTHERN CONNECTIONS CORRIDOR (SCC) – Caerphilly Basin & Lower Islwyn**

NOTE: The geographical extent of each of the strategy areas is illustrated in the Key Diagram in Section 6.0.

Key Components: The Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy

5.20 Ten component parts form the Development Strategy and underpin the Strategy Policies. They are to:

- A. Target development to reflect the role and function of individual settlements;
- B. Target new development to the Northern Connections Corridor and the Southern Connections Corridor;
- C. Allow for the urban expansion of settlements within the Northern Connections Corridor and the Southern Connections Corridor on greenfield sites;
- D. Improve the strategic highway infrastructure within the Southern Connections Corridor through the development of the first phase of a south east bypass for Caerphilly Town;
- E. Explore opportunities to improve the strategic rail network to facilitate the reopening of the Caerphilly-Machen-Newport disused rail line;
- F. Reallocate suitable surplus employment sites for housing use across the Northern Connections Corridor;
- G. Reduce the scale and number of new housing allocations in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area to more closely align with market activities and market demand;

- H. Exploit opportunities afforded by the Valleys Regional Park and identify sites that are suitable for tourism;
- I. Minimise the impact of development on the countryside in the Southern Connections Corridor whilst allowing for appropriate planned levels of growth;
- J. Reduce the impact of development on the countryside in the HOVRA and the NCC.

Role and Function of Settlements

5.21 Within each strategy area there is an existing network of urban and rural settlements that are centered on a Principal town or conurbation, which acts as the hub for enterprise and activity. A number of Local Centres and a network of primarily residential urban areas support each of the Principal Towns.

5.22 For the purpose of the LDP the Principal Towns are: Bargoed, Ystrad Mynach, Blackwood, Caerphilly and Risca, with Blackwood and Caerphilly elevated to sub-regional status.

5.23 These Principal Towns are all strategically important. They are capable of supporting countywide services and facilities that are required to meet the wide and diverse social, economic and community needs of the resident and working population of the town, the surrounding Local Centres and residential areas. Importantly, they also serve to shape the unique identity of the area, its distinctive sense of place and act as a catalyst for investment into the area.

5.24 This strategy will establish a highly connected sustainable urban network of Principal Towns and Local Centres that are vibrant, accessible and safe and which contribute to the economic prosperity of the County Borough and the overall quality of life for residents. The emphasis in the Principal Towns will be on developing them as a focus for economic activity whilst ensuring that their vitality and viability is strengthened. The strategy will achieve this through the identification of land for a diverse variety of services, facilities and uses that complement the unique selling point of each of the Principal Towns.

5.25 There are also a number of important Local Centres within the county borough, namely: Rhymney, Nelson, Newbridge and Bedwas which are generally smaller and not as strategically significant but nevertheless perform a wider role than serving local needs. They have a valuable role, providing a range of local services and facilities that meet the day-to-day needs of residents. The emphasis in these areas will be on sustaining and diversifying the existing facilities to reinforce their importance as a Local Centre. The Strategy will also serve to improve the connectivity of these Local Centres to the Principal Towns and to a wider population with a view to sustaining and enhancing their role into the future.

5.26 All other towns and villages within settlement limits are referred to as primarily residential areas, although it is important to note that these areas will also contain other complementary local facilities such as schools and local shops within them and often some local employment as well, so that they should not be seen as 'just' housing areas. The emphasis within residential areas will be on: small scale expansion; retaining their distinct identity; providing a choice of house types; increasing connectivity to the Principal Towns, Local Centres and to the Cardiff Capital Region and maintaining and creating attractive well connected sustainable communities where people will want to live.

5.27 Rural Villages and Hamlets are located in the open countryside and are outside of defined settlement boundaries. As a general principle these areas will not be subject of further expansion. Furthermore, within these areas, there will be a general presumption against new residential development. Infilling or minor extensions may be acceptable if it can be shown that there is a local need for affordable housing or for housing associated with rural enterprise. New building in the open countryside away from existing villages and hamlets will continue to be strictly controlled.

5.28 In order for this network of urban settlements to function effectively, provision needs to be made to ensure that adequate social, physical and green infrastructure is available to support the education, leisure and health needs of the people that live in them, and to ensure that there is good connectivity between where people work, live and relax. In particular, the strategy will make provision for a strategic network of new and improved leisure and education facilities that have excellent connectivity to the communities that they serve, are fit for the 21st Century, and it will ensure that appropriate land is identified and/or safeguarded to enable adequate provision to be made.

Areas of Significant Change

5.29 This strategy promotes new development in particular housing and employment throughout the county borough but targets significant new development proposals to the Mid Valleys Corridor and the Southern Connections Corridor in particular. Housing sites are identified in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area but are scaled to reflect market demand.

5.30 The emphasis is on balancing the need for small scale organic expansion of existing urban settlements throughout the county borough to serve and sustain Local Centres and services, and the contribution such expansion would have in respect of regeneration initiatives; with the need for larger scale expansions of mixed-use developments that are targeted to key transportation and growth corridors within the Mid Valleys Corridor and the Southern Connections Corridor to meet the housing and employment needs of the population up to 2031.

5.31 The scale of the proposals to be targeted at each of the strategy areas will be based on an appraisal of the ability of the area to accommodate further growth having regard to the existing social and physical capacity of the area, the presence of environmental constraints, and the extent to which development can provide, or compensate for necessary social or physical infrastructure.

5.32 Having regard for the above, two strategic sites are proposed, one focused on the MVC along the A472 strategic highway corridor at Maesycwmmmer and one focused on the rail network resulting in a south east expansion of Caerphilly Town in the SCC. These sites will be of a sufficient size to facilitate new and improved infrastructure provision to support the proposed level of growth planned.

5.33 By targeting development to a limited number of growth corridors this will prevent the proliferation of larger developments in the open countryside throughout the county borough and limit pressure on other environmentally sensitive areas.

5.34 The Mid Valleys Corridor broadly corresponds with a corridor along the line of the A472. It has attracted substantial private and public sector investment and has transformed in recent years, giving confidence that a strategy based on growth in this area is viable and is likely to be effective to the benefit of the whole county borough.

5.35 Within the MVC the urban expansion of existing towns and centres will be targeted at mainly greenfield sites. Where greenfield sites are to be released this is considered necessary to diversify the existing housing stock, release land for economic development purposes in particular for SMEs and new office development and to make the area more attractive for future inward investment.

5.36 The Southern Connections Corridor comprises Caerphilly Basin in the west and Lower Islwyn in the east. Both areas experience significant development pressure given their proximity to Cardiff, Newport and the M4 corridor. Caerphilly Town is only 17 minutes by train from the centre of Cardiff. This is an extremely important economic advantage that the strategy will exploit. Within the SCC (Caerphilly Basin) the strategy will facilitate the release of appropriate brownfield sites close to the town centre and the rail network for redevelopment. Further it will improve the deliverability of those sites by releasing appropriate greenfield land to unlock their development potential. Where the deliverability of the site cannot be guaranteed within the plan period, the site will not be allocated.

Strategic Transportation Network

5.37 As a general principle development will be directed to locations that offer a choice of transportation. Particular importance will be placed on ensuring that development both supports and where necessary contributes towards the development of a modern integrated transport system in the county borough. The strategy therefore promotes development proposals that will improve the connectivity of the area within the Cardiff Capital Region, increases the ability of people to travel to work by public transport (in particular rail), and alleviates problems on the strategic road network.

5.38 Whilst the strategy is very much focused on measures to encourage the greater use of the public transport system, there remain parts of the county borough that also require investment in the highway infrastructure, and this is particularly the case in:

- the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area where there is a pressing need to increase the resilience of the area to the impact of disruption caused by the closure of sections of the A469;
- Maesycwmmmer which remains a traffic pinch point on the main A472 strategic highway route between Blackwood and Ystrad Mynach; and
- the Caerphilly Basin where there is a pressing need to make specific improvements to the strategic network, to ease congestion and alleviate air pollution in the town.

Strategic Road Network

5.39 The strategy identifies the need to implement the final section of the strategic highway network in the HOVRA between New Tredegar and Pontlottyn, in order to realise a long-term ambition to provide a modern road network that meets the needs of business, residents and visitors and which would complete the high quality route between the Caerphilly Northern Bypass and the Heads of the Valleys Road.

5.40 The provision of a first class road and public transport network is key to the economic success of the MVC. The A472 forms the main east-west highway along the southern edge of the MVC. From Newbridge to Blackwood the road is dual carriageway, as is the A469 between Ystrad Mynach and Caerphilly. However the

single carriageway through Maseycwmmmer continues to act as a constraint to the overall flow of traffic using the network. There is a continuing need to ensure that the strategic road network is upgraded to ensure ease of movement between Blackwood and Ystrad Mynach and the strategic rail network, and thus to the wider Cardiff Capital region. The strategy therefore identifies the need to address the traffic pinch point along the A472 at Maesycwmmmer through the provision of either on line improvements or through a new road provided as an integral part of the Strategic Development Site at Maesycwmmmer.

5.41 The strategy provides for a moderate level of housing growth over the plan period. This growth will lead to increases in traffic on the transport network, which will have implications, particularly in the southern connections corridor. There will be a need therefore for improvements to be undertaken to the strategic network in order to increase the capacity of the network and to alleviate the cumulative impact of new development in terms of both congestion and on air quality.

5.42 Road and rail links to Cardiff are particularly important as they serve not only local movements but also the massive commuter flows from further north in the Rhymney Valley. The need to facilitate travel patterns within Caerphilly Town Centre must be tempered by environmental considerations, particularly in respect of air quality standards. A sustainable transport system for Caerphilly which includes the provision of the first phase of a south east bypass as an integral part of the Strategic Development Site in Caerphilly, and capacity improvements along the existing network will ensure that travel patterns are accommodated whilst air quality within the built up area is improved.

Strategic Rail Network

5.43 Improvement to the existing transport infrastructure in the HOVRA continues apace including the provision of the new park & ride facilities and a new bus / rail interchange at Bargoed. The Rhymney Park and Ride is completed, whilst the final stages of the Rhymney Valley Line frequency enhancements are underway with the development of a passing loop at Tirphil. Together these improvements represent a significant step forward in encouraging residents of the HOVRA to shift their mode of transport from the private car to the train. Equally important, this investment in the transportation network provides improved access to job opportunities for residents living in the HOVRA.

5.44 Further improvements are now required in the MVC. There is a need for the strategy to build on the success of the Ebbw Valley Line and safeguard land for the provision of a new station at Crumlin. The establishment of this station would benefit the main employment site at Oakdale Business Park making it more accessible by rail. In addition as Ystrad Mynach is increasingly becoming a strategic hub for public services there is increasing pressure on the park and ride facilities. There is a need therefore to explore the opportunities to increase the park & ride provision at Ystrad Mynach Station.

5.45 Caerphilly has the second highest out-migration level in South Wales, with over 15,000 net car-borne out-movements each day. The majority of the out-migration is south to Cardiff and Newport. Measures therefore need to be identified to increase the number of commuting trips using sustainable modes, rather than the car. The strategic sites at Caerphilly and Maesycwmmmer both have potential to be served by train. Maesycwmmmer is in close proximity to three train stations, namely Hengoed, Ystrad Mynach and Llanbradach, whilst the strategic site in Caerphilly is directly adjacent to Caerphilly Station. There is a pressing need to ensure that the

opportunities to increase park & ride provision, particularly in Llanbradach are pursued to ensure that residents of these sites are able to commute by train.

5.46 Opportunities for the reopening of rail lines, specifically: the Caerphilly Machen / Newport rail line; and a passenger service on the Cwmbargoed line to Dowlais also need to be explored.

5.47 The Cwmbargoed line, whilst operating as a freight line for the Ffos-y-Fran mineral extraction works, remains as the last significant rail line within the county borough that does not have passenger services. The Cwmbargoed line links Nelson to the Principal Town of Ystrad Mynach and the services on the Rhymney Valley Line. The reinstatement of this line for passenger services and the provision of a rail halt at Nelson would facilitate movements to and from Nelson and would make the proposed mixed-use site at Ty Du more accessible to the region.

5.48 The Caerphilly Machen / Newport rail line will be safeguarded for the future provision of a passenger rail line.

5.49 The improved connectivity that will be delivered through these policy interventions and in particular: electrification of the Valleys Lines, capacity improvements throughout the network and the provision of new passenger lines will build on the successes achieved to date including the reopening of the Ebbw Valley Line, the provision of the new halt and park & ride facilities at Newbridge and Energlyn and the improved park & ride provision at Ystrad Mynach, Pengam, Rhymney and Caerphilly.

Walking/Cycling

5.50 A key factor in delivering more sustainable transport is realising a significant increase in the number of shorter trips by walking and cycling. The County Borough has a significant network of footpaths and has an excellent network of local and national cyclepaths. The provision of high quality strategic and local network of dedicated routes for these modes is an essential element in realising this growth. The Strategy will therefore protect and safeguard those routes that contribute to this strategic network and will identify new routes to expand existing provision.

Housing Development

5.51 One of the most basic and important requirements of residents is a home, and land for housing is one of the most significant, and often contentious land uses that have to be allocated in the LDP. The issues of population and housing are thus fundamental to the Plan.

5.52 The aim of the Strategy is to allow for a moderate level of population and housing growth up to 2031, to retain people within the area and attract new people of working age to live and work in the county borough. This approach is considered appropriate as it would not be acceptable to plan for a declining, ageing population, as this would adversely impact on the ability of the area to sustain services, facilities and economic growth. The aim therefore is to increase the 2011 level of population from 178,800 people to 192,250 by 2031. The strategy therefore makes provision for the development of 12,000 new homes in the plan period, 1,200 of which will need to be affordable.

5.53 In identifying sites to accommodate this level of growth regard has been had to the existing housing land supply, which takes into account information in respect of housing commitments, allowances for windfall sites, small sites, empty properties, demolitions and conversions. The Strategy therefore makes provision for the release of an additional 232 hectares of land for housing development up to 2031.

5.54 A large number of potential development sites have been identified through the Candidate Site process. (The Candidate Site Register lists the 177 sites that have been considered as part of the review process). Interested parties, landowners and developers, have proposed approximately 600 hectares of land that could potentially meet the housing objectives of the strategy. Appendix 2 provides a schedule of these sites whilst Appendix 3 provides an indication of the likely spatial distribution of potential development sites to meet the preferred strategy and indicates those sites from the Adopted LDP that will be retained in the LDP. As part of the consultation on the strategy, further assessment work will be undertaken on the acceptability, or otherwise, of all of the sites listed in terms of both their individual impact and the potential cumulative impact of a different combination of sites, on the environment and on the existing and proposed infrastructure of the area.

Economic Development

5.55 The economic needs of residents and business are recognised in the strategy, which seeks the development of a strong and diverse economy; that generates quality, well-paid jobs, and addresses problems of economic inactivity and social deprivation.

5.56 A review of socio-economic data² has raised some areas of concern that the strategy needs to address. Specifically that Caerphilly county borough has:

- Several areas of intense local deprivation, notably in eastern Caerphilly Town, Bargoed and within the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area;
- A low proportion of local residents qualified to degree level and a comparatively high proportion of people with no qualifications;
- Low proportions of people who work in professional and associate professional occupations;
- A strong dependence on public sector employment (30% of the workforce); and
- A high commuting rate with 46% of working residents commuting out of Caerphilly county borough for work, compared to the Wales average of 30%.

5.57 Of note however is that, notwithstanding the general decline in manufacturing the county borough retains a strong local manufacturing sector and retail sector, with 22.9 % of the working population employed in manufacturing and 14.9% in retail.

5.58 The county borough also has a high proportion of small and medium sized VAT registered businesses operating in the area, with some 4,195 businesses in 2013. Most of those businesses employ less than ten employees (79.3 percent). A large proportion of local businesses are in the construction and manufacturing sectors.

5.59 The strategy recognises that the employment market is a dynamic and changing sector and that modern businesses and developers want easily developable, accessible and usually prominent sites for their premises. A healthy property market needs to provide a mix of options including land for speculative developments; design and build schemes, and freehold plots for owner-occupiers to self-build. The LDP will therefore identify an appropriate range and choice of sites

² Employment Sites Supply and Market Appraisal Caerphilly County Borough Council , June 2014

for new build and protect existing employment areas throughout the county borough (as appropriate) to encourage innovation and diversity in the employment sector.

5.60 The county borough has a significant oversupply of employment land and premises, however a number of estates /sites are no longer appropriate to meet modern needs by virtue of their poor quality, size or poor location. Further a number of estates/sites are not served sufficiently by the modern infrastructure that is demanded by modern business, such as excellent connectivity to the road and rail network or access to superfast broadband. As an integral part of the review process therefore all existing estates and allocated sites for employment use have been reassessed to ensure that they are suitable for their proposed use. Where they remain suitable, the strategy will protect them to ensure their continued important contribution to providing accessible sources of employment throughout the county borough.

5.61 The Principal Towns and Local Centres also make an important and significant contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the area. They account for significant employment opportunities for local residents, provide accessible local services and are a focus of community activity. Thriving and vibrant town centres are essential if the county borough is to achieve its ambition of building a strong and sustainable local economy. Retail, commercial, office and tourism development opportunities are therefore identified in order to broaden the range of uses and thus increase footfall.

Natural Heritage

5.62 The natural heritage covers the geology, geomorphology, biodiversity, landscape and amenity value of the environment. It is a valuable natural resource providing many of our basic needs, such as clean air, water, food, raw materials, recreation and economic activity. Whilst the natural heritage is extremely vulnerable it is also under significant pressure from development. The plan recognises this and designates special landscape areas to protect those areas that are considered to be of local landscape value and that are therefore worthy of protection, and sites of importance for nature conservation that are sites of substantive nature conservation value.

5.63 However the strategy is required to strike an appropriate balance between the need to protect the environment with the need to provide for sufficient land for social needs (i.e. housing, community and leisure facilities) and economic needs (i.e. provision of jobs through economic development) over the plan period. In identifying appropriate urban expansion sites in the MVC and SCC the level of potential harm to the natural heritage will be assessed, taking into account mitigation, compensatory and restoration measures.

5.64 Minerals underlie the majority of the county borough, and the Council aims to balance the need to conserve the distinctive features and characteristics of the natural heritage with the need to safeguard nationally important mineral resources. Proposals for mineral working will be subject to national policy tests as set out in Minerals Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Technical Advice Notes.

Valleys Regional Park

5.65 The strategy recognises that in addition to the intrinsic value of the natural environment, there is an opportunity to exploit the potential of these assets to improve the economic prosperity and health inequalities throughout the area. The County Borough has a significant network of country parks and countryside recreation facilities and there is an increasing recognition and momentum building to develop the valleys as a tourist destination as an integral part of the Cardiff Capital

Region. The Strategy will therefore protect and safeguard those sites that contribute to the Valleys Regional Park and will identify sites that can be developed to provide complementary facilities that increase the attractiveness of the area to visitors further.

Energy

5.66 The strategy recognises that coal resources remain particularly in the HOVRA that are capable of future extraction. In order to ensure that coal resources capable of extraction by surface mining methods are not sterilised by new development, they will be safeguarded in the LDP. It is important to note that this does not indicate an acceptance of working in the future.

5.67 The strategy seeks to encourage renewable energy schemes but recognises the inherent conflict between permitting such schemes, in particular wind turbines and the desire to protect areas of recognised environmental, cultural or landscape importance. It therefore identifies Local Areas of Search for the provision of renewable energy wind schemes to indicate where there would be a general presumption in their favour subject to usual planning considerations.

6 STRATEGY POLICIES

6.1 The Strategy Policies are the vehicle for delivering the overarching development strategy over the plan period. They indicate the general provision to be made for housing, employment, retail and transport; define the settlement strategy and the road hierarchy and indicate where policies for restraint will be appropriate to meet the aims and objectives of the plan up to 2031.

Development Strategy - Development in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area

SP1 Proposals in the Heads of the Valley Regeneration Area will be required to:

A Promote the north of the County Borough as a good quality residential, employment and tourist area at the heart of the Valleys Regional Park;

B Focus development on both brownfield and greenfield sites to enhance the social and economic functions of the area;

C Provide appropriate forms of growth in response to the specific role and function of individual settlements;

D Ensure that there is safe, effective and efficient access to the Cardiff Capital Region by all modes of transport;

E Capitalise on the economic opportunities offered by new technologies and the ongoing regeneration of the Principal Town of Bargoed;

F Serve to address existing problems of deprivation in order to sustain and develop communities in a manner that is consistent with the underlying principles of sustainable development.

Development Strategy – Development in the Northern Connections Corridor

SP2 Proposals in the Northern Connections Corridor will be required to:

A Focus development on both brownfield and greenfield sites to enhance the social and economic functions of the area;

B Deliver the proposed level of managed growth for the area whilst having regard for, and positively impacting on, the existing communities within the area;

C Make the most efficient and effective use of the existing infrastructure and make adequate provision for new infrastructure as necessary to facilitate development;

D Reduce car borne trips by promoting more sustainable modes of travel and links to the Cardiff Capital Region Metro;

F Capitalise on the economic opportunities offered by Oakdale / Penyfan Plateau and the Principal Towns of Ystrad Mynach and Blackwood.

Development Strategy - Development in the Southern Connections Corridor

SP3 Development proposals in the Southern Connections Corridor will:

A Capitalise on the excellent public transport links to and within the Cardiff Capital Region in order to reduce the need to travel by car and promote more sustainable modes of transport;

B Deliver the proposed level of managed growth for the area whilst having regard for, and positively impacting on, the existing communities within the area;

D Make the most efficient and effective use of the existing infrastructure and make adequate provision for new infrastructure as necessary to facilitate development;

E Capitalise on the economic opportunities offered by the Principal Towns of Caerphilly and Risca and its strategic location within the Cardiff Capital Region;

F Capitalise on the tourism and economic opportunities afforded by Caerphilly Castle and Cwmcarn Forest Drive;

G Protect the natural heritage from inappropriate forms of development.

Settlement Boundaries

SP4 The Plan defines settlement boundaries in order to:

A Define the area within which development would normally be allowed, taking into account material planning considerations;

B Promote the full and effective use of urban land and thus concentrate development within settlements;

C Prevent the coalescence of settlements, ribbon development and fragmented development;

D Prevent inappropriate development in the countryside.

Local Identity

SP5 The Plan identifies Green Wedges between settlements where the open nature of the area serves to maintain the integrity and identity of individual villages and where development would otherwise result in their coalescence.

Settlement Strategy

SP6 The Council will support existing settlements, which will be enhanced based on their role and function in the settlement strategy:

Sub Regional Principal Towns:

- Bargoed (HOVRA)
- Blackwood (NCC)

Principal Towns:

- Ystrad Mynach (NCC)
- Caerphilly (SCC)
- Risca / Pontymister (SCC)

Local Centres:

- Rhymney (HOVRA)
- Nelson (NCC)
- Newbridge (NCC)
- Bedwas (SCC)

Residential Settlements:

- All other villages within defined settlement boundaries

Rural Villages:

- Villages and Hamlets within the countryside outside defined settlement boundaries

Areas of Significant Change: Strategic sites to deliver planned growth

SP7 The Council will support the planned growth of Caerphilly Town in the Southern Connections Corridor and Maesycwmmmer in the Northern Connections Corridor through the development of the following strategic sites:

NCC1 Gwernau Ganol and Gwerna Fawr Farm, Maesycwmmmer - a housing based scheme of approximately 1700 homes with associated community and leisure uses (including a primary school) focused on an upgraded A472 transport corridor;

SCC1 Former Ness Tar Plant and Adjoining Land – a mixed-use town centre scheme of approximately 450 homes, 3 hectares of employment land with associated community and leisure provision, accessed by a new link road, focused on the Caerphilly Transport Interchange.

Strategic Sites will be required to be of a high quality and sustainable design and will need to be integrated and make a positive contribution to its host settlement. Full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment and its special features is required to be demonstrated and implemented through a masterplanning exercise. New infrastructure needed to support the development is to be provided as an integral part of the development and will be critical to ensure the successful integration of the site into the wider area.

Retail Hierarchy

SP8 The Council will support development proposals that reinforce the importance of the Retail Hierarchy as follows:

Towns

- **Sub Regional Town Centre**
 - **Retail Warehouse Parks**
- **Principal Town**
- **Local Centre**

Proposals for retail and commercial development within the defined Town Centres will be required to demonstrate that they:

- A. Contribute to its unique sense of identity;
- B. Complement the specific role and function of the Centre in question;
- C. Improve the attractiveness of the Centre.

Outside of these Town Centres, proposals for new retail development (including on Retail Warehouse Parks) will be subject to an assessment of need and to an application of the sequential test.

Place Making

SP9 Development proposals should contribute to creating sustainable places by having full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment and its special features through:

- A An appropriate mix of uses that reflect the role and function of settlements;
- B A high standard of design that reinforces attractive qualities of local distinctiveness;
- C Design in accordance with best practice in terms of designing out crime;
- D A location and layout that reflects sustainable transport and accessibility principles and provides full, easy and safe access for all;
- E The incorporation of resource efficiency and passive solar gain through layout, materials, construction techniques, water conservation, and where appropriate the use of sustainable drainage systems;
- F The efficient use of land, including higher densities where development is close to key transport nodes;
- G The incorporation and enhancement of existing natural heritage features;
- H The incorporation of mitigation measures that improve and maintain air quality.

SP10 Built Heritage

The rich heritage and identity of Caerphilly County Borough will be preserved and enhanced by the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they will not cause harm or have a detrimental impact on the following :

- A Listed Buildings and their setting;
- B Conservation Areas and their setting;
- C Local distinctiveness of settlements;
- D Townscape character;
- F Historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance.

Planning Obligations

SP11 The Council will seek to secure Planning Obligations (S106 Agreements) where they are necessary to remove obstacles to planned development and are critical to the delivery of the site, meet local needs and make development more sustainable. Such obligations will include:

- A Infrastructure for walking, cycling, public transport, parking to link development schemes to the strategic transport network;
- B Strategic highway improvements necessary to make the development acceptable in highway and planning terms;
- C On site school and ancillary facilities generated by the development proposal;
- D Flood defence measures required to mitigate the risk of flooding;
- F On site formal and informal open and leisure space;
- G Affordable housing.

Community Infrastructure Levy

SP12 Development proposals throughout the county borough will be required to contribute toward the provision of strategic infrastructure to support the development of the county borough as a whole, in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

Renewable Energy: Local Areas of Search

SP13 Local Areas of Search are identified for the provision of renewable energy wind schemes. Within these Local Areas for Search there will be a general presumption in favour of development provided there is no adverse impact on areas of recognised environmental, cultural or landscape importance. Development proposals outside of the Local Areas of Search will not be permitted.

Minerals Safeguarding

SP14 The Council will contribute to the regional demand for a continuous supply of minerals by:

- A Safeguarding known resources of coal, sand and gravel and hard rock
- B Maintaining a minimum 10-year land bank of permitted aggregate reserves in line with national guidance

Waste Management

SP15 The Council will implement a sustainable, integrated approach to waste management, which minimises the production of waste and its impact on the environment, and maximises the use of unavoidable waste as a resource. To assist in this all allocated and protected class B2 industrial sites are designated as potentially suitable locations for new in-building waste management facilities.

Conservation of Natural Heritage

SP16 The Council will protect, conserve, enhance and manage the natural heritage of the County Borough in the consideration of all development proposals within both the rural and built environment.

Countryside Recreation

SP17 Access to opportunities for enjoyment of the County Borough will be promoted and encouraged where the proposals are sustainable in terms of its impact on the natural heritage, the local community and the rural environment within which they are located.

Development of the Valleys Regional Park

SP18 Development proposals that contribute to the Valleys Regional Park will be permitted provided that there is no adverse impact on areas of recognised environmental or landscape importance.

Protection of Strategic Leisure Network

SP19 The Council will protect important networks of public open space, natural green space and recreational facilities from inappropriate development.

Health and Well Being

SP20 The Council will safeguard suitable land for the development of community, leisure and education facilities in order to ensure that an adequate network of provision can be made at accessible locations across the County Borough to contribute to the health, educational attainment, social care and well being of residents over the Plan period

Total Housing Requirements

SP21 The Council has made provision for the development of up to 13,200 new dwellings in the County Borough between 2006 and 2021 in order to deliver the 12,000 new dwellings required to meet the moderate growth strategy. This over provision allows for flexibility and choice.

Affordable Housing Target

SP22 The Council will seek to deliver through the planning system at least 1200 affordable dwellings between 2011 and 2031 in order to contribute to balanced and sustainable communities

Managing Employment Growth

SP23 The Council has made provision for the development of 55 ha of employment land in the County Borough up to 2031 to meet the identified need for 29 ha. This over allocation is to allow for flexibility and choice. This requirement will be met principally through the development of a diverse range of employment sites located on identified Business Parks and Industrial Estates.

Managing Tourism Growth

SP24 The Council will seek to enhance the tourism potential of the county borough through:

- A The designation of appropriate land for tourism related development;
- B The appropriate protection of the natural and built heritage assets that provide the county borough's sense of identity and unique qualities; and
- C Improvements to the transport network as a whole to improve the connectivity of the area to the Cardiff Capital region and beyond.

Transport Infrastructure Improvement

SP25 The Council will seek to implement improvements to the existing transport infrastructure that:

- A Address social exclusion by increasing accessibility to employment, services and facilities throughout the County Borough and/or;
- B Assist in regenerating the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area through creating and improving transport links to the settlements in the Northern and Southern Connections Corridors, and/or
- C Reinforce the role and function of settlements, and/or
- D Reduce the level of traffic movements and/or congestion, within any identified air quality management area, and/or
- E Improves the connectivity of the county borough to the Cardiff Capital Region; and/or
- F Promote the most efficient use of the transport network as a whole.

Safeguarding Former Rail lines

SP28 The routes of former railwaylines that have the potential for transport related development will be safeguarded, particularly those that facilitate walking, cycling, rail freight or passenger movements.

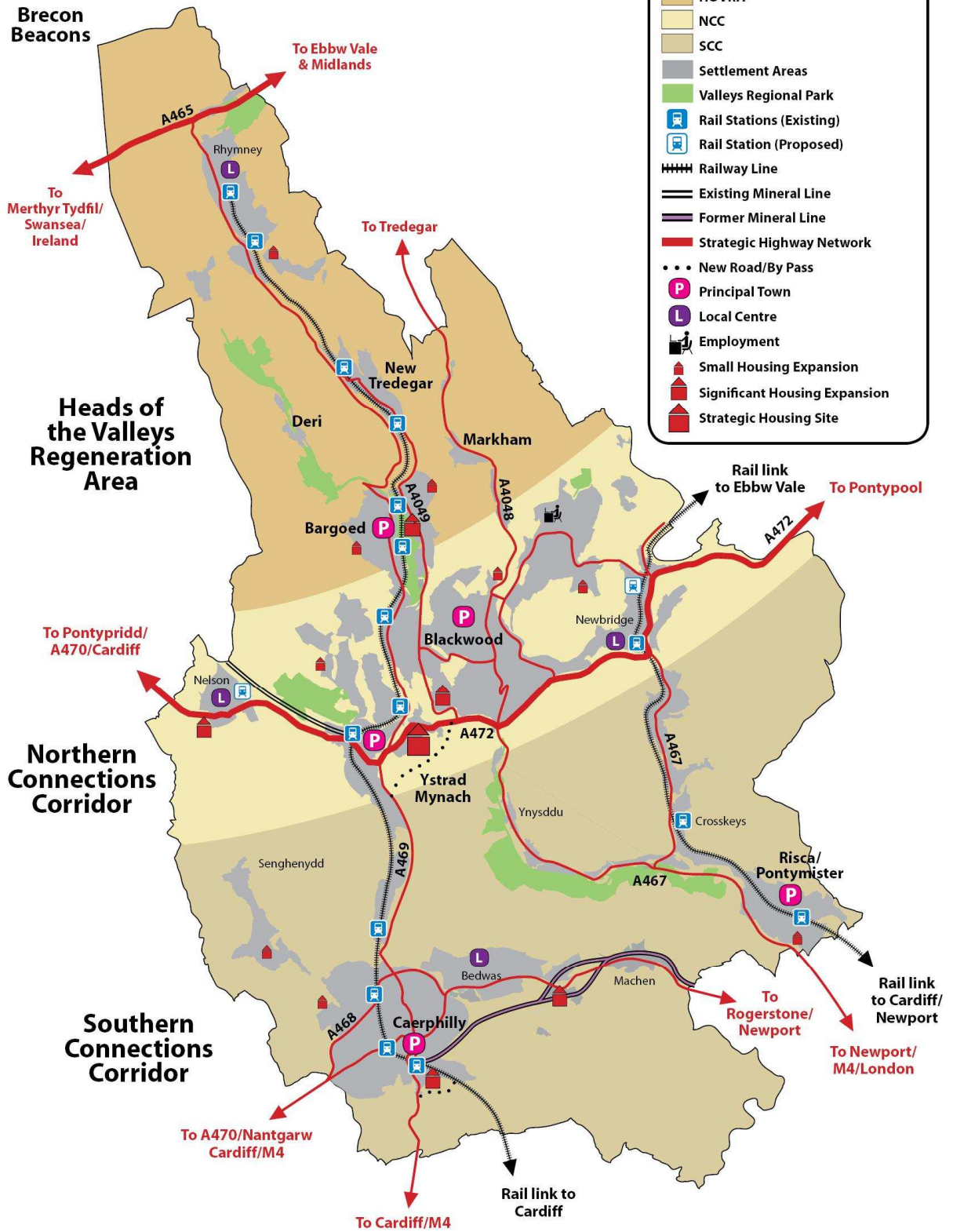
Road Hierarchy

SP29 A road hierarchy is defined as follows:

- A The Strategic Highway Network
- B County Routes
- C Distributor Roads
- D Access Roads

SPATIAL OPTION 5: TARGETING GROWTH TO THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CONNECTION CORRIDORS

KEY DIAGRAM



7.0 STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (HOVRA)

7.1 The Heads of the Valley Regeneration Area (HOVRA) is characterised by the highest levels of unemployment and social deprivation in the County Borough and historically suffered from long-term population decline. One of the main aims of the adopted strategy for the HOVRA was therefore to reverse this long-term trend and to provide sufficient land to meet the housing and employment needs of residents within the area.

7.2 The 2011 Census indicates that the population within the area has increased slightly from 30,626 in 2001 to 31,087 in 2011, which would indicate that the long-term trend of population decline has indeed been halted. The Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy will need to build on this progress to ensure that this trend continues.

7.3 In recent years the HOVRA has experienced unprecedented levels of investment in its infrastructure, in particular in the transportation network and in the regeneration of the Principal Town that serves the HOVRA, namely Bargoed.

7.4 Bargoed provides a wide range of functions and services for the surrounding settlements that are not available elsewhere in the north of the County Borough. This Strategy will continue to seek to elevate the status of Bargoed within the Heads of the Valley Region and make it an attractive town for visitors from across the region to visit.

7.5 A number of initiatives have now been completed in the town centre which contribute towards this aim, including the conversion of the Hanbury Baptist Chapel into a multi purpose community asset comprising a worship space, library and resource centre; and the construction of the new development plateau within the town centre to accommodate the major town centre regeneration scheme.

7.6 The development plateau is divided into two distinct phases and its regeneration is currently transforming Bargoed. Phase 1 comprises a new Morrison food store and 6 modern retail units with an integral decked car park. This phase commenced work in 2011 and was opened on schedule in December 2013.

7.7 Phase 2 will see the delivery of a commercially viable state of the art multiplex cinema consistent with the needs of the Greater Bargoed Community and for the residents of the Upper Rhymney Valley as a whole. This Phase also incorporates a site ideally suited to A3 development that would complement the cinema. The cinema development will see the return of commercial cinema to the town after more than 30 years following the closure of the Cameo Cinema (formally the Palace Cinema) in the late 1970's. It is anticipated that this development will serve to elevate the status of Bargoed within the Heads of the Valleys Region, however further development opportunities will be identified within the town to continue the ambitious modernisation agenda into the next decade.

7.8 The Strategy will exploit and build on this significant investment and identify suitable sites for modern housing, employment and community facilities, to not only meet the role and function of individual settlements but also to continue to positively regenerate the HOVRA over the plan period.

7.9 The choice of housing in this area is particularly limited, and in some villages up to 90% of housing is pre-1914 terraced housing and generally where this figure is lower, most of the remainder is public sector housing. It is likely that the lack of choice of modern housing continues to be a major factor in the continued out-migration of younger and more affluent families from this area. In order to address this issue there is a strategic desire to allow for development opportunities that will diversify the housing stock and help to retain and attract people to the north of the County Borough. However low land values and issues of viability continue to be a significant issue for residential development schemes within the HOVRA. Therefore in order to address this issue and to encourage developers to locate in the HOVRA, there is a continued need to identify both brownfield and greenfield land for new housing within this strategy area.

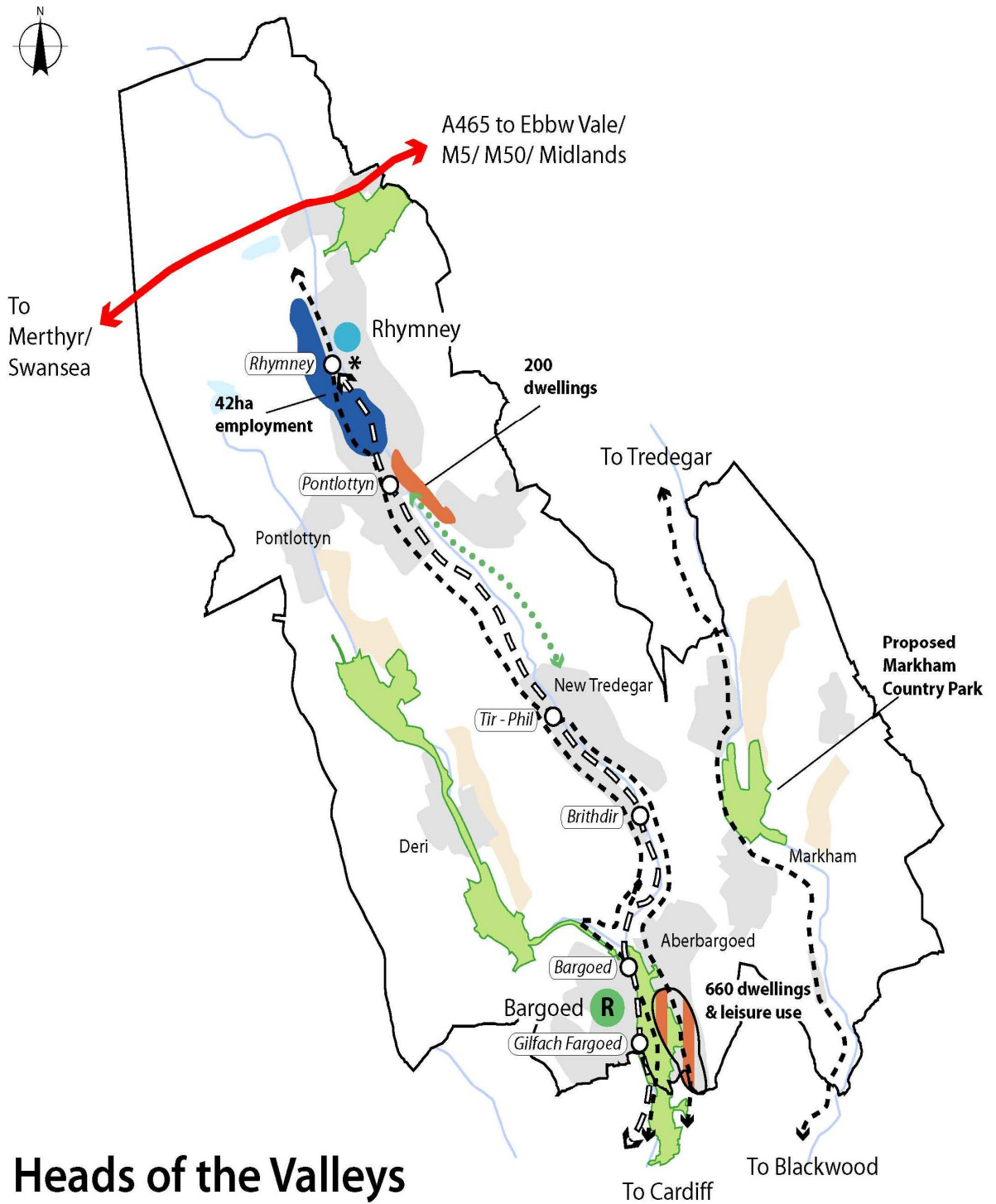
7.10 Whilst there is a significant amount of employment land within the HOVRA. There is also an identified need for the provision of small and medium sized business units to facilitate new business start ups and to accommodate the expansion needs of indigenous businesses within the area. Suitable land will be identified therefore to meet this need. The emphasis for employment sites will be on the identification of brownfield land within existing settlement limits.

7.11 Improvement to the existing transport infrastructure in the HOVRA continues apace including the provision of the new park & ride facilities and a new bus / rail interchange at Bargoed. The Rhymney Park and Ride is progressing, whilst the final stages of the Rhymney Valley Line frequency enhancements are underway with the development of a passing loop at Tirphil. Together these improvements represent a significant step forward in encouraging residents of the HOVRA to shift their mode of transport from the private car to the train. Equally important, this investment in the transportation network provides improved access to job opportunities for residents living in the HOVRA.

7.12 Whilst the transportation strategy for the County Borough is very much focused on measures to encourage the greater use of the public transport system, there remains parts of the county borough that also require investment in the highway infrastructure, and this is particularly the case in the HOVRA. Specifically, there is a pressing need to increase the resilience of the HOVRA to the impact of disruption caused by the closure of sections of the A469. The strategy identifies the need to implement the final section of the strategic highway network in the HOVRA between New Tredegar and Pontlottyn, in order to realise a long-term ambition to provide a modern road network that meets the needs of business, residents and visitors and which would complete the high quality route between the Caerphilly Northern Bypass and the Heads of the Valleys Road

7.13 As part of its ambitious school rationalisation programme the Council has plans to build a new 3-19 school with shared leisure facilities to meet the needs of school children and the residents living in the HOVRA. Appropriate land will be identified to accommodate this programme and in this regard consideration should be given to the identification of Aberbargoed Plateau.

7.14 The HOVRA's potential contribution to the Valleys Regional Park is immense. The Strategy will therefore build on the opportunities afforded by the Valleys Regional Park and identify sites that are suitable for tourism opportunities to increase the tourism offer within the HOVRA and the county borough as a whole.



Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area

- Principal Town
 - Local Centre
 - Proposed Mixed Use
 - Proposed Housing
 - Existing Rail
 - Existing Station
 - * Existing Park and Ride
 - A469 Resilience Programme
 - Existing Employment
 - Country Park (VRP)
 - Settlement
 - Woodland
- R** Bargoed Town Centre Regeneration Scheme

7.15 A large part of the area has been shown to have intrinsic landscape value and is also sensitive environmentally. As a consequence, a considerable proportion of the surrounding countryside is likely to be subject to environmental protection.

7.16 The Upper Rhymney Valley however offers the most significant potential in terms of energy production within the county borough due to the presence of coal resources at Nant Llesg and the potential of the area in terms of renewable energy generation. There is an inherent conflict therefore in terms of exploiting these resources and protecting the countryside from potentially damaging activities. The Strategy recognises this issue and the LDP will provide a robust framework to control the future exploitation of these resources in the future.

7.17 The Upper Rhymney Valley is also a principal gateway to the northern end of the county borough and is particularly prominent when viewed from the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road. The Plan will need to seek to balance the merits of exploiting energy schemes with the safeguarding of the landscape from further degradation. Due to its prominence, any proposals for development associated with energy generation will need to recognise that development must be undertaken in an environmentally acceptable manner.

The Mid Valleys Corridor (MVC)

7.18 The Mid Valleys Corridor (MVC) comprises a contiguous area of urban development spanning the mid valleys area along the A472 corridor. The settlement pattern in this area is more like a conventional urban conurbation rather than the traditional linear settlements typical of the Valleys.

7.19 In the MVC the Strategy seeks to capitalise on the development opportunities in the Principal Towns of Blackwood and Ystrad Mynach and the economic opportunities offered by Oakdale Business Park. New development opportunities are focussed on both brownfield and greenfield sites that have good public transport links to encourage travel by sustainable modes and which make the most efficient use of the existing infrastructure.

7.20 The role of the MVC has increased in importance over the past decade as the Principal Town of Ystrad Mynach has become the location for a number of vital public services including the Council Headquarters, the Local General Hospital, The College and Ystrad Mynach Police Station and Custody Unit. The presence of all these major services means that Ystrad Mynach is a significant employment and learning centre and increasingly is becoming a strategic location for investment and growth.

7.21 The Centre for Sporting Excellence in Ystrad Mynach is the most recent high profile development in this increasingly important Principal Town. The Centre includes two 3rd Generation (3G) artificial playing surfaces to support both football & rugby, supported by an exceptional level of infrastructure. The pitches / lighting / stands / terracing and car parking are constructed to the highest standards and meet the exacting requirements of the sport's governing bodies. The centre provides many of the training requirements of elite sportsmen and women in one single venue and will serve to attract visitors to the area from all over the region. The opportunities afforded by the presence of the Centre should be seized upon and land will be identified within the town for the development of modern visitor accommodation and complementary leisure facilities.

7.22 The LDP will ensure that Ystrad Mynach continues to attract inward investment and that it exploits fully the opportunities available within the Principal Town. In this respect the LDP will identify sites that fully exploit the existing transport infrastructure and in particular the rail network and will identify land for additional park & ride facilities at Ystrad Mynach and Hengoed to maximise the potential offered by the Valleys Line Electrification.

7.23 The Cwmbargoed line, whilst operating as a freight line for the Ffos-y-Fran mineral extraction works, remains as the last significant rail line within the county borough that does not have passenger services. The Cwmbargoed line links the Local Centre of Nelson to the Principal Town of Ystrad Mynach and the services on the Rhymney Valley Line. The reinstatement of this line for passenger services would facilitate movements to and from Nelson, and would make the proposed mixed use development site at Ty Du more accessible and attractive to potential inward investors.

7.24 Blackwood is the Sub Regional Principal Town in the Mid Valleys East and continues to perform relatively well. The town contains more retail floorspace than any other town centre in the county borough, including Caerphilly. The emphasis in Blackwood will be to build on its existing strengths as an excellent sub-regional shopping centre and continue to improve the retail offer of the town. Scope exists to provide modern retail units in the heart of the town to attract good quality middle market retailers and this would enhance the appeal of the town within the region. There is also potential to develop a new role for the town as an employment centre, particularly for office development, this would increase footfall in the town centre and add to the vibrancy of the area.

7.25 The introduction of a new cinema in the southern part of town through the conversion of the former bingo hall is likely to make the town more attractive to visitors and the LDP will make provision through its policies to harness opportunities presented by this development that serve to increase the footfall in the town.

7.26 Blackwood has experienced significant levels of investment in its transport infrastructure with the development of the new bus station in the centre of town. There is a continuing need however to ensure that the strategic road network is upgraded at key locations in order to ensure ease of movement between Blackwood/Ystrad Mynach and Newbridge to afford greater and easier access to the rail network.

7.27 The provision of a first class road and public transport network is key to the economic success of the MVC. The A472 forms the main east-west highway along the southern edge of the MVC. From Newbridge to Blackwood the road is dual carriageway, as is the A469 between Ystrad Mynach and Caerphilly. However the single carriageway through Maseycwmmmer continues to act as a constraint to the overall flow of traffic using the network. There is a continuing need to ensure that the strategic road network is upgraded to ensure ease of movement between Blackwood and Ystrad Mynach and the strategic rail network, and thus to the wider Cardiff Capital region. The strategy therefore identifies the need to address the traffic pinch point along the A472 at Maesycwmmmer through the provision of either on line improvements or through a new road.

7.28 It is appropriate that provision for economic growth be paralleled by provision for an appropriate level of house building in the MVC. However this must be tempered by the fact that the employment areas in the MVC provide employment opportunities for people from across the county borough, particularly residents of HOVRA.

7.29 One of two strategic sites is therefore proposed for Maesycwmmmer. Focused on the MVC along the A472 strategic highway corridor this site will be of a sufficient size to facilitate new and improved infrastructure provision to support the proposed level of growth planned. By targeting development to a limited number of growth corridors this will prevent the proliferation of larger developments in the open countryside throughout the county borough and limit pressure on other environmentally sensitive areas.

7.30 The plan also makes provision for new housing to expand the extent of Greater Blackwood, to reflect the town's status as a Sub Regional Principal Town and to further diversify the housing stock and tenure of the area.

7.31 The plan will also need to set targets for the provision of affordable housing based on a robust assessment of viability, this was previously set at 10% of housing in the Newbridge area and 25% in the rest of the Mid Valleys Corridor area. However the current economic climate means that viability is an issue on some sites with significant abnormal costs within the MVC. There will therefore be a need to reconsider the level of affordable housing provision to be sought within this strategy area. However if further greenfield land is released the issue of viability will be alleviated to some extent.

7.32 The supply of land and properties for employment purposes within the MVC is of significance for the wider area, and in particular, in realising one of the main regional functions of the MVC of offering much needed employment opportunities to residents in the HOVRA. The LDP will continue to target new employment growth to the MVC. Significant land remains available within the MVC for employment at Ty Du, Nelson and Oakdale Business Park. Both of these sites are in public ownership and are actively being promoted. An enlarged Ty Du is to be promoted as a mixed-use site.

7.33 The success of Oakdale Business Park (one of the largest industrial plateaux in South Wales) is critical in terms of ensuring economic prosperity for residents for the County Borough. However there has been a disappointing take up of employment land at Oakdale Business Park to date. Permission has been granted for 2 wind turbines on Plateau 1 and General Dynamics have obtained permission for an extension of their premises to provide a Demonstration Track & Media Centre at Plateau 2 ensuring the future of the business and securing 800 jobs. Consideration will need to be given to the appropriateness of the continued allocation of Plateau 3 for employment given the significant over supply of employment land within the county borough and within the South East Wales area more generally. More generally, consideration should also be given to the release of surplus employment land for alternative uses throughout this strategy area.

7.34 The 21st Century Schools programme is critical to the Council's strategic approach to education provision, particularly with regard to the delivery of the necessary infrastructure on the ground. There is an urgent need to identify a suitable site within the MVC on which to locate a new English medium secondary school to facilitate the Council's Secondary Rationalisation Process. An opportunity exists to

consider the provision of shared leisure facilities as part of this provision to meet the needs of the students, school children and the residents living in the MVC. Oakdale Plateau 3 is the Council's preferred site.

The Southern Connections Corridor (SCC)

7.35 The Southern Connections Corridor comprises Caerphilly Basin in the west and Lower Islwyn in the east. Both areas experience significant development pressure given their proximity to Cardiff, Newport and the M4 corridor.

Caerphilly Basin

7.36 The connectivity of Caerphilly Town via the rail network to the Cardiff Capital Region is of huge significance. Caerphilly is only 17 minutes by train from the centre of Cardiff, which is an extremely important economic advantage that the strategy will seek to exploit.

7.37 Caerphilly Basin remains under extreme pressure for development arising from the growth in the M4 Corridor and has limited capacity for development without causing environmental harm. To date the consolidation of development within settlement limits in the SCC has been extremely successful and instrumental in securing the remediation of a number of significant areas of contaminated and/or brownfield sites for redevelopment. Most notable are the developments at Castlegate, the Gas Works Site and Caerphilly Miners Hospital for residential use.

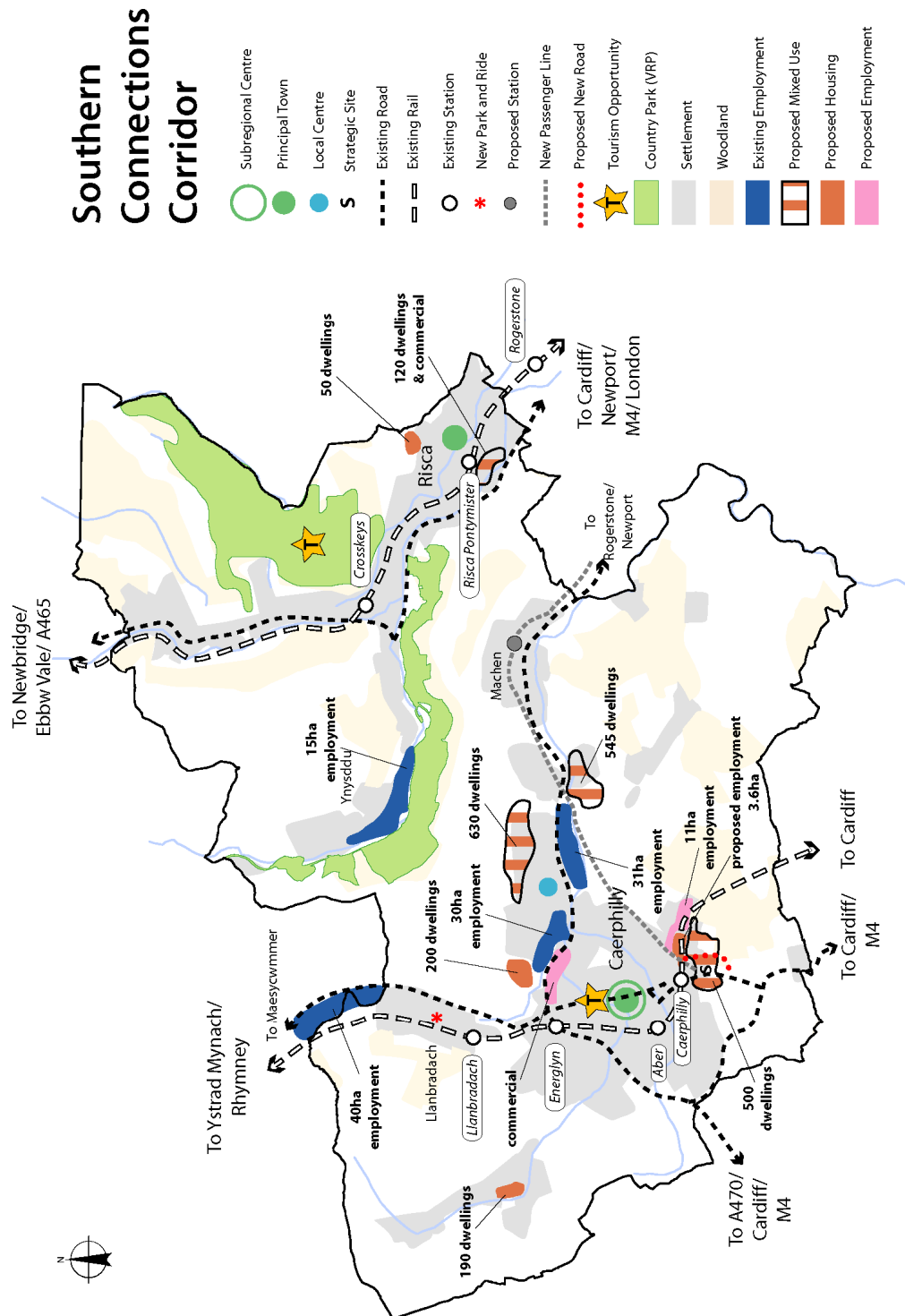
7.38 There are three significant brownfield sites remaining in the Caerphilly Basin that are available for redevelopment, namely: Bedwas Colliery, Bedwas (23ha); Ness Tar (12ha); and Waterloo Works (17ha). However the ongoing challenging economic climate means that even within the Caerphilly Basin viability is an issue in terms of bringing forward these difficult and expensive brownfield sites for development.

7.39 Within Caerphilly Basin the strategy will therefore facilitate the release of appropriate brownfield sites close to the town centre and the rail network for redevelopment. Specifically it will improve the deliverability of those sites by releasing appropriate greenfield land, where necessary, to unlock their development potential. Where the deliverability of the site cannot be guaranteed within the plan period, the site will not be allocated, or relied on for housing delivery.

7.40 In recognition of market realities and the very real need to release housing in an area of extreme housing pressure, one of two strategic sites is therefore proposed for Caerphilly Town. This will be focused on a large brownfield site, namely Ness Tar Plant together with adjacent greenfield land next to Caerphilly Train Station. The release of this site will result in the south-east expansion of Caerphilly Town. This site will be of a sufficient size to facilitate new and improved infrastructure provision, not least appropriate leisure provision and the provision of the first phase of a south-east bypass, to support the proposed level of growth planned. By targeting development to a limited number of strategic sites this will prevent the proliferation of larger developments in the open countryside throughout the county borough and limit pressure on other highly valued and sensitive sites in the Caerphilly Basin.

7.41 Caerphilly Basin does not provide sufficient affordable housing to meet the needs of all sectors of society. The plan will need to set targets for the provision of affordable housing based on a robust assessment of viability, this was previously set at 40% in the Caerphilly Basin (excluding the Aber Valley) and 10% in the Aber

Valley and in the Lower Islwyn parts of the Southern Connections Corridor. However the current economic climate means that viability is an issue on some sites with significant abnormal costs within the SCC. There will therefore be a need to reconsider the level of affordable housing provision to be sought within this area.



7.42 Whilst there is a significant amount of employment land within the County Borough. There is also an identified need for the provision of small and medium sized business units to facilitate new business start ups and to accommodate the expansion needs of indigenous businesses within the Caerphilly Basin. Suitable land will be identified therefore within the SCC to meet this need. The emphasis for employment sites will be on the identification of brownfield land within existing settlement limits in the first instance, however greenfield sites will be identified where they offer better connectivity to the rail network and are likely to secure inward investment.

7.43 Caerphilly is the Principal Town in the Caerphilly Basin and it plays an important subregional role in relation to shopping, employment, leisure and tourism. The new St David's 2 development in Cardiff, which opened in October 2009, has had a very strong impact on Caerphilly, significantly reducing its catchment as consumers are being attracted to the new Cardiff development at the expense of Caerphilly Town. Caerphilly needs to counteract the falling comparison goods market potential by encouraging more premium retailers into the town and improve the attractiveness of the centre. Commercial development opportunities to provide modern retail units/offices within Caerphilly Town Centre will therefore be identified in order to reinforce the town centre, increase the footfall within the town and importantly enhance its importance as a retail and employment hub. There is also increasing pressure to reconsider the designation of Gallagher Retail Park to the north of the town as a Retail Warehouse Park, and the future designation of this area will be reconsidered through the review process.

7.44 Caerphilly Town is home to the impressive Caerphilly Castle, which means that the area has significant potential for tourism. The Castle was built towards the end of the 13th century and it survives today as a national landmark. It is second in size in Britain only to Windsor Castle and is frequently used in television series such as Merlin and Dr Who. The additional expenditure that tourist visitors bring to Caerphilly creates positive benefits for the town's retailers and catering operators. Given the significant tourism potential of the town, there is scope to further exploit opportunities that enhance the tourism offer of the town and which would increase the attractiveness of Caerphilly Town as a destination in its own right. Opportunities for new commercial leisure provision will therefore be identified, and in particular proposals that increase the amount of dwell time within the town will be explored.

7.45 Given the proximity of the area to Cardiff, Caerphilly Town is an attractive base for people visiting the capital city. The town has a number of budget hotels and local guest houses, however there is the potential for additional visitor accommodation to be provided within the heart of the town, where there is good connectivity to the rail network and thus to Cardiff and the wider region. There is an opportunity to use the impressive castle and its environs as a unique selling point for the locality and the strategy will therefore promote the redevelopment of parts of the town for new visitor accommodation.

7.46 Whilst the transportation strategy for the County Borough is very much focused on measures to encourage the greater use of the public transport system, there remains parts of the county borough that also require investment in the highway infrastructure, and this is particularly the case in Caerphilly Basin where

there is a pressing need to make specific improvements to the strategic network, to increase capacity, ease congestion and alleviate air pollution.

7.47 Road and rail links to Cardiff are particularly important as they serve not only local movements but also the massive commuter flows from further north in the Rhymney Valley. The need to facilitate travel patterns within Caerphilly Town Centre must be tempered by environmental considerations, particularly in respect of the impact of commuting patterns on congestion in the town and on air quality standards. A sustainable transport system for Caerphilly must ensure that travel patterns are accommodated whilst air quality within the built up area is improved. The Council have prepared a Draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) that considers options to improve air quality within the town. As part of the AQAP, various options are considered, one of which is the potential impact of a bypass. Initial feasibility work to determine the potential alignment for a future south-east bypass for Caerphilly has been undertaken and there is now a need to facilitate its provision through the development of the strategic site at the former Ness Tar Plant.

7.48 The route of the disused railway line between Caerphilly, Machen and Newport is largely in tact and an opportunity exists to explore the potential for the reintroduction of a passenger line along this route. The reinstatement of this line would offer the potential in the long term to locate new development alongside a new transport corridor and increase connectivity to the wider Cardiff Capital Region, however this is likely to be beyond the current plan period. The strategy will also identify land for additional park & ride facilities at Llanbradach to maximise the potential offered by the Valleys Line Electrification and explore the opportunity for the relocation of the railway halt to maximise its accessibility.

7.49 As part of its ambitious School Rationalisation Plan, the Council is developing the former St Ilan Comprehensive site in Caerphilly as an exciting new Welsh medium school. This will form part of an overall strategy to develop a 3-16 campus with many shared facilities on the site, with the opportunity to offer some post-16 provision as well. An opportunity also exists to improve the leisure offer in the SCC through the development of leisure facilities to meet the needs of students, school children and the residents living in the Caerphilly Basin.

7.50 A large part of the Basin has intrinsic landscape value and is also sensitive environmentally. As a consequence, a considerable proportion of the surrounding countryside is likely to be subject to environmental protection.

Risca Town

7.51 Risca/Pontymister, hereafter referred to as Risca is the main centre for services in the Lower Islwyn Area and is therefore designated as the Principal Town for this part of the SCC. Risca is only 25 minutes by train from the centre of Cardiff and 30 minutes by bus from the centre of Newport affording excellent access to the M4 corridor and the national rail network. This is an extremely important economic advantage that the plan will exploit.

7.52 The commercial function of the area has the potential to be overshadowed by its close proximity to Newport and to some extent Blackwood. Improvements to the retail provision in the shopping centre are therefore needed to ensure that the town continues to cater for the needs of its resident population over the plan period. This has been achieved, in part, with the redevelopment of the former Foundry Site as a superstore and through the conversion of the Palace Cinema in the heart of town,

which now contains a retail use as well as the town's library and Customer First centre. There is scope to modernise the town further and increase the footfall in the town through the redevelopment of town centre sites for office, retail and leisure use, encouraging greater use of the town by workers and visitors in the area. This will serve to elevate the status of Risca within the SCC.

7.53 The consolidation of development within settlement limits in the SCC has been instrumental in securing the remediation of a number of significant areas of contaminated and/or brownfield sites for redevelopment. Most notable in the Lower Islwyn Area is the land west of the A467 and Afon Ebbw (former South Celynen Colliery site) for residential use and the new retail stores in the form of a large Tesco extra on the former Foundry Site and a small food store as part of the Palace Cinema redevelopment scheme in the Town Centre.

7.54 Within Lower Islwyn there are a number of significant brownfield opportunities remaining, which are fundamental to the regeneration of the Principal Town, in particular the Suflux, Rowecord and the Birds Sites. National Resource Wales are undertaking a flood consequence assessment for the River Ebbw with a view to implementing a flood alleviation scheme, which it is anticipated will serve to unlock the development potential of a number of important brownfield sites in this town. There will be a need however to reassess all available brownfield sites in order to ensure that they are deliverable over the plan period. Where the deliverability of the site cannot be guaranteed within the plan period, it will not be allocated in the revised plan.

7.55 The natural setting of the town and the nearby riverside, offers the potential for Risca to become one of the most attractive towns in the county borough. By taking advantage of redevelopment opportunities, particularly along the river frontage, the town could also develop an enhanced employment role as a rail-oriented location for small and medium sized office-based businesses. The identification of sites for new residential development will also seek to diversify and enhance the range of housing available in the area and make the area a more popular residential location.

7.56 The opening of the Ebbw Valley passenger line has improved the connectivity of the area to the Cardiff Capital Region. There is an opportunity to increase the connectivity of the area further through the provision of a passenger service to Newport on the Ebbw Valley Line. This improved connectivity, coupled with the existing tourism attractions in the locality at Cwmcarn Forest Drive, Sirhowy Country Park and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, offers significant potential to attract visitors into the area. There is the potential for new visitor accommodation to be provided within the heart of the town, where there is good connectivity to the rail network and thus to Cardiff and the wider region and where there is an opportunity to exploit the proximity of the town to Cwmcarn Forest Drive as a unique selling point for the locality.

7.57 A large part of Lower Islwyn has intrinsic landscape value and is also sensitive environmentally. As a consequence, a considerable proportion of the surrounding countryside is likely to be subject to environmental protection.

8 CROSS BOUNDARY ISSUES

8.1 In December 2011, South East Wales Regional Partnership Board comprising the Leaders of the ten local authorities in SE Wales asked the Directors of Environment and Regeneration to establish a task and finish group to research, critically evaluate and advise on the essential requirements to establish its vision for ***South East Wales: a thriving region, visible internationally and distinctively Welsh.***

8.2 As an integral part of this work the South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Group (SEWDERG) have sought to co-ordinate and build upon existing work in order to ensure that the best use is made of finite resources. In many ways, South East Wales is already operating as a city region, albeit not formally constituted as such. There is a high degree of interdependence and cooperation between the local authorities and a proven track record of working closely together through regional working groups such as South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta), South East Wales Regional Housing Forum (Sewrhf), South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (Sewspg) and South East Wales Economic Forum (Sewef).

8.3 The publication of the SE Wales Regional Strategic Framework entitled *Delivering a Future with Prosperity*, represents a critical stage in regional working, and as well as taking forward the collaborative agenda of the local authorities, it sets out priorities to complement and support key Welsh Government policies and initiatives, for example in relation to tackling poverty, implementing regeneration initiatives, securing economic development, effective planning, affordable housing, efficient and accessible transport and excellent connectivity in its widest sense.

8.4 There already exists a significant body of evidence for strategic planning within SE Wales, as considerable work has already been undertaken to inform existing and emerging Local Development Plans. In 2013/14, Sewspg with the support of Welsh Government Planning Improvement Fund gathered into one report the existing key evidence for the region to:

- Aid a common understanding of the evidence base;
- Highlight existing gaps and/or deficiencies in the evidence base in order to inform the future development of a regional planning framework; and
- Facilitate a professional dialogue regarding the most appropriate methodologies to be used in plan preparation in the future.

The report outlined:

Section A: The Development Strategies underpinning existing LDPs and thus those areas targeted for growth or consolidation;

Section B: Population & Housing

Population and Household Projections;

Housing Land Supply;

Gypsy and Traveller needs and provision;

Section C: Employment Land Supply; and

Section D: Retail Hierarchy

8.5 The report did not consider transport issues as it was considered that the regional transport issues had been adequately addressed by Sewta through the regional transport work.

8.6 Usefully a single plan for the region was also prepared, which collates all of the authorities Local Development Plans Proposals Maps for the region into one and which highlights clearly the extent of the successful collaborative work undertaken on local development plans within the region to date.

8.7 The Sewspg report highlights the key strategic planning issues that have clear cross-boundary implications.

8.8 For the purposes of the review of the LDP the following strategic matters have been identified as key cross boundary issues: levels of population and household growth, transportation strategy, economic development strategy (including retail); waste; flood risk and the delivery of strategic infrastructure are matters that need to be considered by neighbouring local authorities. Furthermore there is a need to ensure that environmental protection policies are consistent with neighbouring areas.

8.9 The Council has undertaken extensive dialogue with local planning authorities in the wider region to progress its LDP. This work is necessary to ensure that the development strategy that underpins the revised LDP:

- can be delivered having regard to other strategies within the region;
- does not undermine neighbouring local planning authority strategies but complements them;
- makes the most efficient use of finite resources, in particular land and infrastructure; and
- protects those parts of the natural and built environment that are valued for their intrinsic value, not just within the county borough but within the wider regional context.

8.10 Importantly this work will also demonstrate at the Examination that the local planning authority has sought to effectively work with its neighbouring authorities to meet the relevant tests of soundness regarding cross-boundary matters.

8.11 Whilst there is a pressing need to carry out this work for the Draft Preferred Strategy, further collaborative working at a regional level will be necessary in the future to inform the revised Deposit LDP. This work is likely to be ongoing throughout the subsequent stages of plan review.

8.12 Appendix 4 provides a short summary of the development strategies that underpin the local development plans of neighbouring local authorities.

POTENTIAL ISSUES ARISING FOR NEIGHBOURING LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES FROM THE PREFERRED STRATEGY

8.13 There appears to be general agreement that the proposed level of population and household growth for Caerphilly up to 2031 appears reasonable as a basis for consultation.

8.14 The most significant cross boundary issue highlighted by neighbouring local planning authorities was transport. Specifically the need to ensure that any new proposals can maximise sustainable transport options for commuting trips.

8.15 The proposed strategic sites are well related to rail stations. Ness Tar is adjacent to Caerphilly rail station and is also at the Caerphilly end of the Caerphilly-Machen-Newport line, which the council is seeking to use for passenger services. Newport indicated that the freight line is safeguarded within their development plan but the re-introduction of a passenger line has yet to be identified.

8.16 The Maesycwmmer site is within easy walking distance of Hengoed station and is less than a mile from Ystrad Mynach park and Ride and the proposed Llanbradach Park & Ride, there is a desire to ensure that people living in this area are encouraged as an integral part of the design and layout of this site to use public transport.

8.17 It was recognised by all local planning authorities that people have a choice in terms of where they live and work and that there will inevitably be a need for people to commute to work. The population is highly mobile and Caerphilly County Borough has the second highest rate of out-commuting in Wales, after Vale of Glamorgan. Caerphilly is a large net exporter of labour to Cardiff and Newport as well as to the adjacent local authority areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen and Merthyr Tydfil.

8.18 In seeking to address the issue of commuting, key interventions will be the provision of additional rail stations and the increased provision of Park & Ride at existing stations.

8.19 To stem growing levels of traffic into Cardiff the City Council intend to operate gateways on the main routes into the city to slow the influx of traffic into Cardiff resulting in waiting and queuing at junctions. This will have significant implications for people travelling into Cardiff from Caerphilly on the A470. The Deposit LDP will consider allocating Park and Ride solutions on the border with Rhondda Cynon Taf and Cardiff to manage this issue sustainably.

8.20 The rail network and access to it for passengers is a key cross boundary issue in respect of Newport and Merthyr. Specifically the reintroduction of the Caerphilly-Machen-Newport line to passengers and the Ystrad Mynach to Dowlais Top freight line to passengers. The Caerphilly LDP safeguards both routes for future use. The introduction of new stations in Crumlin and Pye Corner (in Newport) with the provision of a direct rail link from Lower Islwyn to Newport is also a key cross boundary issue.

8.21 There was recognition that Caerphilly and the wider region has a significant over-supply of employment land and there is a need to rationalise this. The strategy therefore seeks to reduce the over allocation and proposes the reallocation of some of the employment land in Caerphilly county borough for alternative uses.

8.22 All authorities identified gypsy and traveller accommodation as an issue that needs to be considered at a regional level, specifically in respect of transit sites. Further work needs to be undertaken with neighbouring authorities as an integral part of the gypsy and traveller assessment that needs to be undertaken as part of the local housing market assessment.

8.23 Strategic flood risk matters are of key concern to Newport. Specifically the need to ensure that any flood alleviation schemes and mitigation measures to unlock development sites within Lower Islwyn, and specifically Risca / Pontymister do not result in detriment downstream in Newport. The council is therefore working closely with both Newport City Council and Natural Resource Wales to address this issue.

8.24 Project Gwyrdd is a partnership between Caerphilly, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Newport and the Vale of Glamorgan. The combined municipal waste of the five authorities makes up 40% of the total municipal waste for Wales. Project Gwyrdd is committed to looking for the best environmental, cost effective and practical solution for waste after recycling and composting has been maximised in each area. The five authorities have been working closely together for a number of years and a new state of the art facility has been constructed in Cardiff to meet the identified needs within the area.

8.25 A similar consortium approach is being used to identify a site within the Heads of the Valleys to deal with food and garden waste under the Heads of the Valleys Organics Project to serve the needs of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly and Torfaen. A new site will need to be identified within the HOV for the plan period.

8.26 There are a number of cross boundary issues in respect of the natural environment that will be addressed through the plan. Specifically the need to ensure that environmental protection areas are consistent such as Special Landscape Area Designations, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation etc.

8.27 The need or otherwise for a Green Belt between Cardiff and Caerphilly is also a matter that will be considered through the preparation of the Deposit Plan. At present it is not considered appropriate to designate a Green Belt within Caerphilly. The Green Belt in Cardiff is to be considered at the Cardiff LDP Examination.

8.28 Finally the implications of renewable energy schemes on the landscape and in particular the cumulative impact of schemes is a matter of concern to a number of local planning authorities in the area. In order to address this a landscape sensitivity analysis has been undertaken on behalf of the Heads of the Valleys authorities to identify those areas that should be protected from future development. Further work is required to ascertain how this information can be used to inform local planning policies in future plans.

9.0 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY OPTIONS

Introduction and Process

9.1 European Directive (2001/42/EC), commonly called the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, requires that development plans be the subject of continual assessment throughout the plan production process to ensure that environmental considerations are incorporated into the decision making process of the plan. In addition to this, legislation also requires that all development plans are subject to an appraisal against sustainability considerations (i.e. economic, social and environmental factors). In line with current guidance and good practice, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is undertaken in a combined approach, producing one SEA/SA for the revised LDP.

9.2 The SEA/SA is divided into two distinct parts, Part 1 which encompasses the SEA/SA process up until the publication of the Preferred and Alternative Strategies (this stage), and Part 2 which encompasses the SEA/SA process from Pre-Deposit Consultation to the production of the Detailed Deposit Plan and through to Submission to the Welsh Government.

9.3 Part 1 of the SEA/SA is comprises three documents, namely:

I. Document 1: The Scoping Report (2014)

9.4 The process of producing the SEA/SA begins with a review of the current state of the environment for the area of the plan. This review incorporates environmental, social and economic factors in its assessment identifying, where relevant, important issues. Then the examination is rolled forward to the end of the updated plan period i.e 2031, to provide the control scenario against which the effects of the LDP and its policies can be considered later in the process. Finally Sustainability Objectives are identified from the issues raised through the examination of the environment. Sustainability Objectives are the basis for the assessments of the effects of the LDP throughout the plan process and also form the basis for monitoring the SEA/SA.

II. Document 2: The Review of Relevant Plans, Programmes and Policies (2014)

9.5 The SEA Directive requires that a review of all plans, programmes and policies at all levels (from European level to local level), which may have implications for the revised LDP, be undertaken to identify implications for the LDP and SEA/SA processes.

III. Document 3: The Assessment of the Preferred and Alternative LDP Strategies (2014)

9.6 The final document comprising Part 1 of the SEA/SA is the review of the preferred strategy for the LDP, along with "reasonable" alternatives. The assessments are undertaken against Assessment Tests (questions) that are based upon the Sustainability Objectives identified in the Scoping Report. Each of the strategies has been assessed against the tests and their likely effects have been recorded. In addition the strategies have been compared and ranked by order of their level of sustainability.

The Results of the Assessment of the Strategies

9.7 Assessments were undertaken for the Preferred Strategy and the Alternative Spatial and Growth Strategies. The detail of these assessments is included in the **SEA/SA Part 1 - Document 3: The Assessment of the Preferred and Alternative LDP Strategies** document and it is not proposed to include the details here.

9.8 In summary however of the five strategy options tested, three realised a positive result in terms of sustainability when the cumulative results of each projection were taken into account. However it is important to note that different growth projections scored differently, even for the same strategy option.

Option 1: Continuation of the LDP Preferred Strategy

9.9 All strategy options are seeking growth and, as a result, there will always be tension between economic growth factors and environmental protection factors. However, the fact that this strategy option focuses on the five principal towns as the main poles of growth, and ensures that development is in accordance with the role and function of settlements, has the potential to deliver social and economic benefits across the County Borough as a whole. Inevitably, however, the higher levels of growth, as determined by the latter projections, will have more of an adverse impact in environmental terms. Overall however, this strategy option is positive in sustainability terms, although the number of double negatives outweighs the number of double positives, due to the latter three projections.

Option 2: Targeting Growth to the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area

9.10 All strategy options are seeking growth and, as a result, there will always be tension between economic growth factors and environmental protection factors. In such cases it is the social factors that often determine a strategy's overall performance. Targeting development to the Heads of the Valleys area promotes development in the most deprived strategy area and as such has potential to realise significant benefits. This is the case with this strategy scenario, the options realising strong positives effects from material assets and from improved demographic structures, whilst economic factors, such as housing and employment provision provide positives and environmental factors such as flooding and climate change, realise negatives.

9.11 There is however a question over whether it is practically feasible to realise the higher level population and housing scenarios due to the fact that the HoV's isolated location means that higher levels of growth would be more likely to require the equivalent of a new settlement rather than sustainable extensions to the existing settlements to support and reinforce their role and function. Overall, this is a marginally positive strategy option in sustainability terms.

Option 3: Targeting Growth to the Northern Connections Corridor

9.12 Option 3 has advantages in that it will directly benefit the Mid Valleys settlements that lie within it. Development here would be more viable and deliverable than in the HOVRA, and it is hoped that the north of the County Borough would experience the positive knock-on effects of any such strategy, given its proximity. At the same time, large-scale greenfield expansion in the Southern Connections Corridor would be resisted, although market conditions would inevitably lead to some development around Caerphilly Basin, where the market is more buoyant.

9.13 Social and economic advantages can therefore be expected with this strategy option as well as a minimisation of detrimental environmental effects. However, these effects will be exacerbated by an increase in development as a result of a

reduction in average household size. This projection aside however, this strategy option appears acceptable in sustainability and environmental terms.

Option 4: Targeting Growth to the Southern Connections Corridor

9.14 The approach of targeting development to the Southern Connections Corridor has the benefit of being attractive to the market. Sites allocated in line with this strategy will be viable, deliverable and will contribute to the achievement of a five-year housing land supply and to the delivery of affordable housing. However, this approach will not offer any benefit to settlements in the Northern Connections Corridor or, especially, the Heads of the Valleys. Consequently, socio-economic conditions in the north of the County Borough will not improve and the vitality of settlements here will decline. Also, whilst Caerphilly town in particular will increase in size as new housing is developed, this approach has the potential to alter the character of the town in terms of its cultural identity. Finally, the negative implications of large-scale greenfield land release in environmental terms are a vital consideration in terms of assessing this strategy.

9.15 Consequently, it does not appear that this strategy option would offer social or economic benefits to the County Borough as a whole. Conversely it has the potential to bring about potentially significant environmental disbenefits and is therefore not acceptable in sustainability terms.

Option 5: Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connections Corridors

9.16 The potential benefits of this approach are the realistic prospect of a five-year housing land supply being maintained, but in such a way as to foster the vitality and viability of a majority of settlements within the County Borough. Although the level and rate of development in the Heads of the Valleys will be less pronounced, housing growth in those settlements in nearby settlements within the NCC may have a positive effect and may act as a potential catchment for those services and facilities in the principal town of Bargoed. Additionally, such housing development may act as a catalyst for employment growth in the NCC, something which HOVRA residents would be able to take advantage of. Certainly this position is borne out by the assessments for the lower level projections, which acknowledge the environmental impact of development across two thirds of the County Borough but realise positive overall outcomes.

Ranking of Options

9.17 The ranking of strategy options in sustainability terms, based on the cumulative number of positive and negative scores obtained during the assessment of each projection, is as follows (from most sustainable to least):

Option 3 – Targeting Growth to the Northern Connections Corridor (67 positives, 29 negatives);

Option 1 – Continuation of the LDP Preferred Strategy (65 positives, 44 negatives);

Option 2 – Targeting Growth to the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (49 positives, 42 negatives);

Option 5 – Targeting Growth to the Northern and Southern Connections Corridors (55 positives, 56 negatives);

Option 4 – Targeting Growth to the Southern Connections Corridor (32 positives, 74 negatives).

9.18 Critical part of the whole process is how the results of this assessment influence and change the LDP, making it more sustainable. It should be noted that it is not the role of the SEA/SA to produce a truly sustainable plan; rather it is incorporated in decision making with the result of making the LDP more sustainable. Consequently, whichever of the Strategy Options is used as the basis for the LDP, all of them would require changes to seek to change the negative and neutral results to positive ones.

9.19 These changes usually take one of two forms:

- I. Changes to the text of the document. Commonly used to clarify how the strategy is applied or to address issues that have not been addressed.
- II. Mitigation, i.e. the provision of some form of gain that will compensate for a negative impact that cannot be changed.

The Preferred Strategy for the LDP

9.20 Following consideration of the results of the assessments, Strategy Options 4 was not considered appropriate for use as the LDP Strategy for the reasons outlined. The other four strategies were relatively close in terms of their assessment outcomes, although Strategy Option 3 was considered to be the most sustainable due to its perceived likely social and economic impact on an area of severe deprivation.

9.21 However, Strategy Option 5 was preferred over Option 1, 2 and 3 for the following reasons. It will:

- i. attract net in migration, which is needed to sustain balanced communities.
- ii. balance the need for development across the whole of the county borough with environmental capacity;
- iii. target significant development to the Northern Connections Corridor and thus provide social and economic benefits to the deprived Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area;
- iv. provide development in areas of acute housing pressure, particularly in the Southern Connections Corridor;
- v. facilitate the release of attractive sites for employment in the southern connections corridor to attract inward investment in an area of identified demand;
- vi. partially address the air quality issues in Caerphilly Town;
- vii. maximise the potential to locate significant new development close to public transport nodes and in particular rail stations;
- viii. provide the necessary physical and social infrastructure to support the planned level of growth over the plan period;
- ix. provide the most deliverable and viable development schemes for the county borough;
- x. maximise the social, economic and environmental opportunities that are likely to arise throughout the plan period.

9.22 In accordance with the overall aim of the SEA/SA Assessment process, Option 5 represents the better option for meeting the corporate objectives of the authority throughout the plan period in the most sustainable manner

The Next Steps

9.23 The whole of the SEA/SA Part 1 (Documents 1, 2 & 3) will be the subject of consultation as part of the consultation on the LDP Strategy. Comments in respect of both the SEA/SA and the LDP Strategy are welcomed during this period. Any comments on the SEA/SA will be considered in due course and changes to the SEA/SA will undoubtedly be made as a result. Changes to the LDP Strategy will be re-assessed against the Assessment Test once they are completed. Any changes or mitigation identified as part of that reassessment process will be incorporated into the strategy.

9.24 Once the strategy has been amended, work will commence on drafting the detailed plan that will be the basis for the Deposit Consultation period. The SEA/SA will devise Assessment Tests relevant for the detailed plan and the detailed plan will be the subject of assessment throughout its production.

MONITORING OF STRATEGY POLICIES

Policy		Aim	Indicator
SP1	Development Strategy - Development in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area	To promote economic development	The take up of Employment land in the HoV Strategy Area
SP2	Development Strategy – Development in the Northern Connections Corridor	To reduce the length of trips	Out-Commuting as a percentage of total commuting in and out of the county borough.
		To promote economic development at Oakdale/Penyfan	The take-up of employment land at Oakdale/Penyfan (Ha)
SP3	Development Strategy - Development in the Southern Connections Corridor	To increase modal shift to sustainable modes	The number of out-commuting trips
		To increase tourism at major locations	The number of tourist visits to major attractions.
SP4	Settlement Boundaries	To promote efficient use of urban land	The percentage of permitted developments within settlement boundaries
SP5	Local Identity	To protect important spaces between settlements	The amount of land lost to urban forms of development within designated green wedges
SP6	Settlement Strategy	To enhance the role & function of Principal Towns & Local Centres	The percentage increase in footfall in retail centres
SP7	Areas of Significant Change: Strategic sites to deliver planned growth	To develop identified housing levels during the plan period	The percentage of dwellings developed on strategic sites (cumulative)
		To develop identified employment uses during the plan period	The area of land developed for employment uses as a percentage of total allocated employment land on strategic sites (Ha) (cumulative).

		To provide community facilities and infrastructure improvements	The number of identified community facilities and infrastructure improvements provided as a percentage of those identified as being required for the development of the strategic sites.
SP8	Retail Hierarchy	To focus retail development into the existing town centres	The area of retail development permitted outside designated town and local centres and retail warehouse parks
SP9	Place Making	To promote high quality development throughout the county borough	The number of applications refused on design grounds
SP10	Built Heritage	To conserve and enhance the built heritage of the county borough	The number of application refused on heritage grounds
SP11	Planning Obligations	To secure contributions from developers towards required infrastructure	The total value of planning obligations negotiated with developers
SP12	Community Infrastructure Levy	To secure the provision of strategic infrastructure through the implementation of the councils Community Infrastructure levy.	The number of developments realising a CIL charge
			The number of infrastructure projects realised through CIL funding.
SP13	Renewable Energy: Local Areas of Search	To encourage the development of renewable energy generating schemes.	Number of applications for renewable energy generation permitted in search areas.
SP14	Minerals	To contribute to the regional demand for minerals in accordance with the Regional Technical Statement.	The level of permitted aggregate reserves (in years).
SP15	Waste Management	To promote sustainable waste management in accordance with the waste hierarchy	The amount of waste recycled
			The total amount of waste taken to landfill
SP16	Conservation of Natural Heritage	To conserve the natural heritage of the County Borough	The area of land of natural heritage value lost to development (Ha)
SP17	Countryside Recreation	To promote sustainable increase in use of countryside recreation facilities	The numbers of visitors to countryside recreation facilities
SP18	Development of the Valleys Regional Park	To promote development that contributes positively to the Valleys Regional Park	The number of permitted developments that contribute positively to the Valleys Regional Park

SP19	Protection of Strategic Leisure Network	To maintain and enhance accessibility to public open space, natural green space, and recreational facilities.	The area of public open space, natural green space, and recreational facilities lost to permitted development (Ha).
SP20	Health and Well Being	To improve access to community, leisure, education and health facilities for the residents of the county borough	The number of permitted developments providing facilities identified in the plan
SP21	Total Housing Requirements	To secure the construction of 12,000 new dwellings through the plan period	The number of residential units permitted.
SP22	Affordable Housing Target	Secure construction of 1200 affordable dwellings through the planning system	The number of affordable housing units permitted.
SP23	Managing Employment Growth	To provide sufficient land for all employment land needs	Annual rate of employment land take up
SP24	Managing Tourism Growth	To promote sustainable tourism growth	The number of tourism related developments in locations accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes
SP25	Transport Infrastructure Improvement	To improve air quality within designated AQMAs	The reduction of transport related emissions in AQMA
		To reduce the length of trips and increase modal shift to sustainable forms of transport	The number of out-commuting trips from the county borough as a percentage of total travel to work trips
SP26	Transport Safeguarding Route	To protect former transport routes for future transport use	The length of former transport route brought back to beneficial transport use (m)
SP27	Road Hierarchy	Ensure the efficient use of the highways network	The number of monitored links that are at congestion level or higher

APPENDIX 2

Schedule of Candidate Sites for consideration for inclusion in the Deposit LDP

- Sites indicated in **bold do not** meet the Sustainable Network Growth Strategy.
- Sites preceded by an * will be dealt with through the Settlement Boundary Review.
- Remaining sites meet the Sustainable Network Growth Strategy subject to further detailed assessment.

Aber Valley

- ABV001 Senghenydd Minerals Site, Senghenydd
* ABV002 Land south of Cefn Ilan, Abertridwr
ABV003 Land at Former Windsor Colliery, Abertridwr
ABV004 Land to the East of Caerphilly Road, Senghenydd
ABV005 Land west of Coronation Terrace, Senghenydd
* ABV006 Land west of 4 Terraces, Senghenydd
* ABV007 Land east of Coedcae Road, Abertridwr

Aberbargoed

- * ABB001 Land at Commin Road, Aberbargoed
ABB002 Bedwellty Comprehensive School, Aberbargoed
ABB003 Aberbargoed Plateau, Aberbargoed
ABB004 Land at Coed y Brain House, Aberbargoed
ABB005 Land at Bedwellty Road, Bedwellty
ABB006 Land adj to Coed y Brain Quarry, Bedwellty
* ABB007 Land Southwest of Cwmsyfiog Road, Aberbargoed
* ABB008 Land East of Church Street, Aberbargoed

Abercarn

- * ABC001 Land at 66 Llanfach Road, Abercarn
ABC002 Land south of Railway Terrace, Abercarn
* ABC003 Land east of Celyn Road, Abercarn

Argoed

- ARG001 Land opposite Highcrest garage, Markham
ARG002 Land off Abernant Road, Markham
ARG003 Land to the West of new Inn Public House, Bedwellty
* ARG004 Land south of Springfield Terrace, Hollybush
ARG005 Old Cwrtybella School Site, Colliers Row, Argoed
ARG006 Land at The Rock, Blackwood
ARG007 Land at Argoed Fawr Farm, Argoed
* ARG008 Land Northeast of Llwynbach Terrace, Hollybush
* ARG009 Land East of John Street, Markham

Bargoed

- BAR001 Land at Gilfach Fargoed Estate, Bargoed

Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen

BTM001 Land at Coed-Y-Fedw, Machen
BTM002 Field adjacent to Bedwas House Industrial Estate
BTM003 Land Southwest of Gelli Wastad Farm, Machen
BTM004 Land East of Clos Trefeddyg, Machen
BTM005 Land North of Brynhuelog Terrace, Machen
BTM006 Land North of The Old School House, Bedwas
BTM007 Land South of Sunny Bank Terrace, Machen
BTM008 Land West of Chestnut Close, Machen
BTM009 Land off Pandy Road (Site 1), Bedwas
BTM010 Land off Pandy Road (Site 2), Bedwas
BTM011 Bedwas Colliery (Site 1), Bedwas
BTM012 Bedwas Colliery (Site 2), Bedwas
BTM012 Bedwas Colliery (Site 2), Bedwas

Blackwood

BLA001 Land at Penycoed Fawr Farm, Bedwellty
BLA002 Land at Woodview, High Street, Blackwood
BLA003 Land at Cwmgelli Farm, Blackwood
BLA004 Land at 4 Berllangron Cottages, Cwmgelli

Cefn Fforest

CEF001 Land west of Pencoed Avenue, Cefn Fforest
CEF002 Land Adjacent to Fairview Allotment Gardens, Pengam

Crosskeys – There are no candidate sites submitted in this ward

Crumlin

CRU001 Land to rear of Pendarren Road, Aberbeeg
CRU002 Land at Cly-Gro Green Bungalow, Trinant
CRU003 Land at Trinant S.S.C
* CRU004 Land off Pleasant View, Kendon Hill, Croespenmaen
* CRU005 Station Road Garage, Crumlin
CRU006 Land west of Pentrapeod Road, Pentrapeod
CRU007 Land west of Brierly House, Pentrapeod
CRU008 Land at Lower Ton-y-Felin Farm, Croespenmaen
* CRU009 Land off Pentwyn Road, North of Ton Ty'r Bel
CRU010 Land West of Ty-Mawr Farm Lane, Croespenmaen
* CRU011 Land north west of Lower Viaduct Terrace, Crumlin
CRU012 Croespenmaen Industrial Estate

Darran Valley

* DAR001 Land at Llwyn Iago Farm, Glyn Terrace, Fochriw
* DAR002 Plot of land at Bailey Street, Deri

Gilfach

GIL001 Land adjacent to the south of Hillside Park, Gilfach

Hengoed

HEN001 Land off Penallta Road, Hengoed
HEN002 Land North of Cae Ysgubor, Hengoed
* HEN003 Land east of Valley View, Cefn Hengoed

HEN004 Land North of Cwm Calon, Penallta

Llanbradach

LLA001 Land East of 'The Rise', Llanbradach

LLA002 Land East Of Wingfield Crescent Llanbradach

Maesycwmmmer

MAE001 Land at Gwernau Ganol & Gernau Fawr, Maesycwmmmer

MAE002 Land adjacent to Tredomen Athletic Football Club,
Maesycwmmmer

MAE003 Land at Hawtin Park Industrial Estate, Gellihaf

MAE004 Land at Bryn Meadows Golf Club, Maesycwmmmer

Morgan Jones

MOJ001 Gallagher Retail Park, Caerphilly

MOJ002 Catnic Site, Pontypandy Industrial Estate

MOJ003 Land at Virginia Park and Golf Course, Caerphilly

Moriah

MRH001 Land west of Carn Y Tyla Terrace, Abertysswg

MRH002 Land North of Benjamin Court, Rhymney

MRH003 Land at Pontlottyn Football Club, Pontlottyn

MRH004 Land south of Maerdy House, Rhymney

Nelson

NEL001 East of the Handball Court, Nelson

NEL002 Nelson Boys and Girls Club, Nelson

NEL003 Land East of the Handball Court, Nelson

NEL004 Land at Maesmafon Farm, Nelson

NEL005 Land north west of Ty Du Farm, Nelson

* NEL006 Land North of Brooklands, Nelson

New Tredegar

* NWT001 Land at end of Jubilee Road, Cwmsyfiog, New Tredegar

* NWT002 Land at Station Terrace, Brithdir

* NWT003 Land fronting South View Terrace, New Tredegar

* NWT004 Land adjacent to Ty Rhosyn, Bedwellty Road, New Tredegar

Newbridge

NWB001 North of Pentwynmawr Recreation Ground, Newbridge

NWB002 Land North of Aiwa Technology Park, Newbridge

NWB003 Land north of Celynen Colliery, Newbridge

NWB004 Land North of Gilboa Road, Newbridge

NWB005 Land North of A472, Newbridge

NWB006 Newbridge School and Leisure Centre, Newbridge

Pengam

PEG001 Allotment Gardens off Summerfield Terrace, Fleur-de-Lys

PEG002 Land at Springfield Bungalow, Pengam

PEG003 Land to the rear of 40 Victoria Road, Fleur-De-Lys

PEG004 Land North of Knoll House, Gellihaf

PEG005 Land West of Knoll House, Gellihaf

PEG006 Southern area of Trelyn scrap yard, Gellihaf

Penmaen

PEM001 Land at Coed Cariad Farm, Woodfieldside
PEM002 Land Southeast of Llwyn Onn Crescent, Oakdale
PEM003 Land North of Woodfield Park Lane, Penmaen
PEM004 Land at Oakdale Golf Club, Oakdale
PEM005 Tir Filkins Colliery Site, Woodfieldside
PEM006 Land at the Gwrhay, Argoed
PEM007 Oakdale Comprehensive School, Oakdale

Penyrheol

PEY001 Land at Cwm Ifor Primary School, Penyrheol
PEY002 Land south of Groeswen Road, Groeswen
PEY003 Land at Ty Fry, Nantgarw
PEY004 Land adjoining the Chapel, Groeswen Road, Groeswen
PEY005 Land Opposite Ty Llywd, Groeswen Road, Groeswen
PEY006 Land East of Eglwysilan Road, Groeswen
PEY007 Land at Ty Llwyd, Groeswen Road, Groeswen
PEY008 Land surrounding Gwaun Gledyr Isaf Farm, Groeswen
PEY009 Land at Former Railway Sidings, Trecenydd
PEY010 Land at Trecenydd Industrial Estate, Penyrheol
PEY011 Land at former Zonner premises, Hendredenny
PEY012 Land north of Hendredenny Drive, Hendredenny
* PEY013 Land at Abertridwr Road, Penyrheol

Pontllanfraith

PLF001 Land at Cwm-Nant-Yr-Odin, Springfield
PLF002 Plot One, Land opposite Gwarren Fach Bungalow, Springfield
PLF003 Land at Twyn Filkins Farm, Woodfieldside
PLF004 Land at Glynbrynar Farm, Pontllanfraith
PLF005 Land at Heolddu, Pontllanfraith
PLF006 Pontllanfraith House, Pontllanfraith
PLF007 Pontllanfraith Comprehensive School, Pontllanfraith

Pontlloftyn

* PLT001 Land Southeast of Sunnyview, Pontlloftyn
PLT002 Former Depot South of Pontlloftyn Link Road, Pontlloftyn

Risca East

RSE001 Land off Snowdon Close, Risca

Risca West

* RSW001 Danygraig Works, Risca
RSW002 Units 1-4 Pontymister Industrial Estate, Pontymister
RSW003 Rowecord Engineering Site, Pontymister
RSW004 Eastern Part of Land adjacent to River Ebbw, Pontymister
RSW005 Land at 106 Commercial Street, Risca

St. Cattwg

STC001 Fields at Tir y Berth Farm
STC002 Greenhill Primary School, Gelligaer

STC003 Land adjoining Bron Las Estate, Penpedairheol
STC004 Land west of Cefn Llwynfa Farm, Penallta
STC005 Land at Heol Adam Farm, Gelligaer
STC006 Land adjacent to Green Hill Primary School, Gelligaer
STC007 Land adjacent to Caerau House, Pengam Road,
STC008 Land at Rhos Farm, Penpedairheol
STC009 Land South of Glyngaer Road, Cefn Hengoed
STC010 Land at Gelligaer Court, Penpedairheol
STC011 Land west of Penybryn Football Ground, Penybryn
STC012 Land adjacent to Gwaun-Fro Road, Gelligaer
STC013 Land at Bryn Quarry, Gelligaer
STC014 Land at Bryn Quarry, Gelligaer
STC015 Land adjacent to Yew Cottages, Gelligaer

St. James

* STJ001 Land at Bryngolau, Rudry
* STJ002 Land at Porset Row, Caerphilly

STJ003 Land at The Oaks, Rudry

STJ004 Land West of Pentwynngwyn Road, Rudry

STJ005 Land north of Waterloo Place, Machen
STJ006 Land Northwest of Waterloo Place, Machen
* STJ007 Land at Glendale, Van Road, Caerphilly
STJ008 Land at the Former Tin Works, Machen
STJ009 Land at Gwern y Domen Farm, Caerphilly
STJ010 Land at Plant Repair, Garth Place, Rudry
* STJ011 Unit 2, Van Industrial Park, Caerphilly

St. Martins

STM001 Land at Watford Road, Caerphilly
STM002 Land at Caerphilly Golf Course
STM003 Land south of Westhaven, Watford Road, Caerphilly
STM004 Land north of Westhaven, Watford Road, Caerphilly
STM005 Former Ness Tar Plant and Adjoining Land

Twyn Carno - There are no candidate sites submitted in this ward

Ynysddu

YNY001 Land south of The Glade, Wyllie
YNY002 Land West of Tylu du House, Mynyddislwyn
YNY003 Land West of Pontgam Terrace, Ynysddu
YNY004 Land East of Pontgam Terrace, Ynysddu
YNY005 Land east of Glanhwy Road, Wyllie
YNY006 Land Northwest of Pen-Y-Cwarel Road, Wyllie
YNY007 Land adjacent to Pen-Y-Cwarel Road, Wyllie
YNY008 Twyn Gwyn House, Twyn Gwyn Road, Ynysddu

Ystrad Mynach

YST001 Land east of Cefn Llwynfa Farm, Penallta
* YST002 Land adjacent to White Rose Cottage, Ystrad Mynach
YST003 Land east of Penallta Colliery

YST004 Land at New Road, Ystrad Mynach

YST005 Land west of Penallta Road, Ystrad Mynach

YST006 Land adjacent to Cefn Llwynau Bungalow, Penallta Road

YST007 Units 1-4, Caerphilly Road, Ystrad

APPENDIX 3

Schedule of sites that potentially meet the Sustainable Urban Network Growth Strategy - subject to further assessment

Sites indicated in bold are proposed to be retained from the Adopted Local Development Plan

Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area			
Carn y Tyla	Abertysswg	7.08	Housing
Bedwellty Road	Aberbargoed	7.3ha	Housing
Aberbargoed Plateau	Aberbargoed	12 ha	Mixed use
Bedwellty Comprehensive School	Aberbargoed	1.8 ha	Housing
Maerdy House	Rhymney	0.8 ha	Housing
Maerdy Crossing	Rhymney	2.4 ha	Housing
Land at Heads of the Valleys	Rhymney	5.2 ha	Employment
		36.58 ha	
Northern Connections Corridor			
Gwernau Ganol and Gwerna Fawr Farm	Maescymmer	80 ha	Strategic Mixed use site
Land at Hawtin Park (south)	Pontllanfraith	14.3 ha	Housing
Land at Hawtin Park (north)	Pontllanfraith	4.5 ha	Employment
Cwm Gelli Farm	Blackwood	6.58 ha	Housing
Penallta Yard	Ystrad Mynach	0.29 ha	Housing
Land at New Road	Ystrad Mynach	0.54 ha	Housing
Greenhill Primary School	Gelligaer	2.8 ha	Housing
Ty Du	Nelson	18.8 ha	Mixed use
North west of Ty Du	Nelson	5.08 ha	Housing
North of Woodfield Park	Penmaen	1.8 ha	Housing
Land at Ton-y felin farm	Oakdale	2.2 ha	Housing
West of Ty Mawr Farm	Croespenmaen	2.3 ha	Housing
Plateau 1, Oakdale Business Park	Oakdale	30.2 ha	Employment
Plateau 2, Oakdale Business Park	Oakdale	7.0 ha	Employment
Plateau 3, Oakdale Business Park	Oakdale	3.4 ha	Education
Plateau 4, Oakdale Business Park	Oakdale	4.3 ha	Employment
Dyffryn Business Park (north)	Ystrad Mynach	4.9 ha	Employment
Dyffryn Business Park (south)	Ystrad Mynach	6.3 ha	Employment
		195.29	

		ha	
Southern Connections Corridor			
Former Ness Tar Plant and Adjoining Land	Caerphilly	30 ha	Strategic Mixed use site
Land adjacent to Pen- y-Cwarel Road	Wyllie	1.6 ha	Housing
Land at Station Road	Risca	0.51 ha	Housing
Suflex Factory	Pontymister	2.1 ha	Housing
Waterloo Works	Waterloo	17.0 ha	Housing
Windsor Colliery	Abertridwr	5.51 ha	Housing
Land off Pandy Road	Bedwas	6.43 ha	Housing
Bedwas Colliery	Bedwas	36.22 ha	Housing
Catnic Site	Caerphilly	4.76 ha	Housing
Land at Glendale	Caerphilly	1.09 ha	Housing
Land at Watford Road	Caerphilly	1.10 ha	Housing
Land at Westhaven	Caerphilly	3.36 ha	Housing
Caerphilly Business Park	Caerphilly	3.6 ha	Employment
Land at Trecenydd	Caerphilly	2.2 ha	Employment
		115.48 ha	

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR NEIGHBOURING LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITIES

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan: Spatial Strategy

Context: Rhondda Cynon Taf is the second largest Local Authority in Wales, it covers an area of 424 square metres with a population of 231,946 (2001). Strategic transportation links with the wider region are provided by the M4, A470 and A465.

Core Strategy: The Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP strategy is a hybrid strategy which provides development in locations that meet local needs whilst promoting sustainable growth. The core strategy advocates a different approach for development in the north and in the south of the County Borough. The strategy for northern Rhondda Cynon Taf places an emphasis on the need to build sustainable communities and halt the process of depopulation and decline. Development proposals in the Northern Strategy Area will provide appropriate growth to address the problems of deprivation and high levels of social and economic need.

In the south of the County Borough the emphasis is on sustainable growth that benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf as a whole. Development proposals in the Southern Strategy Area will promote sustainable development by providing a managed form of growth which will consolidate existing settlement patterns; have regard to the social and economic function and identity of settlements and the surrounding countryside; address existing or potential capacity needs to provide necessary infrastructure and reduce the need to travel.

Within these two strategy areas the LDP strategy will recognise the important role settlements play in providing homes and services of both local and county importance. In order to support and reinforce the important role these centres play as places for social and economic activity new development opportunities will be focused in the principal towns of Pontypridd, Llantrisant / Talbot Green and Aberdare and in the 8 key settlements of the County Borough.

A range of sites are allocated for the development of new housing, employment and retail facilities throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf. Large-scale Strategic Sites, which are capable of accommodating significant development, have been identified in locations that maximise the opportunities for sustainable regeneration and ensure a step change in the economy of the County Borough. Smaller non-strategic sites intended to meet local needs have been allocated in sustainable locations that reinforce the role of Principal Towns and Key Settlements.

Key Policy: Policy areas central to the delivery of the core strategy include;

- The provision of 14,385 new dwellings, which includes 1770 affordable homes;
- The development of 51 hectares of land for B1, B2 and B8 use to meet strategic employment needs and 47 hectares of land for B1, B2 and B8 local employment needs;
- The development of between 34,400 and 36,400 m² (net) of new retail floorspace, and

- Improvements to the strategic highway network which require the implementation of 4 new highway schemes.

Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan: Spatial Strategy

The Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan is based on an enhanced growth strategy which aims to reduce current levels of out migration from the County Borough so that the population stabilises by 2011 and then grows significantly over the remaining 10 year period.

The strategy distributes growth over three areas: the Primary Growth Area comprising of the northern sector communities of Pant, Dowlais, Penydarren, Golan Uchaf, Gurnos, Swansea Road, Heolgerrig, Cefn Coed, Twynnyrodyn, Town Centre, Georgetown, Abercanaid and Pentrebach; the Secondary Growth Area comprising of the southern sector communities of Edwardsville, Treharris, Trelewis and Quakers Yard; and the Other Growth Areas comprising of the mid valley communities of Troedyrhiw, Aberfan, Merthyr Vale and Bedlinog.

The Primary Growth Area reflects the fact that the main Merthyr Tydfil settlement has the best prospects for sustainable growth and the majority of development is focussed in and around this area. This will allow the area to expand its role as a hub settlement so that it acts as a key driver for regeneration within the Heads of the Valleys sub-region. The majority of housing and employment sites, as well as higher order retail and social facilities, are located within this area.

The Secondary Growth Area allows for limited further growth within extended settlement boundaries and the Other Growth Areas are limited to developments which sustain the integrity and vitality of existing settlements. Proposed development within these areas primarily consists of housing and lower order facilities which serve local needs.

Newport Local Development Plan: Development Strategy

The strategy is essentially a brownfield strategy, but that does not mean that it relies heavily on the development of flats and apartments. By way of illustration, the largest site, Glan Llyn (the Llanwern Regeneration Site) is one of the largest regeneration sites in Wales, and is intended primarily for family housing - about 4,000 dwellings in total. House building on the site has recently commenced.

The Preferred Strategy followed the Welsh Government 2006 based projections, which resulted in a build rate of 640 dwellings per year. The Deposit Plan has not yet gone to Council, but will do so shortly, and is likely to take the more recent and lower figure from the 2008 based projections for the first 5 years of the plan (2011-16), but reverting to the higher assumptions of the 2006 based projections thereafter (2016-26). This applies an element of market realism to the strategy, reflecting the lower level of activity in the house building sector in the current difficult trading conditions, but assumes that conditions will improve over time.

Newport has a good overall housing land supply. The adopted UDP includes a Growth Strategy, with the main element being the Eastern Expansion Area, including the Llanwern Regeneration Site, and which amounts to over 5,000 dwellings in total. There are also extensive regeneration sites within the urban area, many of which

have planning permission, and some of which are partly complete. This gives Newport the ability to accommodate growth, matched to a generous supply of employment land. This is further seen as supporting the major retail redevelopment scheme proposed for the city centre, for which a developer has been appointed. Pressure for growth due to constraint in adjoining areas would not therefore be an immediate cause for concern to Newport.

The need to maintain the separate identity of settlements is seen as significant, and the Preferred Strategy retains, and slightly extends, the existing Green Belt west of Marshfield and Castleton, which was designated in the adopted UDP.

Cardiff City Local Development Plan: Strategy

1. Making provision for new homes and jobs

- Cardiff has a significant need for new homes including family homes, affordable homes together with catering for the whole range of needs
- Cardiff also plays a key role as economic driver of the wider city-region
- The Plan aims to respond to these evidenced social and economic needs in a balanced way - respecting environmental qualities, providing a framework to manage delivery and provide new infrastructure together with carefully managing impacts
- The overall level of growth is considered to represent the most robust, balanced and appropriate approach taking into account all relevant factors and the advice of independent population forecasting experts
- The Plan sets out a Strategy to deliver 41,100 new dwellings and 40,000 new jobs over the Plan period including ways to provide flexibility should build rates be higher than anticipated
- This level of growth is considered appropriate to deliver Wales Spatial Plan objectives, the Council's overall vision and the LDP objectives
- Overall, for the whole Plan period, approximately 65% of all new homes being provided on brownfield sites and 35% provided on greenfield sites
- The provision of a genuine range and choice of new sites is crucial in effectively delivering the required level of growth, delivering LDP objectives, providing flexibility and the ability to meet a wide range of evidenced need for new homes and jobs
- Key strategic sites to deliver this need are proposed at:
 - Cardiff Central Enterprise Zone
 - Former Gas Works, Ferry Road
 - North West Cardiff
 - North of Junction 33
 - South of Creigiau
 - North East Cardiff (West of Pontprennau)
 - East of Pontprennau Link Road
 - South of St Mellons Business Park

2. Putting in place a framework to manage future growth and encourage high quality, sustainable design

- Policies and mechanisms have been put in place to provide a framework to effectively manage future growth
- Areas to be kept free from development are made explicit avoiding the current climate of uncertainty created by not having an adopted Plan in place

- Protected areas include the designation of Green Belt North of the M4 Motorway together with tight settlement boundaries policy county-wide and protection of river valleys and open spaces
- Collectively, these policies protect vast tracts of Cardiff's valued countryside, river valleys and open spaces
- The masterplanning approach provides an over-arching framework for the development of new areas setting out key requirements relating to land use, densities, facilities, transportation, open spaces and phasing

3. Bringing forward new infrastructure

- The Plan sets out an approach which requires the timely provision of new infrastructure including community facilities, transportation and other services
- Whilst it is recognised that some significant elements of infrastructure may take many years to complete, the Strategy seeks to ensure that each phase of new development is tied to the provision of necessary infrastructure with each stage of development being able to demonstrate an acceptable level of supporting facilities.
- An Infrastructure Plan is contained as a Supporting Document setting out future requirements.
- Further dialogue and consultation findings will help further develop a detailed list of required infrastructure along with funding opportunities including the roles of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions for strategic projects to Section 106 Agreement contributions for local priorities together with other potential funding streams from the public and private sectors

4. Delivering sustainable transportation solutions

- The overall approach seeks to minimise travel demand and provide a range of measures and opportunities which reduce reliance on the car
- New development in Cardiff must be integrated with the provision of new transport infrastructure which can help contribute to this objective by putting in place sustainable transport solutions which also provide improved travel choices for the wider community
- This approach is fully consistent with on-going work at a city-region scale which seeks to develop a more effective public transport network across the region as a whole, helping people travel from where they live to work and thereby helping to spread prosperity around the entire city-region

5. Responding to evidenced economic needs

- The key economic role performed by Cardiff must be maintained and enhanced for benefits to Cardiff, the city-region and Wales
- Evidence demonstrates that Cardiff has consistently delivered a high proportion of jobs in the city-region
- The Strategy responds to this by ensuring a full range and choice of economic opportunities across all relevant sectors
- The Cardiff Central Enterprise Zone will be a key element of the approach but there is also a need to maintain the roles of the City Centre, Cardiff Bay, existing employment sites together with providing a range and choice of sites to cater for demand across sectors.

6. Responding to evidenced social needs

- Cardiff experiences some significant social needs, with particularly high housing demand projected to continue over the Plan period

- The Strategy aims to positively respond to these needs by providing a wide range and choice of sites to respond to the full diversity of needs, including those from the Gypsy and Traveller community as required in national policy and guidance
- Overall, the Plan promotes more sustainable communities where emphasis is placed on supporting District & Local Centres, encouraging the full range of accessible social, health and educational facilities, together with supporting regeneration initiatives and utilising the potential positive benefits which new developments can bring to adjoining areas

7. Respecting Cardiff's environment and responding to climate change

- Cardiff possesses a unique and particularly distinctive natural and built Heritage
- The Plan delivers sustainable development by meeting social and economic needs, but in a managed way which retains, manages and enhance important features of natural and built heritage. Central to this approach is the designation of a Green Belt to the North of the M4 Motorway, strict settlement boundaries policy together with protection to the river valleys and open spaces.

Torfaen Local Development Plan: Spatial Strategy

Context: Torfaen covers an area of 117 square kilometres with a population of 91,372 (2011 Census) and is located within the eastern most South Wales Valley, just north of Newport City and the M4 Motorway. Strategic transportation links with the wider region are provided by the Marches Railway-line from Newport (South Wales Mainline) to Shrewsbury and the A4042 Trunk Road also from Newport (M4) to Shrewsbury and the A472 Mid Valleys Road; with County routes northwards from Pontypool to Blaenavon (A4043) and onto Brynmawr (B4248) and from Cwmbran to Caerleon (B4236) in the south-east; with Cwmbran being served by the A4051 (Malpas Road / Cwmbran Drive).

Core Strategy: The Torfaen LDP 'Network of Integrated Communities Strategy' aims to ensure a network of integrated communities, focusing particularly on the two key settlements of Cwmbran and Pontypool to ensure that they are successful and function as service hubs for the surrounding settlements. Growth is focused in locations where wider benefits are likely to occur, for example the realisation of the regeneration potential of the British Strategic Action Area, Cwmbran Town Centre and adjacent Strategic Action Areas. Effective transport links will be forged to and from jobs and services, which are not available locally. Development is emphasised along key transport routes and will reflect the role, scale and function of individual settlements, with each settlement building upon its particular opportunities for the benefit of the County Borough as a whole.

Key Policy: Policy areas central to the delivery of the Core Strategy include:-

- The provision of 4,700 new dwellings (550 in North Torfaen, 1,875 in Pontypool and 2,275 in Cwmbran) mainly on brownfield sites, which includes 1,132 affordable homes;
- The development of 7 mixed use / or large Strategic Action Areas, including the provision of a new 450 bed Hospital at Llanfrechfa Grange in Cwmbran;

- The protection of existing employment land / premises and the development of 40.3 hectares of local employment land for B1, B2 and B8 uses and 35 hectares of regional employment land for B1, B2 and B8 uses;
- Maintenance of a retail hierarchy and protection of Town Centres;
- Implementation of 4 key transport improvements, including the North Torfaen Highways and Public Transport Corridor (A4043 and B4246) and the Pontypool & New Inn Train Station Park and Ride / Share Facility; and
- Protection of the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site and the 'Green Wedge' preventing the coalescence of Cwmbran and Newport.

Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan: Spatial Strategy

Context: Blaenau Gwent covers an area of approximately 10,900 hectares and has an estimated population of 69,300 (2006). Strategic transportation links with the wider region are provided by the A465.

Core Strategy: The Blaenau Gwent LDP Strategy is based on regenerating the area through building a network of district hubs around the principal hub of Ebbw Vale, whilst recognising that there is a north south divide in terms of opportunities for growth. The creation of an integrated network of modern and revitalised hubs provides an opportunity to transform the area. It creates a mechanism to co-ordinate investment and ensures the benefits of growth and regeneration are shared widely. Vital to delivering this is ensuring good connectivity between the principal hub of Ebbw Vale and the district hubs of Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery, in turn ensuring that each hub is accessible to the areas they serve.

The northern strategy area includes the three hub areas of Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and Upper Ebbw Fach. The emphasis is on sustainable growth and regeneration with most of the growth concentrated in the principal hub area of Ebbw Vale.

The Southern Strategy Area covers the Lower Ebbw Fach valley. The focus is on regenerating the area and maximising the potential offered by the area's unique setting and cultural qualities. The southern area differs from the north due to the topography of the area. In this area the valley narrows and the valley sides become steeper.

A range of sites are allocated for the development of new housing, employment and retail facilities throughout Blaenau Gwent. The strategy also recognises the potential of two key brownfield sites located in the principal hub of Ebbw Vale which are capable of accommodating significant development to accommodate growth and regenerate the area.

Key Policy: Policy areas central to the delivery of the strategy include:

- The provision of 3,907 new dwellings which includes 1,000 affordable homes;
- The development of 50 hectares of land for employment and business purposes;
- The development of 10,200 sq m of comparison and 2,445 sq m of convenience (net) of new retail floorspace;

- Improvements to the strategic highway network which require the implementation of 1 new highway schemes; and
- Improvements in connectivity between Ebbw Vale and the district hubs of Tredegar, Brynmawr and Abertillery through rail network and station improvements and 5 new roads to facilitate development.

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EXTRACT OF REVIEW REPORT – POSITION STATEMENT ON JOINT REVIEW

Caerphilly County Borough Council Local Development Plan – First Review

Caerphilly County Borough Council adopted its LDP in November 2010 and has since been monitoring the progress of the plan through its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). As a consequence of the findings of the 2013 AMR, the Council resolved to trigger the first full review of the plan in line with LDP Regulation 41. There is no specific guidance on the review process, other than that contained in the Local Development Plan (Wales) Regulations 2005. Procedures for consultation and handling representations on LDP alterations are set out in LDP Wales, paras 4.46 – 4.50.

As part of the early stakeholder engagement for the review, a series of stakeholder events has occurred. As a consequence of WG involvement in this process Caerphilly County Borough Council has been advised that appropriate consideration should be given to preparing a Joint LDP with neighbouring authorities, particularly in light of the proposals contained within the Positive Planning Consultation Paper and Draft Planning Bill as outlined above.

Consideration has been given to the preparation of a joint review with Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils reflecting the recommendations contained within the Williams Report. This indicates that Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen could be merged into a single local planning authority.

At its meeting on the 29 September 2014, the Council resolved that Caerphilly County Borough Council does not support the idea of a merged authority covering Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.

The preparation of a joint LDP review does not however require the formal merger of the Councils in question to enable this work to be undertaken. There remains the potential for the three local planning authorities to work together on a joint review of their respective local development plans as follows:

- Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 - Adopted November 2010;
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Local Development Plan up to 2021 - Adopted November 2012;
- Torfaen County Borough Council Local Development Plan (to 2021) - Adopted December 2013.

Caerphilly LDP is required to commence review by no later than November 2014, Blaenau Gwent LDP is not due to be reviewed until November 2016, whilst Torfaen's LDP is not required to commence review until December 2017.

Caerphilly County Borough Council Position Statement

There is a pressing need to continue work on the review of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up to 2021 (Adopted November 2010) for the reasons outlined below:

- LDP Regulation 41 states that an LPA must commence a full review of its LDP every four years from the date of its initial adoption, in accordance with regulation 3(1). In Caerphilly this would be November 2014 at the latest.
- The Caerphilly County Borough Council resolved to progress a full review of the LDP as a consequence of the findings of the 2013 AMR, therefore the 2014 review was triggered a year early. The Council considered this was necessary as:
 - There is an urgent need to increase the housing land supply within Caerphilly County Borough as the 2013 HLAS indicates that there is only a 2.9 years housing land supply. This supply issue should be properly addressed through a review of the LDP.

- Land needs to be released through the review to accommodate the 21st Century School Rationalisation Process.
- The third Annual Monitoring Report is currently being prepared for submission to WG in October 2014
- The end date of the Adopted LDP is 2021 whilst the end date for the revised LDP will be 2031.
- The Planning Bill will introduce expiry dates for development plans, thus the Caerphilly LDP will expire in 2021 if a review is not undertaken promptly.
- The Delivery Agreement for the first review of the LDP has been agreed by WG.
- Considerable work has already been undertaken on the first review of the LDP including extensive work with stakeholders.
- Any delay in the review process would undermine the plan led system in Caerphilly and indeed Wales and could inadvertently result in stakeholders disengaging with the process.
- Any delay in the review process would make Caerphilly County Borough vulnerable to planning by appeal.
- There is an indicative adoption date of 2017 for the revised plan, which would precede any proposed merger.
- The timescale for the proposed mergers have been extended from the original proposal of 2017 to around 2020.
- There is the opportunity for councils to enter into voluntary mergers, which allow a more advanced timescale, but this has yet to be agreed by any authorities. The benefits of any voluntary mergers ahead of the proposed timescales are unclear.
- On the 29 September 2014 Caerphilly County Borough Council resolved that Caerphilly County Borough Council does not support the idea of a merged authority covering Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.
- In setting out a preference in relation to its options, WG accept the Williams Commission recommendation that the boundaries of merged Local Authorities should align with health board and police force boundaries.
- Aneurin Bevan Health Board and the Gwent Police Authority both incorporate Caerphilly, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Monmouthshire
- There is considerable uncertainty of the configuration of any future planning authority.
- Unlike Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen, the south of Caerphilly County Borough is under extreme housing pressure as a consequence of its proximity to Cardiff and there is a need to release land to ease this pressure through a review of the plan.
- There is an urgent need to review the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Position Statement

- The Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Local Development Plan was adopted in November 2012.
- The first Annual Monitoring Report was submitted to WG in October 2014 stating that there was no need to review the Plan.
- To accord with LDP Regulation 41 Blaenau Gwent needs to undertake a full review in November 2016.
- The Planning Bill will introduce expiry dates for development plans, thus the Blaenau Gwent LDP will expire in 2021 if a review is not completed by this date.
- The 2013 JHLAS indicates that there is only a 2.9 years housing land supply. This supply issue is not linked to lack of land in Blaenau Gwent but to the lower than expected completion figures experienced between 2006-2013. This has resulted in an increase in the number of

houses required to be built in the next 5 years to unattainable figures. General viability issues in the area means that sites are marginal and developers are not prepared to take risks in the current economic climate.

- There is no pressure from developers to build in the area.
- Due to the lack of development pressure the area is not vulnerable to planning by appeal.
- The 21st Century School Rationalisation Process was addressed in the LDP.
- Caerphilly County Borough Council made public its intention to stand alone and not merge with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen as proposed by the Williams Report.
- Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen have decided to explore the potential for a voluntary merger

Torfaen County borough Council Position Statement

The Torfaen Local Development Plan was adopted on the 3rd December 2013. Torfaen are currently looking to deliver this plan, which lasts until 2021. Considerable work is being devoted to enable the delivery of the Plan, especially housing sites and employment creation / safeguarding; and there are no staff or financial resources to embark on a plan review at this time.

- The Torfaen County Borough Council Local Development Plan was adopted in December 2013.
- The first Annual Monitoring Report is due to be submitted to WG in October 2015.
- To accord with LDP Regulation 41 Torfaen needs to undertake a full review in December 2017.
- The Planning Bill will introduce expiry dates for development plans, if implemented the Torfaen LDP will expire in 2021 if a review is not completed by this date.
- Caerphilly County Borough Council made public its intention to stand alone and not merge with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen as proposed by the Williams Report.
- Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen have decided to explore the potential for a voluntary merger.

Torfaen's first Annual Monitoring Report is not due until October 2015 and in advance of that I would consider any review of the Torfaen LDP to be premature and would create uncertainty in the delivery of the Torfaen LDP.

Planning Policy Wales states at 2.1.6 "LDP strategies and policies must be kept up to date so as to support the objectives of the plan-led system to provide certainty, rational and consistent decisions and a reduction in the number of misconceived planning applications and appeals. Local planning authorities are required to make an annual monitoring report on their LDP. The annual monitoring report will identify any policy that is not being implemented, together with the steps the authority intends to take to secure implementation. Annual monitoring and regular review are mandatory." In addition Welsh Government Consultation Document - Annex 1.1 Draft Planning Policy Wales - Chapter 2 Local Development Plans issued on 1st October 2014 states:

"2.5.16 The timing and frequency of **plan review**, and the consequential need for a **Review Report**, will depend upon the findings of the AMR and on local circumstances. To ensure that the LDP is kept up to date and the plan period remains strategic, an authority should commence a more thorough full review of its LDP at least once every 4 years, potentially sooner if suggested by the findings of the AMRs (LDP Regulation 41)."

There does not appear to be any support for an early review mechanism in advance of an AMR in the existing or new guidance from Welsh Government.

In addition to this as already stated, in view of the state of Local Government finances, there is unlikely to be staff resources to switch from plan delivery (a key objective of Welsh Government) to devote to plan review in the immediate future.

The Torfaen CBC Chief Executive has stated "As you will know; the map that Williams has suggested is that Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly should merge to form one authority. In responding to

the Williams Commission our Cabinet have stated their position as being that a merger between Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire would be their preferred option. Caerphilly's Cabinet have now decided that their preferred option is to stand alone, and Newport has done similarly. Monmouthshire has not made any statement at present." (Alison Ward 06.10.14)

Therefore as well as being premature and potentially creating uncertainty in plan delivery there is in addition no political mandate to consider joint arrangements between Torfaen and Caerphilly at this time.

The Torfaen LDP was developed in full cognisance of the position of Caerphilly CBC and their LDP and Torfaen CBC has engaged and assisted in the review work so far conducted. Torfaen will continue to respond to any further requests and assist where required and provide support and information to the review process.

Strategic Development Plans

Welsh Government consider that the strategic elements of LDPs, such as housing, employment, transport, gypsy and traveller provision, minerals and waste, should be elevated for discussion and conclusion in a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the region. This it is argued will result in a consistent, effective and efficient approach, reflecting strategic priorities, with key decisions taken once rather than numerous times. WG also considers that SDPs should only be prepared in areas where there are matters of greater than local significance and therefore identify the focus for three SDPs as follows: Cardiff; Swansea; and the A55 Corridor.

Although WG propose to set the geographical focus for SDPs, they do not specify the precise physical extent of the area to be covered by the SDP. It is suggested that a nominated lead local authority will be required to work collaboratively with other local authorities within the area of focus to identify the boundary of the plan area based on robust evidence which must be submitted for approval by Welsh Ministers.

Within a Caerphilly context it is assumed that the SDP area would be SE Wales and would cover the Cardiff Capital Region. This would reflect the collaborative work that has already been undertaken to date, by the 10 LPAs in the region through the SE Wales Regional Board, South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Group (SEWDERG) and South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG).

Alternative governance arrangements for such an approach have been considered and the WG have identified a preferred option that gives the responsibility for preparing an SDP with representatives from LPAs nominated to a 'Panel' which has the relevant statutory development plan making powers, including responsibility for approval of the Plan. Such powers will provide the 'Panel' with decision making capability, avoiding the need to refer back to parent authorities. This is considered by WG to be important to avoid delay and frustration of the process and instil responsibility and accountability. As a general approach this would seem sensible and is in conformity with the way in which the Scottish Regional Model works.

In future LDPs will be required to be in conformity with the relevant SDP. Where an SDP covers an LDP area, the LDP should be rationalised so that it only focuses on local matters, particularly site specific allocations, in accordance with the scale and location of growth set out in the SDP. Issues such as the overall level of housing, employment, retail provision and strategic sites will have already been addressed in the SDP and do not need to be repeated. This will result in a much slimmer LDP in both scope and content and should reduce the cost and time associated with plan preparation and review.

The current review of the LDP will precede the preparation of the SDP for SE Wales and is likely to be adopted by 2017. It is envisaged that work on the SDP will commence in earnest in 2015 further to the Planning Bill receiving Royal Assent.

Regional Evidence Base

In December 2011, South East Wales Regional Partnership Board comprising the Leaders of the ten local authorities asked the Directors of Environment and Regeneration to establish a task and finish group to research, critically evaluate and advise on the essential requirements to establish its vision for **South East Wales: a thriving region, visible internationally and distinctively Welsh.**

As an integral part of this work the South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Group (SEWDERG) have sought to co-ordinate and build upon existing work in order to ensure that the best use is made of finite resources. In many ways, South East Wales is already operating as a city region, albeit not formally constituted as such. There is a high degree of interdependence and cooperation between the local authorities and a proven track record of working closely together through regional working groups such as South East Wales Transport Alliance (Sewta - now abolished), South East Wales Regional Housing Forum (Sewrhf), South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (Sewspg) and South East Wales Economic Forum (Sewef- Now abolished).

The publication of the SE Wales Regional Strategic Framework entitled *Delivering a Future with Prosperity*, represents a critical stage in regional working, and as well as taking forward the collaborative agenda of the local authorities, it sets out priorities to complement and support key Welsh Government policies and initiatives, for example in relation to tackling poverty, implementing regeneration initiatives, securing economic development, effective planning, affordable housing, efficient and accessible transport and excellent connectivity in its widest sense.

There already exists a significant body of evidence for regional planning within SE Wales, as considerable work has already been undertaken to inform existing and emerging Local Development Plans. However, the staggered nature of the delivery of LDPs means that they have been produced across the region using a variety of different methodologies and data sets.

With the support of Welsh Government Planning Improvement Fund, Sewspg has progressed work to gather and collate the existing key evidence for the region. This evidence base serves to:

- Aid a common understanding of the evidence base within the region;
- Highlights existing gaps and/or deficiencies in the evidence base in order to inform the future development of a regional planning framework;
- Facilitate a professional dialogue regarding the most appropriate methodologies to be used in plan preparation in the future.

The report collates the evidence into distinct sections by Topic Area as follows:

Section A: The Development Strategies underpinning existing LDPs and thus those areas targeted for growth or consolidation;

Section B: Population and Household Projections;

Section C: Housing Land Supply;

Section D: Gypsy and Traveller needs and provision;

Section E: Employment Land Supply; and

Section F: Retail Hierarchy

In addition, a single plan for the region was prepared that collates all of the authorities Local Development Plans Proposals Maps for the region into one.

In South-East Wales, there is a general consensus about what the 'region' is and the geographical extent of the area that requires a strategic regional approach to planning is largely agreed. The Cardiff Capital Region consists of ten local authority areas that formerly comprised the counties of Mid and South Glamorgan and Gwent.

The area has a strong degree of geographical unity characterised by river valleys that flow into the Severn Estuary from the upland coalfield area to the coastal towns and cities. At the 2011 census the region contained a population of 1.48 million – nearly half the population of Wales.

The South East Wales Regional Board comprising the Leaders and Chief Executives of all of the 10 LPAs in SE Wales is already in existence and is now meeting on a regular basis with the Cardiff Capital Region Board.

There is a genuine desire to capitalise on the opportunities afforded by the Cardiff Capital Region and resources associated with progressing this work need to be identified by LPAs.

Conclusion

There is an urgent need for the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan to be reviewed and it would not be appropriate to delay this process given the considerable uncertainties in respect of any joint working arrangements.

In setting out a preference in relation to its options, WG accept the Williams Commission recommendation that the boundaries of merged Local Authorities should align with health board and police force boundaries. Aneurin Bevan Health Board and the Gwent Police Authority both incorporate Caerphilly, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Monmouthshire.

There is considerable uncertainty of the configuration of any future planning authority as a result of any voluntary or forced local government reorganisation.

Conversely, within South-East Wales, there is a general consensus about what the 'region' is and the geographical extent of the area that requires a strategic regional approach to planning is largely agreed. The Cardiff Capital Region consists of ten local authority areas that formerly comprised the counties of Mid and South Glamorgan and Gwent.

Having regard therefore to the emerging planning reform agenda, it would be more productive to divert finite resources to aid the preparation of a joint plan to cover the 10 SE Wales local authorities and commence work on a comprehensive evidence base to underpin a Strategic Development Plan in line with the emerging Planning Bill.

The second review of the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan will then be undertaken within a context of certainty in respect of those matters that will be addressed through the Strategic Development Plan and those that continue to be addressed through the Local Development Plan. Moreover there will also be considerably more certainty concerning the spatial area of any newly configured local planning authorities.

There is no robust planning or business case for the preparation of a Joint Review of the three LDPs covering Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen at this time



COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF SOUTH EAST WALES VALLEYS LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.1 The attached report was presented to Cabinet on 21st January 2015.

1.2 The recommendations of Cabinet will be reported at the meeting.

Author: H. Morgan, Senior Committee Services Officer.

Appendix 1 Report to Cabinet dated 21st January 2015.

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CABINET – 21ST JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF SOUTH EAST WALES VALLEYS LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

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

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- 1.1 The attached report which sought Members' views on the draft South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan (LTP) and reported the responses from statutory and public consultation, was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2014. It seeks the views of Cabinet before it is referred to Council for determination.
 - 1.2 Members were advised that the Welsh Government requires all local authorities in Wales to produce LTPs in accordance with WG LTP guidance, which will replace the 4 Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) currently in place across Wales. The LTP has to be submitted to WG by 31st January 2015 and as such there has been a very short timescale to produce the LTP. On 29th October 2014, Cabinet gave approval for a joint South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan to be produced by Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil Councils, with RCT identified as the lead authority for the plan.
 - 1.3 Members were advised that in line with the WG requirements that the LTP cannot refer to rail/trunk road schemes, a number of amendments would need to be made to the LTP prior to the final version being submitted, including removal of Appendix 2 of the LTP Consultation Report. Members were also advised of accelerated developments in regards to the scheme to extend park and ride facilities at Ystrad Mynach Rail Station, with recent DDA and station improvement works facilitating the opportunity to bring forward this plan to within the next 12-18 months and therefore increasing the Priority Rating against this scheme from 6 to 2.
 - 1.4 In response to Member consultation feedback received regarding LTP scheme programmes, Officers suggested that a scheme could be added to the LTP to improve the signalised junction serving the Pengam Park and Ride Site.
 - 1.5 Members commented on the need for an improved road and public transport infrastructure around the county borough, with these comments noted by Officers. A query was raised in regards to the short consultation timelines with it advised that despite the short WG deadline submission date for the LTP, sufficient notice was given to all consultees.
 - 1.6 Following consideration of the report, the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet and Council that for the reasons contained therein, and subject to amendments to the LTP as detailed by Officers, the South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan be adopted.
 - 1.7 Members are asked to consider the recommendation.

Author: R. Barrett, Committee Services Officer, Ext. 4245

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Report to Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2014
– Agenda Item 12



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9TH DECEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF SOUTH EAST WALES VALLEYS LOCAL
TRANSPORT PLAN**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Members views on the draft South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan (LTP) and to report the responses from the statutory and public consultation, prior to its presentation to Cabinet and Full Council for adoption.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Welsh Government (WG) requires all local authorities (LAs) in Wales to produce LTPs by the end of January 2015. The LTPs will replace the 4 Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) that are currently in place. A South East Wales Valleys LTP has been produced jointly by Caerphilly CBC, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC. Adoption of the final version of the LTP is required to enable submission of the document to the Welsh Government by the deadline.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 To work towards the Council's corporate objective of improving peoples' living environment through targeted actions, regulation, information and advice.
- 3.2 Contributes to the Single Integrated Plan priority to 'improve local employment opportunities including access to opportunities across a wider geographical area'.
- 3.3 Contribute to the Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan aim to 'provide a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and protects the environment; where public transport, walking and cycling provide real travel alternatives.'
- 3.4 LTPs are a statutory requirement as set down by the Transport Act 2000 and amended by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006. LTPs must set out the LA's policies for 'safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within their area'.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Welsh Government (WG) requires all local authorities in Wales to produce LTPs in accordance with WG LTP guidance that was issued in May 2014. The LTPs will replace the 4 Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) that are currently in place across Wales. The LTPs have to be submitted to WG by the end of January 2015 and as such there has been a very short timescale to produce the LTP.
- 4.2 On 29th October 2014, Cabinet gave approval for a joint 'South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan' to be produced by Caerphilly CBC, Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, Torfaen CBC, Blaenau Gwent CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC.
- 4.3 The Welsh Government requires a lead authority to be identified in cases where LTPs are produced jointly between LAs. The role of the lead authority is solely to act as a point of contact with the Welsh Government. Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC has been identified as the lead authority for the South East Wales Valleys LTP.
- 4.4 The consultation version of the LTP is included as Appendix 1. The format of the LTP is in line with the WG LTP guidance and includes:
- A review of national, regional and local policies and plans.
 - Details of issues, opportunities and interventions across the area.
 - A programme of schemes for 2015 to 2020 and longer term aspirations to 2030.
 - Details of statutory checks and consultation undertaken.
 - A monitoring and evaluation plan.
- 4.5 The LTP sets out each of the 5 local authorities' priorities for transport schemes in the five year period 2015 to 2020, and medium and longer term aspirations up to 2030. The short term programme of schemes (up to 2020) within each of the 5 LA areas are listed in order of priority as required by the Welsh Government. Although the LTP is a joint document, there is no requirement to prioritise schemes across the whole South East Wales Valleys area. Any funding applications for the priorities and schemes identified will be on an individual LA basis unless agreed otherwise.
- 4.6 The majority of schemes within CCBC's LTP short and longer term programmes are included within the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP). The LTP will need to link closely with the LDP review during 2015.
- 4.7 In line with the Welsh Government's LTP guidance, the LTP programme does not include any rail or trunk road schemes i.e. schemes not with the LA's remit. Such schemes will be prioritised, progressed and delivered directly by WG. It is expected that these regional 'strategic' scheme proposals will be included in WG's National Transport Plan (NTP). The WG LTP guidance states that the next NTP is expected to commence in April 2015 i.e. after the LTPs have been submitted to WG. The Cardiff Capital Region Board will also have a role in prioritising these regional 'strategic' scheme proposals as part of the Metro programme.
- 4.8 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that were previously undertaken for the Regional Transport Plan were reviewed and updated as part of the development of the LTP. This process also incorporated information from the SEAs and HRAs that each of the individual LAs have in place to support their LDPs.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The LTP document has undergone Caerphilly CBC's Equalities Impact Assessment process. The current version of the Equality Impact Assessment form is included as Appendix 2. The

Equality Impact Assessment form will be reviewed and updated to reflect the final version of the LTP that is submitted to the Welsh Government.

- 5.2 Stakeholders in affected minority groups were consulted during the LTP consultation process in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance document. The consultation draft LTP was sent to equalities groups listed within the Caerphilly CBC's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance for review and comment. The consultation draft was also sent to Caerphilly CBC officers with an equalities remit for wider dissemination to their contacts.
- 5.3 Further detail of comments received from equalities groups during the consultation process is included in the Equalities Impact Assessment form (Appendix 2). All comments received from equalities groups have been reviewed and the key issues raised will be incorporated into the final LTP document.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No direct financial implications in producing the LTP. The LTP will set down the future transport schemes that will form the basis of bids for transport funding.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.9 The draft LTP that was produced jointly by the 5 local authorities has been through a period of consultation. Due to the short timescales in which the LTP had to be produced, the consultation period on the draft Plan was limited to 3 weeks. An email to key stakeholders was sent 2 weeks prior to the start of the consultation to notify them of the forthcoming consultation.
- 4.10 The consultation included statutory consultees, key external stakeholders, Caerphilly CBC Members and relevant officers, Town and Community Councils and equalities groups. There was also a WG requirement to consult with the Cardiff Capital Region Board and neighbouring local authorities. Each consultee was sent a copy of the draft LTP to review and provide comments. The LTP was also uploaded to the websites of the 5 LAs to enable the public to comment on the draft plan. A questionnaire was provided to assist people in responding to the consultation. A copy of the consultation questions is included in the LTP Consultation Report (attached as Appendix 3).
- 4.11 A total of 46 consultation responses were received, which have been reviewed and summarised in the LTP Consultation Report (Appendix 3). The consultation report provides an overview of common themes or issues that were raised during the consultation. It also provides detail of any specific comments received that required consideration of whether changes to the LTP were needed. The LTP Consultation Report highlights the proposed changes to the LTP that have resulted from the consultation process. The proposed changes will be incorporated into the final version of the LTP.
- 4.12 The comments received on this report from the list of consultees have been incorporated within the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To seek Members' views on the South East Wales Valleys LTP prior to reporting to Cabinet and Full Council for adoption.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To enable the South East Wales LTP to be submitted to the Welsh Government by the end of January 2015 to meet the Council's statutory obligations.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Transport Act 2000
Transport (Wales) Act 2006

Author: Gemma Thomas, Principal Engineer (Transport Strategy and Road Safety)
Consultees: Cllr T Williams – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation & Engineering
Cllr D T Davies – Chair of Regeneration and Environmental Scrutiny Committee
Cllr E Aldworth – Vice Chair of Regeneration and Environmental Scrutiny Committee
Chris Burns – Interim Chief Executive
Sandra Aspinall – Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Dave Street – Corporate Director – Social Services
Terry Shaw – Head of Engineering Services
Pauline Elliott – Head of Regeneration and Planning
Gail Williams – Monitoring Officer/Principal Solicitor
Clive Campbell – Transportation Engineering Manager
Mike Eedy – Finance Manager
Sian Phillips – HR Manager
David Thomas – Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Rhian Kyte – Team Leader (Strategic and Development Planning)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan: consultation draft
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment Form
Appendix 3 – Local Transport Plan Consultation Report

Background Paper:

South East Wales Local Transport Plan – Summary of Consultation Comments (Available in Members' Library)

South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan

Consultation Report by Caerphilly CBC

1. Public Consultation Process

- 1.1 The draft South East Wales Valley Local Transport Plan (LTP) has been through a period of public consultation. Due to the short timescales in which the LTP had to be produced, the consultation period on the draft Plan was limited to 3 weeks. An email to key stakeholders was sent 2 weeks prior to the start of the consultation to notify them of the forthcoming consultation.
- 1.2 The consultation included statutory consultees, key external stakeholders, Caerphilly CBC Members and relevant officers, Town and Community Councils and equalities groups. There was also a Welsh Government requirement to consult with the Cardiff Capital Region Board and neighbouring local authorities. Each consultee was sent a copy of the draft LTP to review and provide comments. The LTP was also uploaded to the websites of the 5 local authorities in the SE Wales Valleys area to enable the public to comment on the draft plan. A questionnaire was provided to assist people in responding to the consultation. A copy of the consultation questions is included as Appendix 1.

2. Consultation Responses Received

- 2.1 A total of 46 responses were received to the public consultation, which have been reviewed and summarised in this consultation report. Of these responses, 35 completed the consultation questionnaire. 20 of the consultation responses were from members of the public and 21 of the responses were from those organisations listed below:
- Bridgend County Borough Council
 - British Driving Society Wales
 - British Horse Society
 - Cadw
 - Castle Bikes Cycle Club
 - Community Transport Association (CTA) Cymru
 - Disability Wales
 - Diverse Cymru
 - Gelligaer Community Council
 - Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council
 - NAT
 - Network Rail (Property)
 - Rhondda Cynon Taf Access Group
 - RCT Local Access Forum
 - RNIB Cymru and Guide Dogs Cymru
 - Sight Cymru
 - Stagecoach in South Wales
 - Sustrans
 - Vale of Glamorgan Council
 - Valleys to Coast Housing
 - Welsh Government

2.2 The remaining 5 responses were from Caerphilly CBC Ward Members and officers from the other local authorities. It should be noted that a response to the consultation is still awaited from the Cardiff Capital Region Board.

3. Responses to Consultation Questionnaire

3.1 A summary of the responses to the questions asked in the consultation questionnaire is as follows.

Question 1 – Do you agree or disagree with the Objectives in Section 2.3 of the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree – 71%

Partly agree – 26%

Disagree – 3%

Question 2 – Do you agree or disagree with the Issues, Opportunities and Interventions identified in Table 1 of the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree – 47%

Partly agree – 41%

Disagree – 12%

Question 3 – Do you agree or disagree with the short-term programme of transport schemes (covering 2015-2020) set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree – 51%

Partly agree – 34%

Disagree – 15%

Question 4 – Do you agree or disagree with the medium and longer term programme of transport schemes (covering up to 2030) set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree – 37%

Partly agree – 37%

Disagree – 26%

Question 5 – Do you agree or disagree with the monitoring and evaluation proposals set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree – 61%

Partly agree – 24%

Disagree – 15%

3.2 To summarise the above:

- The response to the questions in the consultation questionnaire was largely positive.
- The majority of respondents either agreed or partly agreed to all questions asked in the consultation.
- 85% or more of respondents either agreed or partly agreed with questions 1-3 and question 5.

- Question 4, which asked about the LTP's medium and longer-term programme, had the highest number of respondents that disagreed with the question (26%).
- 3.3 In term of the higher number of negative responses to question 4, the written comments received about the question were reviewed to consider any common themes. It is worth noting that four respondents who disagreed with the question made reference to the lack of emphasis on active travel in the medium and longer-term programme and too much focus and funding being directed towards highway schemes. In response to these comments, it is considered that the implementation of the Active Travel (Wales) Act in the coming years will lead to the identification of a wide range of additional active travel schemes that will be fed into the LTP programme at the appropriate time.

4. Summary of Comments Received and Proposed Changes to LTP

- 4.1 All comments received during the consultation have been reviewed. The detail of all comments received is included in a supporting document to this report – 'South East Wales Local Transport Plan – Summary of Consultation Comments'. If Members wish to view the supporting document, it is available in the Members' Library.
- 4.2 The following section provides an overview of common themes or issues that were highlighted in the responses and any specific comments that required consideration of whether changes to the LTP were required. Any proposed changes to the LTP as a result of the consultation, are highlighted in bold throughout the section.

4.3 Comments received about the LTP objectives

4.3.1 There were some comments received in relation to the LTP objectives (section 2.3 of the LTP). There were no common themes among these comments and each comment was only made by a single respondent. The table below details the comments made.

Comment received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
The LTP contains a vision, wider goals and objectives. It is confusing to have this alongside the Programme for Government and strategic priorities for transport, which are what the LTPs need to demonstrate they deliver. (Welsh Government comment).	It is considered important for the LTP to have its own objectives for transport in the SE Wales Valleys area. It is felt these support and complement the Welsh Government's Programme for Government. Proposed change to LTP – Include additional text to highlight that the LTP vision, goals and objectives support and complement the Welsh Government's Programme for Government and strategic priorities for transport.
The term 'access for all' in objective 3 does not acknowledge that some people require more support than others – change wording to include the promotion of 'equality of opportunity'.	Proposed change to LTP – Change wording of objective 3 to 'Improve access for all and promote equality of opportunity to employment opportunities, services, healthcare, tourism and leisure facilities'.
Include 'promotion of social inclusion' in the objectives.	Promotion of social inclusion currently included as a wider goal of the LTP (section 2.2 of the LTP). No change proposed to the objectives of the LTP.
Objectives are missing health. Include an additional objective 'To introduce travel choices that will improve the health of local people'.	Objective 11 currently makes reference to promoting sustainable travel and making the public aware of the consequences of their travel choices on their health. No change proposed to the objectives of the LTP.
Objectives are meaningless without specific goals, e.g. targets to increase the percentage of journeys by cycling.	Inclusion of targets to be considered in the LTP monitoring strategy. No change proposed to the objectives of the LTP.

4.4 Comments received about the Issues, Opportunities and Interventions identified in the LTP

4.4.1 A number of specific comments were received in relation to the table of 'Issues, Opportunities and Interventions' within the LTP (section 2.4 of the LTP). The table below details the comments made. The first four issues in the table below were mentioned by more than one respondent. Each of the other comments was only made by a single respondent.

Comments received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
A few respondents felt that the solutions identified are too limited, focus on the 'usual tools' and there is a lack of emphasis on alternative and innovative solutions. Examples suggested were community car sharing, car pools, electric bike network, subsidised services to employment sites and reallocation of highway space to car sharing, public transport and active travel. One comment was that it would be good to see more priority given to more innovative, community based solutions involving local communities.	No specific schemes identified at present to include in programme of scheme proposals. Proposed change to LTP – Make reference to 'develop innovative transport schemes' being a potential intervention to address a number of issues within the issues table.
Two respondents highlighted that actions within the issues table require the incentivisation of public transport. It is not clear how this will be approached in light of funding cuts, therefore the form of incentives should be specified given possible future constraints on funding.	The LTP makes reference to and supports the work of the Welsh Government's Bus Policy Advisory Group that has considered this issue (section 1.3.6). No change proposed to LTP.
Two respondents felt that the issues need to consider the resilience of the transport network to climate change e.g. increased flood and landslip risks due to increased frequency of extreme weather events.	Comments are noted. Only one scheme in the LTP programme currently links to this issue i.e. Highway Improvement – A467 New Tredegar to Pontlottyn. Issue to be considered on a scheme-by-scheme basis as the LTP is delivered. No change proposed to LTP.
Two respondents made reference to freight and whether enough consideration has been given to the contribution that heavy vehicles make to traffic congestion and air pollution/ emissions. One respondent highlighted the potential of transporting freight by rail.	Freight has been identified as an issue within the LTP. Guidance is awaited from the Welsh Government on a revised Wales Freight Strategy and the LTP will be reviewed in light of this guidance. No change proposed to LTP.
Issues 1-11 and F – Include reference to personalised travel planning schemes as this can significantly reduce car use.	Although not specifically mentioned in the LTP, this measure will be considered as part of wider active travel and travel planning initiatives that are included in the LTP. No change proposed to LTP.
Issue E – Include reference to Bike It schemes.	Although not specifically mentioned in the LTP, this measure will be considered as part of wider active travel initiatives that are included in the LTP. No change proposed to LTP.

Comments received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
Change emphasis to raise priority of active travel above other interventions.	The actions in the issues table are not listed in any order of priority. No change proposed to LTP.
Highlight the low rates of active travel across the SE Wales Valleys area as an additional issue.	LTP currently identifies poor health as an issue, which links to low rates of active travel. Proposed change to LTP – Change wording of issue F to ‘Inactive, car based lifestyles and low rates of active travel leading to poor health’,
Issue 2 – Make reference to lack of early morning services as well as evenings. Change wording from ‘lack of evening and weekend bus provision’ to ‘lack of evening and Sunday bus provision’ as Saturday bus provision is mainly on a par with that which is provided weekdays.	Proposed change to LTP – Change wording of issue 2 to ‘Lack of early morning, evening and Sunday bus provision leads to difficulties in accessing employment opportunities and reliance on the private car’.
Issue 4 – Provide a clear distinction between community transport and taxis, as not part of community transport provision.	Proposed change to LTP – Change wording of action 4 to ‘Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport, taxis etc.’
Issue 12 – Expand wording to refer to enforcement i.e. amend wording to state ‘Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes and effective policing thereof’.	Proposed change to LTP – Change wording of issue 12 to ‘Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes and effective enforcement’.
The link between the list of schemes in the programme and the ‘action required’ (schemes) identified in the issues table is not very clear. This will help to demonstrate how the plan is delivering the strategic priorities. (Welsh Government comment).	Proposed change to LTP – Each scheme within the short-term programme to include cross-reference to the relevant issues identified in the issues table.
Include additional point addressing the issue of accessibility to public transport in relation to disability e.g. timing of interchange, the environment at interchanges and on public transport, ticketing and booking systems.	Issues raised to be considered on a scheme-by-scheme basis as the LTP is delivered. Proposed change to LTP – Equalities section of the LTP to be expanded to highlight the points raised (section 5).

4.5 Comments received about the LTP scheme programmes

4.5.1 A range of comments were received in relation to specific scheme proposals within the short and longer term programmes of schemes (sections 3 and 4 of the LTP). It will be for each of the 5 local authorities to determine whether any changes or additions are required to their scheme proposals as a result of the comments made. A summary of the comments made in relation to Caerphilly CBC's schemes are provided below. The first issue in the table below was raised by more than one respondent. Each of the other comments in the table was only raised by a single respondent.

Comment received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
Public Transport Interchange Signage scheme welcomed – should also look at smart phone applications. Also links to comments from equalities groups regarding the importance of accessible travel information in appropriate formats for those with disabilities.	Proposed change to LTP – Include reference to ‘smart phone technology’ and ‘accessible information for all users’ within scheme description. Also include reference within issues table to ‘work with Welsh Government and other partners to improve travel information’.
Crumlin Park and Ride should be moved to the long term programme as unlikely a station will be delivered in the short term (Welsh Government comment).	The delivery of Crumlin Station/ Park and Ride is linked to the short-term proposed improvements to the Ebbw Valley Railway as part of the Metro Phase 1 proposals. No change proposed to LTP.
Crumlin Park and Ride – The impact of new stations and improvements to park and ride facilities on the existing bus networks needs to be assessed and taken into account.	Comments are noted. This will be considered as part of the development of the station proposal. No change proposed to LTP.
More detail and emphasis on improving the A467 from Newbridge to Crosskeys during peak times.	Highway Improvement scheme along A467 Newbridge to Crosskeys already included within the LTP's short-term programme. No change proposed to LTP.
Support the Pwllpant Roundabout scheme but should also include reviewing traffic lanes at Trecenydd Roundabout.	No further scheme proposed at Trecenydd Roundabout following highway improvement scheme implemented in 2012. Lane assignment to be reviewed but will only result in minor works e.g. to lane markings. No change proposed to LTP.
A 20mph scheme is required at Derwendeg Primary Schol along Hengoed Road and Hengoed Avenue.	Future scheme proposal to be considered by Transport Strategy and Road Safety team. No change proposed to LTP.
Add a scheme to increase park and ride provision at Hengoed Station. The existing park and ride is over capacity.	Not a current proposal but feasibility of scheme proposal to be reviewed. No change proposed to LTP.

Comment received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
Bus Stop Enhancements – Mid Valleys Area should be a higher priority – suggest priority 3.	Comments are noted. No change proposed to the scheme priorities at this stage, but the LTP programme will be subject to ongoing review as the LTP is progressed. No change proposed to LTP.
Highway improvement of the A472 Ystrad Mynach to Nelson should be given a higher priority due to its useage than the A469 New Tredegar to Pontlottyn.	Both schemes are currently included in the LTP’s medium and longer-term programme of schemes, which are not listed in any order of priority. No change proposed to LTP.
Inclusion of Connect2 and improvement of bus stops as a short term priority welcomed, especially in terms of accessibility.	Comments are noted. No change proposed to LTP.
The plan omits the fact there is no decent road from Tredegar to Blackwood, no bypass, no train line.	The route is not on the strategic highway network and there is no significant development proposed for the area. As such, there are no highway improvement proposals for this area at the present time. No change proposed to LTP.
No mention of future bypass for Maesycwmmmer. This should be dualled.	Proposals for the area may be influenced by the review of Caerphilly CBC’s LDP. Proposed change to LTP – Include additional scheme in the LTP longer term programme for improvements to the A472 through Maesycwmmmer. The wording of the proposal is in line with Caerphilly CBC’s LDP i.e. ‘Highway Improvement – A472 Crown Roundabout to Cwm Du Roundabout’.
Ystrad Mynach Park and Ride Extension – add to it an active travel route following an old railway alignment that will give direct access from the station to National Cycle Network route 47.	Incorporated within existing active travel route proposal in short-term programme – Link from Penallta Park to Ystrad Mynach. No change proposed to LTP.
Consider an active travel scheme to fill the gap between Abertysswg and New Tredegar. The best alignment would be to follow a rough track that currently crosses what is believed to be an old colliery site.	Future scheme proposal to be considered by Transport Strategy and Road Safety team as part of the requirement of the Active Travel Act. No change proposed to LTP.
Disagree with proposal for a park and ride at Llanbradach as not needed.	Long term aspiration to increase park and ride opportunities on the Rhymney line. No change proposed to LTP.
Make reference to the new 21 st Century school in Oakdale – safe routes, 20mph zone etc.	Transport appraisal of Education’s 21 st Century provision will be considered through the planning process and is not directly linked to the LTP. No change proposed to LTP.

Comment received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
<p>Include long-term proposal for a scheme to eliminate traffic congestion at the railway bridge near Pengam Station.</p>	<p>Minor improvements have been delivered as part of the Pengam Park and Ride scheme. The route is not on the strategic highway network and there is no significant development proposed for the area. As such, there are no highway improvement proposals for this area at the present time. No change proposed to LTP.</p>
<p>Cardiff Road, Caerphilly should be pedestrianised and Mountain Road (south towards Cardiff) should be made one-way to force traffic to use the A469.</p>	<p>Proposals to be considered as part of the action plan for the Air Quality Management Area. No change proposed to LTP.</p>
<p>Query regarding why the Connect2 scheme is the only community/flexible transport scheme to be highlighted in the programme, as vehicle replacement is a significant issue for operators across the area. Suggest that the opportunity for vehicle renewal should be applied fairly across the SE Wales Valleys area.</p>	<p>Comments are noted. Future proposals from organisations that deliver 'transport for all' flexible transport solutions will be considered for inclusion in the future programme. No change proposed to LTP.</p>

4.6 Comments received about Specific Modes of Transport

4.6.1 A number of comments received were focused on specific modes of transport. The table below summarises the common issues raised through the consultation.

Mode of transport	Comments received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
Public transport	A number of comments highlighted problems experienced with public transport currently e.g. poor connections between bus and rail services and the need for improved transport hubs/ interchanges, safety concerns while waiting for public transport, high cost, employment sites not being accessible by public transport, lack of cross-valley links by public transport and the long journeys required to travel between valleys etc. A few respondents highlighted the need for longer hours of operation of public transport and improved services on Sunday, evenings and early mornings. A few stated their support for measures to increase the safety and security of those travelling. Similarly a few respondents supported the focus on improving the integration between modes, support for park and ride schemes and for integrated, multi-modal ticketing and uniformity of fares.	Comments are noted. It is believed that the issues identified within the LTP and scheme proposals to improve public transport are aimed at addressing the issues raised through the consultation. No change proposed to LTP.
Rail	Comments were received regarding the need for the plan to give more focus to rail improvements e.g. not enough emphasis on linking the Ebbw Valley railway line to Newport and increasing the number of trains, lack of early/late services, rail link between Ystrad Mynach and Abercynon required. A comment was also received that the Bedlinog line should be referred to as the Ystrad Mynach to Dowlais railway line. Welsh Government comment drew attention to Appendix 2 that lists rail interventions considered key to the SE Wales Valleys area and emphasised that 'the LTP cannot include reference to rail or trunk road schemes'.	<p>Rail schemes are not included within the LTP programme as the Welsh Government guidance states that the LTP should not include interventions that are not within the LA's remit i.e. rail or trunk road schemes. However, Appendix 2 has been included as it identifies those rail initiatives that are of importance to the local authorities in the SE Wales Valleys area. The Welsh Government will be responsible for the delivery of these schemes. It is considered important that Appendix 2 is included in the LTP for completeness.</p> <p>Proposed change to LTP – Retain Appendix 2 and include reference to the Bedlinog line as 'reopening of the rail line between Ystrad Mynach and Bedlinog/ Dowlais Top'.</p>

Mode of transport	Comments received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
Bus	A number of responses referred to the importance of bus services. Reference was made to the recent cuts in bus services, the need for more direct and faster bus services to key locations and the LTP having too much dependence on bus companies agreeing to improvements. Comments were received about the importance of public transport reliability, particularly to those with disabilities, and a few respondents stated their support for measures to improve bus reliability and efficiently.	Comments are noted. It is believed that the issues identified within the LTP and scheme proposals to improve public transport are aimed at addressing the issues raised through the consultation. The bus network is provided on a commercial basis and the local authorities have no option but to work with the bus operators to deliver improvements. No change proposed to LTP.
Active Travel	Comments were received supporting the emphasis on active travel, but there were also comments that not enough priority has been given to active travel in the LTP. A few detailed comments were received regarding the need for active travel to be given a higher priority in the LTP generally and over other scheme types (especially road schemes), for funding to be re-directed towards active travel and for the long-term programme to focus upon active travel. Comments were received for the need for on-highway improvements for cycling to be included in the LTP e.g. advance stop lines, cycle lanes and improving active travel facilities at key junctions/ roundabouts. Other comments included the current network not being linked up and not fit for purpose and the need for proper engagement with user groups.	Comments are noted. It is considered that the implementation of the Active Travel (Wales) Act in the coming years will lead to the identification of a wide range of additional active travel schemes (including on-road improvements) that will be fed into the LTP programme at the appropriate time. No change proposed to LTP.
Car travel	Reference was made to current problems of traffic congestion during peak periods e.g. around Caerphilly town. A few respondents felt that the LTP had too much of a focus on car travel and road schemes (especially in comparison to active travel) and that building additional highway space would lead to more traffic. There were comments that proportionally too much funding was being directed to road improvements in comparison to active travel schemes. Other comments were that there is a need to be realistic in that people will not abandon car travel and park and ride schemes were considered a good approach in relation to this. Comments from equalities groups also emphasised that some people with disabilities will always be reliant on car travel to enable them to lead independent lives. Other comments made reference to the cost of travel e.g. the need for incentives to switch from car travel to public transport and the only way to bring about modal shift being the restriction of destination parking.	Comments are noted. The comments above relating to active travel will influence the future allocation of funding in the longer term programme. No change proposed to LTP.

Mode of transport	Comments received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
Equestrian	Two detailed responses were received from equestrian groups. The responses set down the issues faced by the equestrian community in using the transport network. Concerns raised included the equestrian community not being recognised as a user group of the transport network and their needs not being considered in transport policy or in the development and design of schemes. View that equestrians are vulnerable road users and that off-road 'multi-user routes' should be made accessible to all users. Where there is a high volume of equestrians then their needs should be taken into account in the design of schemes.	Proposed change to LTP – Include additional text in section 2.3 to highlight that the LTP objectives refer to 'all' users of the transport system, including vulnerable road users e.g. those with disabilities, young people, older people, cyclists, the equestrian community etc.
Community Transport	A response from the Community Transport Association stated that the LTP should emphasise the use and development of community/ flexible transport services to address economic and social disadvantage e.g. suggestion that community transport could be better utilised in the development of feeder routes to improve access to main public transport services.	The LTP currently identifies the development of 'innovative, flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport' as an action to address a number of issues identified in the LTP. No change proposed to LTP.

4.7 Comments about Policies and Statutory Checks

4.7.1 Some comments were raised about the statutory checks carried out as part of the LTP preparation (section 5 of the LTP) and the associated policies referred to within the LTP (sections 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 of the LTP). The points raised are summarised in the table below. Each of the points below was only raised by a single respondent.

Comment received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP in bold)
There is only a brief paragraph on compliance with the Equalities Act and mention of the Strategic Environmental Assessment but no information. What about the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Bill, Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance – Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery, United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child, United Nations Principles for Older Persons, Welsh Language Measure 2011, Health Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulation Assessment? (Welsh Government comment).	Final version of the LTP will include further detail about the Equalities Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Information about the Habitats Regulation Assessment and Health Impact Assessment also to be included in the final LTP. Other documents highlighted to be reviewed and details included in the LTP where relevant. Proposed change to LTP – Update text with further information of the statutory checks undertaken.
It would enhance the LTP if a Health Impact Assessment was carried out. The SEA process should be stated i.e. how the RTP SEA has been used in undertaking the LTP SEA.	Comments as above.
Include Welsh Government's Learner Travel Measure and Road Safety Framework for Wales in the policies section.	Proposed change to LTP – Include reference to the Welsh Government's Learner Travel Measure and Road Safety Framework for Wales in section 1.3 of the LTP.
The LTP makes no mention of the 2026 deadline for claiming Rights of Way. The importance of these routes as infrastructure for the Active Travel Act should be recognised.	Proposed change to LTP – Include reference to the deadline and links to the Active Travel Act in the Rights of Way Improvement Plans section (section 1.5.1 of the LTP).
Make reference to the Welsh Government's Planning Bill, which will supersede the Wales Spatial Plan.	Proposed change to LTP – Include reference in the Wales Spatial Plan section (section 1.3.2 of the LTP).

4.8 Comments received about the LTP's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

4.8.1 A number of comments were received about the LTP's monitoring and evaluation plan (section 7 of the LTP). There were no common themes among these comments and each comment was only made by a single respondent. The points raised are summarised below:

- The monitoring plan should clearly link to the high level interventions and include baseline information and detail on what information to be collected and when. (Welsh Government comment).
- The focus is on quantifiable outcomes. Qualitative measures need greater inclusion e.g. need to include representation from the general public and residents.
- Funding needs to be set aside for a minimum of 5 years of monitoring.
- Active travel schemes should monitor walkers as well as cyclists.
- Cycling to school could include an additional measure of a 'hands up survey'.
- Monitoring for cycle storage should be measured by usage i.e. bike counts.
- Disagree that changes in accessibility should be assessed solely using TRAAC software. A more effective way of measuring accessibility would be to involve those who need it to be accessible e.g. those with physical and sensory disabilities. This could be carried out through contact with relevant organisations.
- Needs to include more indicators e.g. modal shift from single car occupancy to sustainable transport modes, reduction in number of journeys made.
- Need to monitor the outcomes and impacts of schemes overall and identify the positive and negative impact on various groups.

4.8.2 Proposed change to LTP – Monitoring and evaluation plan to be reviewed in light of all consultation comments received. However the review will need to ensure the monitoring and evaluation plan remains realistic and deliverable in light of levels of funding likely to be available for monitoring.

4.9 Comments received from Equalities Groups

4.9.1 The following equalities groups submitted comments as part of the LTP consultation:

- Disability Wales
- Diverse Cymru
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Access Group
- RNIB Cymru and Guide Dogs for the Blind
- Sight Cymru

4.9.2 Some detailed responses were received from the above groups that set down the key issues and barriers experienced by those with disabilities. From an equalities perspective, the consultation has highlighted that certain groups of the population may be more reliant on public transport. This includes disabled people (particularly those who are blind or partially sighted) who are often reliant on public transport for their everyday journeys, but also the young, elderly and those on low incomes.

4.9.3 Many comments received from the above groups were supportive of measures proposed by the LTP e.g. improvements to public transport and flexible transport, improved interchange, integrated ticketing etc. Comments also highlighted how the particular needs of certain groups need to be considered in the scheme development process e.g. the need to ensure adequate parking and access is provided for disabled people who are reliant on car travel, active travel routes should consider the needs of those who cannot walk or cycle or need to use adapted bikes, shared use routes/ spaces should consider the needs of those who are blind or partially sighted, the need for training on disability issues etc.

4.9.4 Proposed change to the LTP – The section within the LTP on Equalities will be expanded to highlight some of the key issues raised by the above groups e.g.

- **The importance of transport and transport interchanges being accessible to those with disabilities (including sensory disabilities),**
- **The need for information to be provided in a range of accessible formats (including audio, large print, braille),**
- **The importance of improving issues of safety and security when using public transport and public transport interchanges (e.g. CCTV and help points),**
- **The need to ensure disabled people are appropriately consulted and actively engaged in the development of transport schemes to ensure access requirements are understood.**

4.10 Comments received about Wider Issues

Issue	Comments received	Response to comment (Proposed changes to LTP highlighted in bold)
Funding	There were comments received around funding of the LTP e.g. that the measures proposed will need a lot of funding, which will be challenging in the current economic climate. It was stated that 'a plan is only as good as its potential funding opportunities' and reference made to the importance of the Welsh Government providing funding for schemes. A specific comment from the Welsh Government was that paragraph 4 in section 3.1 is confusing as it is not clear what 'potential funding sources' are being referenced.	Comments are noted. Proposed change to LTP – Delete sentence from paragraph 4 in section 3.1 that says 'A number of the potential funding sources that may be available to more affluent areas may not be available for this area'.
Joined-up thinking between service areas	A number of comments were received in relation to wider services areas (e.g. planning, health, education etc.) and the impact of these wider issues on travel choices e.g. the location of homes, employment and education, decisions about hospital catchments, start times of schools and employment, provision of school transport etc. The responses highlighted the need for better coordination and joined up thinking between service areas e.g. between transport, planning, education, health and employment.	Comments are noted. The LTP already highlights the links and need for coordination between other service areas such as planning, health and education (section 1.5.2). No change proposed to LTP.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The consultation process has resulted in a number of proposed changes to the LTP as detailed above. These will be incorporated into the final version of the LTP prior to submitting the LTP document to the Welsh Government at the end of January 2015.
- 5.2 It will be important to ensure that responses that have been received from specific user groups through the consultation process (e.g. equalities groups, active travel, equestrians) continue to be considered during delivery of the LTP. These user groups will need to be further consulted as appropriate during the development and delivery of the schemes within the LTP programme.

Appendix 1 – Consultation Questionnaire

South East Wales Valleys Draft Local Transport Plan

CONSULTATION RESPONSE: YOUR VIEWS COUNT!

In co-operation between Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen Councils, a joint Local Transport Plan has been produced for the area - which has been called the South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan.

This Plan is currently in draft form but before the final version is submitted to the Welsh Government for approval, we would like to hear from you. Please can you complete this online questionnaire by no later than Monday 17th November 2014.

1. Do you agree or disagree with the Objectives in Section 2.3 of the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree

Partly agree

Disagree

Please give reasons for your response.

2. Do you agree or disagree with the Issues, Opportunities and Interventions identified in Table 1 in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree

Partly agree

Disagree

Please give reasons for your response.

3. Do you agree or disagree with the Short Term Programme of Transport Schemes (covering 2015 - 2020) set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree

Partly agree

Disagree

Please give reasons for your response.

4. Do you agree or disagree with the Medium and Longer Term Programme of Transport Schemes (covering up to 2030) set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree

Partly agree

Disagree

Please give reasons for your response.

5. Do you agree or disagree with the monitoring and evaluation proposals set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

Agree

Partly agree

Disagree

Please give reasons for your response.

6. Do you feel that any part of the draft Local Transport Plan has a different or greater impact on you, such as because of your age, disability, gender or any other reason to do with who you are as an individual?

7. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the draft Local Transport Plan?

About You

8. Where do you live?

- Blaenau Gwent County Borough
- Caerphilly County Borough
- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough
- Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough
- Torfaen County Borough
- None of the above

9. Name:

10. Organisation (if applicable):

11. Email contact:

12. Do you give permission for the Council to contact you in connection with the preparation of the draft Local Transport Plan?

- Yes
- No

Thank you for completing this questionnaire and contributing with your views.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council will process the information you have provided in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Please note that this information may be shared between Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen County Borough Councils for analysis purposes but all personal details will be anonymous.

This publication is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

This Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities, residents, elected members, job applicants and workforce.

We will also work to create equal access for everyone to our services, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

NAME OF NEW OR REVISED POLICY / FUNCTION / PROCEDURE	Local Transport Plan (LTP)
DIRECTORATE	Environment
SERVICE AREA	Transport and Road Safety
CONTACT OFFICER	Gemma Thomas 01495 235214
DATE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED / REVISED NEXT	To be determined by Welsh Government – the LTP contains 5 year programme of schemes to 2020

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY / FUNCTION / PROCEDURE

1.	<p>What is the policy / function / procedure intended to achieve? <i>(Please give a brief description of the purpose of the new or updated policy / function / procedure)</i></p> <p>A Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a statutory document that the Welsh Government requires every local authority in Wales to produce by the end of January 2015. LTPs must set out the local authority's policies for 'safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within their area'. LTPs across Wales will replace the current Regional Transport Plans, which expire on 31st March 2015. A draft LTP has been produced jointly by Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen Councils. This has been called the South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan. The LTP sets out the local authorities' priorities for transport schemes in the five year period 2015 to 2020, and the medium and longer term aspirations up to 2030. In line with guidance issued by the Welsh Government, the LTP does not include any trunk road or rail schemes.</p>
2.	<p>Who are the service users for whom the policy / function / procedure has been developed? <i>(Who will be directly affected by the delivery of this policy / function / procedure? e.g. staff members, the public generally, or specific sections of the public i.e. youth groups, carers, road users, people using country parks, people on benefits etc.)</i></p> <p>The LTP sets down proposed improvements to the transport network in the South East Wales Valleys area for the benefit of local communities and businesses. The delivery of the schemes set out in the LTP will affect the public generally as all sections of the public will use the transport network to access employment, services, facilities etc. As such the LTP will affect all residents and visitors to the South East Wales Valleys area.</p>

IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC AND STAFF

<p>3.</p>	<p>Does the policy / function / procedure ensure that everyone has an equal access to all the services available? <i>(What has been done to examine whether or not these groups have equal access to the service, or whether they need to receive the service in a different way from other people?)</i></p> <p>One of the overall goals of the LTP is to ‘promote social inclusion and equality, by providing a transport system that is safe, accessible and affordable to all sections of the community.’ In addition an objective of the LTP is ‘To improve access for all to employment opportunities, services, healthcare, education, tourism and leisure facilities’. The LTP promotes equality of opportunity through improving access to services and facilities e.g. access to jobs, healthcare, education etc. The focus upon schemes to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling will benefit those who do not have access to a car.</p> <p>Different sections of the community will have different transport and accessibility needs. It is important that such needs are understood and taken into account in the overall direction of the LTP and in the design of individual transport schemes that are delivered through this LTP. There will be the opportunity to consider the needs of all users, including more vulnerable groups, on a scheme by scheme basis as funding becomes available for scheme delivery.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>Issues of equal access to be considered on a scheme-by-scheme basis during the delivery of the LTP.</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>What are the consequences of the policy for particular groups? <i>(Has the service delivery been examined to assess if there is any indirect affect on any groups? Could the consequences of the policy differ dependent upon people’s disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, language, religion/belief?)</i></p> <p>Different sections of the community will have different transport and accessibility needs. In terms of the consequences of the LTP for particular groups, it is considered that the impact of the schemes delivered through the LTP may affect people differently in terms of their disability, gender or age. It is important that such needs are understood and taken into account in the overall direction of the LTP and in the design of individual transport schemes that are delivered through this LTP. There will be the opportunity to consider the needs of all users, including more vulnerable groups, on a scheme by scheme basis as funding becomes available for scheme delivery.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>The impact of LTP schemes on particular groups, e.g. in terms of disability, gender or age, to be considered on a scheme-by-scheme basis during the delivery of the LTP.</p>

INFORMATION COLLECTION

5.	<p>Is full information and analysis of users of the service available? <i>(Is this service effectively engaging with all its potential users or is there higher or lower participation of uptake by one or more groups? If so, what has been done to address any difference in take up of the service?)</i></p> <p>The LTP includes a monitoring and evaluation plan that identifies data sources for transport e.g. Welsh Transport Statistics, bus and rail patronage data, user satisfaction surveys etc.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>The LTP’s monitoring and evaluation plan will be reviewed following comments received through the consultation process (including those from equality/disability groups). Detail of relevant comments that were received in relation to monitoring and evaluation are included in the LTP Consultation Report.</p>

CONSULTATION

6.	<p>What consultation has taken place? <i>(What steps have been taken to ensure that people from various groups have been consulted during the development of this policy / function / procedure? Has the Council’s Equalities groups/staff been consulted?)</i></p> <p>The draft LTP has been through a period of consultation. Due to the short timescales in which the LTP had to be produced, the consultation period on the draft Plan was limited to 3 weeks. An email to key stakeholders was sent 2 weeks prior to the start of the consultation to notify them of the forthcoming consultation.</p> <p>The consultation included statutory consultees, key external stakeholders, CCBC Members and relevant officers, Town and Community Councils and equalities groups. There was also a WG requirement to consult with the Cardiff Capital Region Board and neighbouring local authorities. Each consultee was sent a copy of the draft LTP to review and provide comments. The LTP was also uploaded to the websites of the 5 LAs to enable the public to comment on the draft plan. A questionnaire was provided to assist people in responding to the consultation.</p> <p>The consultation draft LTP has been sent to equalities groups listed within CCBC’s Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance for review and comment. The consultation draft has also been sent to CCBC officers with an equalities remit for wider dissemination to their contacts. In addition to the wider public circulation, the specific groups covered include the Older People’s Forum, youth groups, community groups representing people with physical and/or learning disabilities, the local Menter Iaith (Welsh language) voluntary organisation, Stonewall and organisations representing race and community cohesion issues.</p> <p>A response to the LTP consultation was received from the following equalities groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Disability Wales – Diverse Cymru
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rhondda Cynon Taf Access Group - RNIB Cymru and Guide Dogs for the Blind - Sight Cymru <p>Some very detailed responses were received from the above groups that set down the key issues and barriers experienced by those with disabilities. From an equalities perspective, the consultation has highlighted that certain groups of the population may be more reliant on public transport. This includes disabled people (particularly those who are blind or partially sighted) who are often reliant on public transport for their everyday journeys, but also the young, elderly and those on low incomes.</p> <p>Many comments received from the above groups were supportive of measures proposed by the LTP e.g. improvements to public transport and flexible transport, improved interchange, integrated ticketing etc. Comments also highlighted how the particular needs of certain groups need to be considered in the scheme development process e.g. the need to ensure adequate parking and access is provided for disabled people who are reliant on car travel, active travel routes should consider the needs of those who cannot walk or cycle or need to use adapted bikes, shared use routes/ spaces should consider the needs of those who are blind or partially sighted and the need for training on disability issues. <i>The scheme development and delivery process will also need to consider the requirements of the Welsh language policies of the individual local authorities.</i></p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>The section within the LTP on Equalities will be expanded to highlight some of the key issues raised by the above groups during the consultation e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of transport and transport interchanges being accessible to those with disabilities (including sensory disabilities), - The need for information to be provided in a range of accessible formats (including audio, large print, <i>Braille, Welsh language</i>), - The importance of improving issues of safety and security when using public transport and public transport interchanges (e.g. CCTV and help points), - The need to ensure disabled people are appropriately consulted and actively engaged in the development of transport schemes to ensure access requirements are understood.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

<p>7.</p>	<p>How will the policy be monitored? <i>(What monitoring process has been set up to assess the extent that the service is being used by all sections of the community? Are comments or complaints systems set up to record issues by Equalities category?)</i></p> <p>In line with the Welsh Government’s LTP guidance, the LTP includes a monitoring and evaluation plan. This focuses on monitoring and evaluating the schemes and improvements that are delivered by the LTP. In terms of usage of the transport improvements that are delivered, the monitoring and evaluation plan’s main focus is upon overall numbers of people using a new facility rather than usage by particular groups. A number of comments were received during the consultation process about the LTP’s monitoring and evaluation plan. These include comments from the Welsh Government and equalities groups. In finalising the LTP, the monitoring and evaluation plan will be reviewed in light of the comments received.</p> <p>The Engineering Division’s Service Request system will record any correspondence from the public in relation to any issues raised about the transport network or new facilities that are provided.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>The LTP’s monitoring and evaluation plan will be reviewed following comments received through the consultation process (including those from equality/disability groups). Detail of relevant comments that were received about monitoring and evaluation are included in the LTP Consultation Report.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>How will the policy be evaluated? <i>(What methods will be used to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met?)</i></p> <p>In line with the Welsh Government’s LTP guidance, the LTP includes a monitoring and evaluation plan. This focuses on monitoring and evaluating the schemes and improvements that are delivered by the LTP. In terms of usage of the transport improvements that are delivered, the monitoring and evaluation plan’s main focus is upon overall numbers of people using a new facility rather than usage by particular groups. A number of comments were received during the consultation process about the LTP’s monitoring and evaluation plan. These include comments from the Welsh Government and equalities groups. In finalising the LTP, the monitoring and evaluation plan will be reviewed in light of the comments received.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>The LTP’s monitoring and evaluation plan to be reviewed following comments received through the consultation process (including those from equality/disability groups). Detail of relevant comments that were received about monitoring and evaluation are included in the LTP Consultation Report.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Have any support / guidance / training requirements been identified? <i>(Has the EIA or consultation process shown a need for awareness raising amongst staff, or identified the need for Equality training of some sort?)</i></p> <p>Comments were received from equalities groups during the consultation about</p>

	<p>the need for training. Specific comments from Sight Cymru were ‘training for staff in how to best support travellers with disabilities is vital’ and ‘extensive training at every level would enable staff to understand the wider implications of accessibility’. A comment from Disability Wales was that ‘staff training such as disability equality training would go a long way to assist implementation of increasing safe behaviour awareness amongst staff and travellers’. These comments particularly refer to those working within the public transport sector i.e. for bus companies, at rail stations etc. However consideration should be given to equalities training for LA officers involved in the development and implementation of the LTP.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <p>Consider the benefits of equalities training for LA officers involved in the development and implementation of the LTP.</p>

<p>10.</p>	<p>What wider use will you make of this Equality Impact Assessment? <i>(What use will you make of this document i.e. as a consultation response, appendix to approval reports, publicity etc. in addition to the mandatory action shown below?)</i></p> <p>This report will be an appendix to the Local Transport Plan Scrutiny/ Cabinet report. The EIA will be a supporting document to the LTP itself. This EIA and the responses received from equalities groups during the consultation will be considered during the delivery of the LTP.</p>
	<p><u>Actions required</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIA will be attached to the committee report as an appendix. • EIA, when completed, to be returned to equalities@caerphilly.gov.uk for publishing on the Council's website.

Completed By:	Gemma Thomas
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Date:	24.11.14
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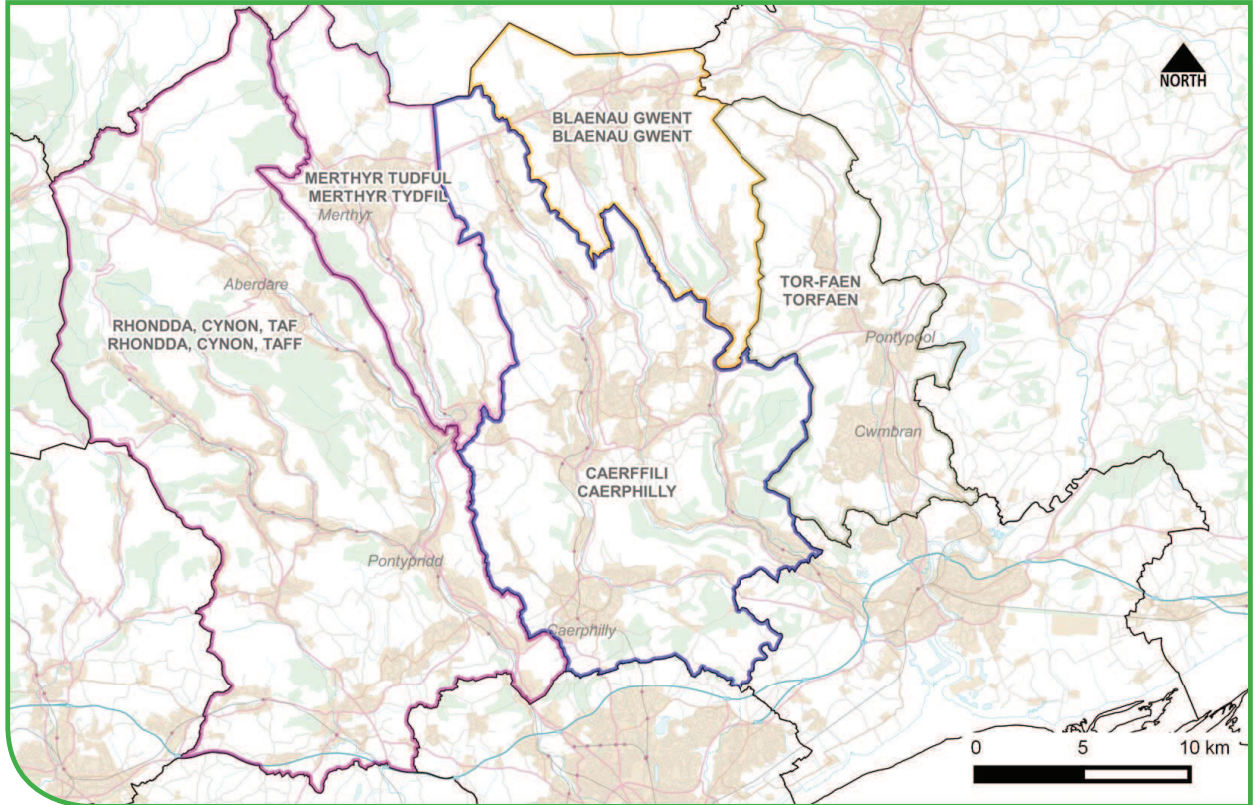
Position:	Principal Engineer – Transport Strategy and Road Safety
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Name of Head of Service:	Terry Shaw
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South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan Consultation Draft

October 2014



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South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan

Local Authority Names	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council• Caerphilly County Borough Council• Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council• Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council• Torfaen County Borough Council
Lead Contact	Roger Waters, Head of Service – Highways, Transportation and Strategic Projects, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Telephone	01443 494702
Email	Roger.J.Waters@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview – Transport in the Cardiff Capital Region

The Capital Region comprises a population of over 1.4 million and extends beyond the administrative boundary of Cardiff to include the following unitary authorities - Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Capital Region is committed to a low carbon future, which has a transport network and mobility culture that positively contributes to a thriving economy and the health and wellbeing of its citizens, and where sustainable travel is the option of choice. To achieve this, the Capital Region requires policies and measures to address the current environmental, social and economic challenges. In particular, an estimated 24% increase in Cardiff's population during the next 25 years will result in a 32% net increase in traffic levels and a 20% increase in the number of residents commuting to work. This can be contrasted with the disparities in income, health and economic activity that exist in the northern parts of the Capital Region.

Tens of thousands of journeys start and finish in the Capital Region every day, presenting a huge and diverse challenge to meet the many competing transport demands. Although central Cardiff presents the single most concentrated location for these journeys, it is recognised that a large number of movements also take place across the Capital Region, and for a wide range of purposes.

The new Local Transport Plans for the region will therefore need to recognise the diverse economic and social geography, and overlapping labour and housing markets that exist. These Plans need a collaborative approach for the future development of the Capital Region's transport needs to help deliver enhanced

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mobility for both residents and visitors and greater accessibility to jobs and services, thereby unlocking the potential for sustainable economic growth.

Across the Capital Region, efficient and effective transport networks are critical to the success of achieving the Welsh Government's Programme for Government Priority Areas such as targeted investment, supporting economic growth, reducing economic inactivity, tackling poverty and encouraging safer, healthier and sustainable travel. This can be done by:

- Providing new transport capacity to cope with future demand
- Improving accessibility and connectivity, and reducing journey times between key settlements within South East Wales
- Improving access to a wider range of job opportunities by increasing the coverage of public transport, particularly for cross-valley journeys
- Expanding the effective labour market catchment for businesses, enabling local companies to recruit from a wider skills base
- Supporting the growth of business clusters in the larger urban centres (for example, around the designated Enterprise Zones), helping to stimulate competition and innovation
- Ensuring that additional travel demand does not impose costs on businesses through increased congestion and crowding
- Enhancing facilities that support our key airport, ports and freight terminals

Realising the Welsh Government's metro vision for the Capital Region for a multi-modal rapid transit network integrating all transport modes, offering the passenger a single ticket 'turn up and go' experience, is vital to delivering these transport objectives.

All local authorities in the Capital region are committed to the delivery of this vision and will fully support and engage with Welsh Government and the Cardiff Capital Region Board in this enterprise.

1.2 Local Transport Plan coverage and period

The 5 South East Wales Valleys local authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen have jointly developed this Local Transport Plan (LTP). The area covered by this LTP is shown in Figure 1. The local authorities have worked closely together to identify the issues and opportunities for transport in the South East Wales Valleys area.

Many of the issues identified in this LTP are common to the 5 South East (SE) Wales Valleys local authorities. The area as a whole is faced with challenges of regeneration in the north and pressures of development in the south. Transport has a key role to play in achieving the economic, social and environmental

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objectives and in reducing disparities across the SE Wales Valleys area. The connections to the wider Cardiff Capital Region, particularly Cardiff, Newport and the M4 corridor, will be crucial to the successful future of the SE Wales Valleys area. Similarly the successful future of the Cardiff Capital Region will be dependent on the growth and sustainable development of the SE Wales Valleys area.

In line with the Welsh Government's LTP guidance, the LTP focuses on those transport improvements that lie within the remit of the local authorities. However the LTP also emphasises the close links to those schemes that lie within the remit of the Welsh Government, including improvements to the rail network and trunk roads. The wider transport infrastructure improvements delivered through the Welsh Government's National Transport Plan and the Metro programme will be crucial if significant progress towards the Programme for Government outcomes is to be realised.

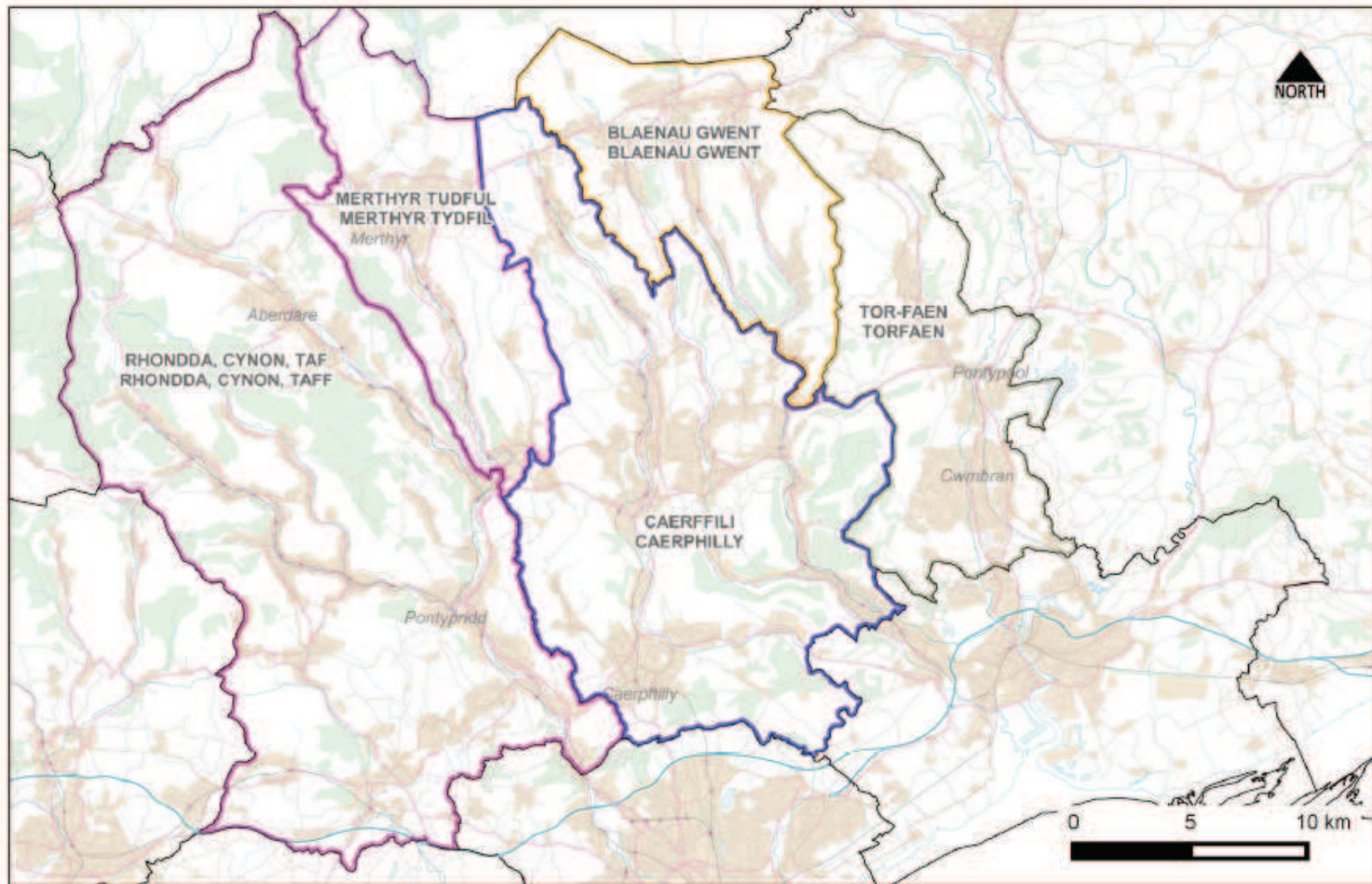
The LTP sets down the vision and objectives for transport in the SE Wales Valleys area and provides a short and long term programme of interventions to work towards achieving these goals. The short-term programme sets down those schemes that are priorities for the next 5 years up to 2020. The longer-term programme identifies aspirations up to 2030.

The LTP programme provides details of the transport schemes and aspirations of the SE Wales Valleys local authorities at the current time. However the landscape of transport investment is changing and it is important that the LTP programme is able to evolve over time as the delivery of the National Transport Plan, Metro programme and Active Travel Act progress. This will ensure that the aspirations in the LTP are closely aligned to the priorities of these wider programmes and ensure maximum benefit is achieved from transport interventions delivered across the Cardiff Capital Region.

A Glossary of Terms used throughout this LTP is included as Appendix 1.

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Figure 1 – Area covered by the South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan



© Ordnance Survey Open Data

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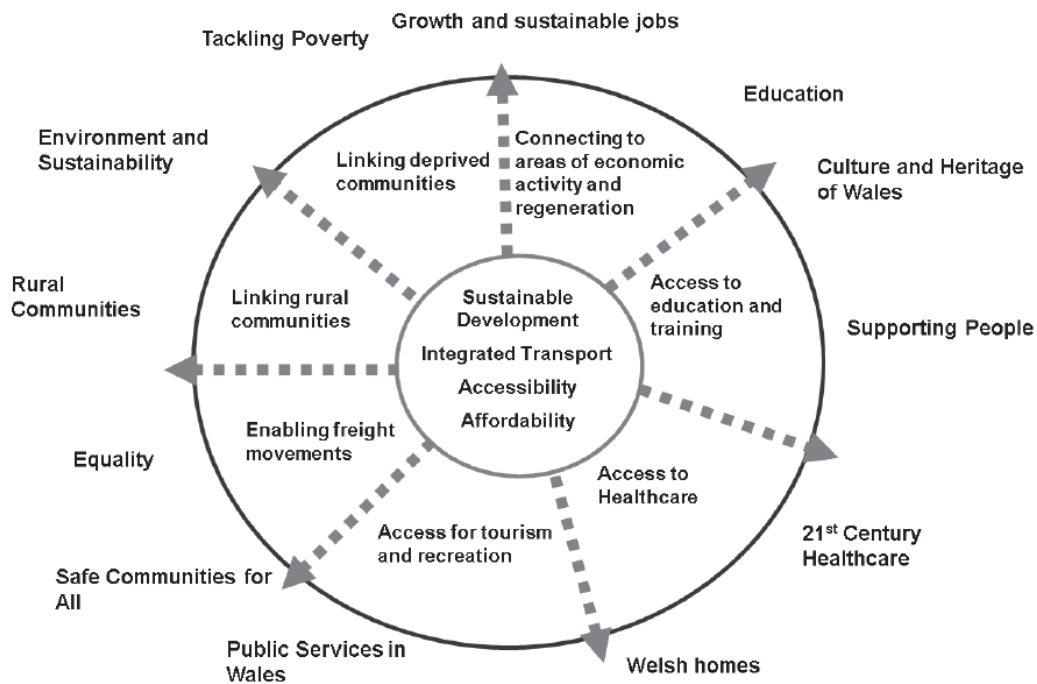
1.3 Links to Welsh Government Priorities

The development of the Local Transport Plan has been influenced by a range of plans, policies and strategies at the national, regional and local levels. There is a suite of strategic documents providing direction at each of these levels. This section details how the LTP links to and is guided by the key Welsh Government priorities that will influence the future of transport in the SE Wales Valleys. The LTP brings a local and sub-regional focus to the implementation of these Welsh Government priorities.

1.3.1 Programme for Government

The LTP sets down how transport in the SE Wales Valleys area will deliver the Programme for Government outcomes with a focus on maximising the benefits from future transport improvements in Wales (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Transport Links to Programme for Government Priority Areas



This Local Transport Plan focuses on targeting investment in transport that will support the following Welsh Government priority areas:

- Support economic growth and safeguard jobs across Wales, but with a particular focus on the City Regions, Enterprise Zones and local growth zones
- Reduce economic inactivity by delivering safe and affordable access to employment sites across Wales
- Maximise the contribution that effective and affordable transport services can make to tackling poverty and target investment to support improvements in accessibility for the most disadvantaged communities
- Encourage, safer, healthier and sustainable travel

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1.3.2 Wales Spatial Plan (2008)

A key theme of the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) is 'Achieving Sustainable Accessibility'. The Plan sets out area strategies for spatial areas within Wales, including one for SE Wales – The Capital Region. The vision for this area is 'An innovative skilled area offering a high quality of life – international yet distinctively Welsh. It will compete internationally by increasing its global visibility through stronger links between the Valleys and the coast and with the UK and Europe, helping to spread the prosperity within the area and benefiting other parts of Wales.'

The WSP recognises that a fully integrated, high quality transport system is necessary for this to happen. The vision sees South East Wales as a 'networked city region' of strong, sustainable and interdependent communities spreading the prosperity of Cardiff and Newport to the neighbouring valleys. The strategy envisages that new development will be focused on 14 key settlements in SE Wales with growth being distributed evenly to avoid overdevelopment in the south and support the regeneration and viability of key settlements outside the main cities.

1.3.3 Wales Transport Strategy (2008)

The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) is the key transport policy document of the Welsh Government and established the framework for creating an integrated transport system for Wales. It set out that joining together proposals for road, rail and public transport will enable people and freight to travel more efficiently and sustainably, whilst being able to access the goods, markets, services, facilities and places they need. The WTS has identified 5 over-arching priorities that provide additional strategic direction for work towards its 17 long-term outcomes. These are:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts
- Integrating local transport
- Improving access between key settlements and sites
- Enhancing international connectivity
- Increasing safety and security

1.3.4 National Transport Plan (2010, updated 2011)

The National Transport Plan (NTP) will sit alongside the LTP in delivering the aims and outcomes of the Wales Transport Strategy. The NTP sets out Welsh Government interventions to deliver the aspects of transport policy for which it is responsible. It sets out proposals to deliver a transport system as integrated as possible and to ensure the transport system is used efficiently and sustainably. The NTP reflects a balanced approach to the development of the transport network, recognising that it must continue to support economic growth and promote social inclusion, while playing its full part in tackling climate change.

The current NTP sets out a programme of action up to 2015 with a focus on strategic corridors. The NTP is supported by the Wales Rail Forward Programme and the Wales Trunk Road Programme, both approved in 2008.

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The next NTP is expected to commence in April 2015 and will strongly influence the future development of this LTP.

1.3.5 Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) aims to make active travel the most attractive option for shorter journeys. The Act requires local authorities in Wales to produce active travel maps and deliver year on year improvements in active travel routes and facilities. It requires highways authorities in Wales to make enhancements to routes and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in all new road schemes and to have regard to the needs of walkers and cyclists in a range of other highway authority functions. It also requires the Welsh Ministers and local authorities to promote active travel journeys in exercising their functions under this Act.

Key policy objectives include:

- Making it safer to walk and cycle
- Making it easier to walk and cycle
- Creating an active travel culture
- Walking and cycling for all
- Monitoring progress and evaluating delivery

1.3.6 Report of the Bus Policy Advisory Group (2014)

The Bus Policy Advisory Group report put forward 29 recommendations to the Welsh Government for improving bus services in Wales. The report includes recommendations for action by the Welsh Government, local authorities, bus operators and other organisations to work more closely to organise and integrate bus services more effectively. This LTP supports the recommendations of Bus Policy Advisory Group report in order to improve bus services in the SE Wales Valleys. The recommendations would have a positive impact on many of the issues identified in this LTP and would maximise the benefits of bus infrastructure improvement schemes.

1.3.7 Cardiff Capital Region Metro (2014 update)

The Cardiff Capital Region Metro vision is for a multi-modal rapid transit network integrating all transport modes, offering the passenger a single ticket, 'turn up and go' experience. The aspiration is that Metro will 'deliver a network where interchange is straightforward using vehicles that are designed for speed and capacity and where stations provide better passenger facilities and become a focal point for their communities.' The network will provide integrated, reliable and frequent services that allow people to move easily across the region.

The strategic vision for the Metro is being taken forward by the Cardiff Capital Region Board and will be considered as part of the development of the broader approach to economic development in the region. The Metro is therefore closely interlinked with the emerging Cardiff Capital Region and is

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seen as an opportunity to physically embody the city region concept and deliver economic benefits across all of SE Wales.

Half the population of Wales, 1.49 Million people, live within 20 miles of the centre of Cardiff. In order to secure the benefits of this critical mass, SE Wales needs to operate as a cohesive city region. This is especially relevant given that, globally, cities are increasingly becoming the dominant engines of both economic activity and societal change. City regions can deliver three main economic benefits:

- Larger and more efficient labour markets,
- Larger potential market for goods and services, and
- A greater exchange of knowledge through agglomeration of businesses and services.

The Cardiff Capital Region Metro will provide enhanced connectivity helping to spread economic growth and prosperity across the region. This will be achieved through e.g. greater connectivity to Cardiff's prime markets for labour, outsourcing of services from the centre to the sub-region and the increased attractiveness of regional living and commuting.

The future development and delivery of the Cardiff Capital Regional Metro will need to be closely linked to the development and delivery of this LTP. The Metro will have a key impact on the combined success of transport interventions delivered at the national and local levels in addressing the issues identified in this LTP.

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1.4 Review of Regional Transport Plan and Studies

1.4.1 Background to the Regional Transport Plan

The South East Wales Regional Transport Plan (RTP) has been a key document in the development of this LTP. The South East Wales RTP was published in March 2010. It was developed in collaboration by the ten constituent councils of Sewta and provided a long-term strategy for transport in South East Wales up to 2025.

The RTP set out the key issues, problems and opportunities within South East Wales and these were the focus of activity of the RTP. The development of the SE Wales Valleys LTP has included a review of the problems and opportunities detailed in the RTP. Those issues that are applicable to the SE Wales Valleys area have been identified within Section 2 of this LTP and continue to be the areas to focus future transport investment. Although the focus of the LTP is on those issues of most relevance to the 5 SE Wales Valleys local authorities, it is important that wider issues affecting the other local authorities within South East Wales are also addressed through the relevant LTPs in order to maximise the opportunities of the wider Capital Region.

1.4.2 Vision and Objectives of the Regional Transport Plan

The vision, wider goals and objectives of the RTP set down the long-term aspirations for transport in South East Wales. The RTP recognised that a long-term programme of transport interventions and improvements would be required in order to make significant progress towards the vision and objectives of the RTP.

In the 5 years since the RTP was published, a number of transport projects in the SE Wales Valleys area have been successfully delivered in line with the available levels of funding. However there is much more to be done to continue to tackle the key transport issues and to work towards the objectives set down in the RTP. As such, in 2015, the vision and objectives of the RTP remain current, remain aspirational and remain applicable to the 5 SE Wales Valleys local authorities as they do to the South East Wales region as a whole.

The vision, goals and objectives identified in the RTP will continue to be core to the direction of this LTP. They will be taken forward as the vision, goals and objectives of the SE Wales Valleys LTP and are set down in section 2.

1.4.3 Regional Transport Plan preferred strategy

The RTP identified a number of specific core activities and interventions as being critical to achieving its vision. These remain current to this SE Wales Valleys LTP and will continue to form the basis of the programme of schemes and aspirations that are set down in Sections 3 and 4.

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The core activities and interventions and details of their role in the delivery of the SE Wales Valleys LTP are as follows:

- **Developing innovative walking, cycling and Smarter Choices programmes**

The programme of active travel interventions detailed in this LTP will deliver schemes to join up and enhance the active travel network in the SE Wales Valleys area. The future programme will build on the investment in active travel achieved in recent years through the RTP, Safe Routes in Communities and the European funding programmes.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 will require the identification of a range of new active travel infrastructure improvements across the SE Wales Valleys area. As such the LTP programme of active travel schemes will need to be updated at the appropriate time to capture those additional improvements identified.

Continued investment in active travel has the opportunity to make a real difference to people's travel choices and will have positive benefits to the health and wellbeing of the population of the SE Wales Valleys. Investment in active travel routes and expansion of the network of cycle routes across the SE Wales Valleys area also has an important role to play in enhancing the attractiveness of the area as a key tourism destination in the Capital Region. This will build upon recent investment through the Valleys Regional Park programme.

Smarter Choices initiatives will also be important in increasing levels of active travel and in realising the goal of the Active Travel Act. Activities to promote active travel infrastructure that is delivered across the area will be important to encourage sustained usage of the new facilities. Travel planning will also play an important role in encouraging more sustainable and active forms of travel for everyday journeys.

- **Continuing investment in the regional rail system**

Future improvements to the regional rail system are the responsibility of the Welsh Government and Network Rail and lie outside the remit of the 5 SE Wales Valleys local authorities. Rail schemes are therefore not included in the future programme of schemes in line with the LTP guidance. However future rail investment through the National Transport Plan and the Metro programme will be crucial in achieving the vision and objectives of the LTP and the outcomes of the Programme of Government.

Appendix 2 of the LTP lists those rail interventions that are considered key to the future development of the SE Wales Valleys area in addition to the planned Valleys Line Electrification programme. The SE Wales Valleys local authorities would welcome the opportunity to work in partnership with the Welsh Government to progress the priorities for rail investment across the area.

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- **Improving the quality of bus services across the region**

Improving the quality of public transport, and in particular local bus services, will widen the travel choice of local residents in the SE Wales Valleys by giving them a viable alternative to the private car for certain regular journeys. For those residents without access to a car, buses are often the only realistic travel option for journeys to work, to the shops or to local hospitals and surgeries. As journeys to work by car account for a 85% modal share in the SE Wales Valleys** more can be done to encourage residents to travel to work by bus and assist in reducing congestion.

Working closely with the bus operators to plan and deliver service improvements, the local authorities in the South East Wales Valleys have identified schemes in this LTP that will reduce delays to bus services at critical locations by either giving buses priority over other traffic (for example, through the construction of bus lanes) or by improving the general flow of traffic (for example, by remodelling a busy road junction).

A proportion of the existing network is subsidised by the local authorities as part of their statutory duty to support local bus services that are deemed to be socially necessary, but are not commercially viable. These services play a not insignificant role in tackling social exclusion however recent reductions in the level of funding provided by the Welsh Government has led to a number of services being cut.

In addition, a number of community organisations provide door-to-door, accessible transport services for residents who are not able to use the mainstream local bus services, for reasons of a mobility impairment and/or because they are living a considerable distance away from their nearest bus route. These services play an important part in tackling social exclusion and can provide a feeder role by offering connections and interchange with the mainstream local bus services, thereby widening the journey opportunities for users.

*** Statistics for Wales Bulletin 2011 (Welsh Government)*

- **Developing better public transport integration**

Improved interchange with and between modes of transport is crucial to increasing the attractiveness of sustainable and active modes of travel. Investment through the RTP in recent years has enabled bus interchange improvements, rail park and ride facilities and improved active travel links to public transport interchanges to be delivered. The LTP takes forward this strategy for investment and identifies a number of interchange improvements in the SE Wales Valleys area.

During the delivery of the RTP, the SE Wales local authorities were responsible for the delivery of rail park and ride schemes. It is acknowledged that rail schemes now lie outside the remit of local authorities. However due to the nature and complexities of rail park and ride schemes, the responsibilities

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for delivery are not always straightforward. For example a rail park and ride proposal may be on land that is within the ownership of the local authority and may not be located directly adjacent to the rail infrastructure. It is unclear whether such schemes lie within the remit of the local authority or the Welsh Government. As such, and for completeness, this LTP has included rail park and ride schemes within its future programme.

In addition to capital infrastructure, improvements to public transport ticketing and information have an important role to play in encouraging interchange within and between modes of transport. The LTP programme includes such measures that focus on making public transport easier to use and reducing barriers to sustainable travel.

- **Making better use of the regional road system**

The highway network across the SE Wales Valleys area is under significant pressure from traffic in places with congestion occurring during the peak periods and at local hotspots. Highway investment during the delivery of the RTP has been focussed on making best use of the existing highway network. This strategy emphasised the importance of improving journey time reliability, reducing congestion and keeping traffic moving on the strategic network.

The aims of improving the efficiency and reliability of the highway network will continue to be a key feature to this LTP and will have economic, environmental and social benefits. Adding additional road capacity is an important option to consider either in relation to specific locations or where there are gaps in the highway network. Also making better use of the existing highway through a range of measures such as demand management, land use and spatial planning, behavioural change and new technology, can be effective in improving journey time reliability and traffic flows, reducing congestion and improving air quality and road safety.

Key problem areas on the strategic road network identified in the RTP will continue to be priorities for improvement in this plan. This LTP also includes proposals for highway improvement schemes that are important to the SE Wales Valleys area in terms of regeneration and improving the resilience of the existing highway network.

1.4.4 RTP Programme

Based on these core activities and interventions, the RTP set down a 5-year and longer-term programme of transport investment for the region. The development of the LTP has involved a review of the RTP's future programme of schemes. Those schemes that are yet to be delivered and remain a priority for transport in the SE Wales Valleys area have been brought forward into this LTP. This future programme of schemes and aspirations are included in Sections 3 and 4 of this LTP.

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1.4.5 Regional Studies since the Regional Transport Plan

The development of the LTP has also taken into account a number of regional studies that have been completed since the RTP was published in 2010. These studies were used to inform the evolving RTP capital programme following the publication of the RTP up until the end of the Regional Transport Consortia Grant in March 2014. The LTP programme therefore also includes schemes and interventions that have become priorities in the years following the publication of the RTP. The development of the LTP has incorporated a review of the following regional studies:

- **Sewta Highways Making Better Use Study (February 2011)** – Identified a shortlist of small-scale junction improvement schemes to improve the functioning of the strategic highway network.
- **Bus/ Rail Integration Study (May 2012)** – Recommendations for improving interchange and integration between public transport modes.
- **Sewta Rail Strategy 2013 (February 2013)** – Recommendations for future rail investment in the South East Wales region.
- **South East Wales Integrated Task Force Report (March 2013)** – Long-term recommendations for the delivery of a sustainable, modern, integrated public transport system across South East Wales.
- **Sewta Interchange Walking, Cycling and Signage Audit (July 2013)** – Recommendations for pedestrian and cyclist facilities and signage improvements at key public transport interchanges across South East Wales.
- **Sewta Bus and Community Transport Regional Network Strategy (January 2014)** – Sets out proposals to further develop bus and community transport provision across the region over the next 5 years.
- **South East Wales Regional Bus Infrastructure and Corridor Investment Strategy (May 2014)** – Recommended programme of investment to improve the operation of the bus network along a number of key corridors in South East Wales.

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1.5 Review of Other Policies and Plans

1.5.1 Links to Local Authority Policy and Plans

The preparation of this LTP has also been informed by the 5 SE Wales local authorities' own plans, policies and strategies that relate not only to transport, but the wider local agenda.

- **Single Integrated Plan (SIP)** – Replaces a number of different partnership plans that were previously produced, including the Community Strategy, Children and Young Peoples Plan, Health Social Care and Well Being Strategy, Community Safety Plan and Local Housing Strategy. The SIP has been produced by an overarching partnership of organisations in the public and voluntary sectors within each authority in the SE Wales Valleys area including the Local Health Boards and the Police. Covering themes such as health, safety and prosperity, various goals and targets have been set with the aim of improving the quality of life for local people. These are closely aligned to the Welsh Government's 'Programme for Government Priority Areas'.
- **Local Development Plan (LDP)** – The LDP is the statutory framework for the development and use of land within each of the local authority areas. The LDPs set out each authority's objectives and priorities relating to the development and use of land within their areas and the policies and proposals for implementing them. The unitary structure of the five authorities in the SE Wales Valleys LTP area has lent itself to a better spatial relationship between land-use planning and transport, which can achieve more sustainable development over the longer term. There are close links between the transport priorities within this LTP and the individual LDPs across the SE Wales Valleys area.
- **Corporate Plan** – Updated each year to take account of the programme of public sector reforms being implemented by the Welsh Government, the financial position of the public sector and the drive to increasingly involve communities in the decision making process and influence service delivery. The Corporate Plan of each local authority in the SE Wales Valleys area is an important strategic document that describes the challenges facing each authority as well as setting out the priorities agreed in partnership with local people and organisations.
- **Highway Asset Management Plan** – As the local highway authority, each authority in the SE Wales Valleys has direct responsibility and powers for the highways (excluding motorways and trunk roads) and associated structures within their area, such as bridges, footways and street lights. The Plan takes a strategic approach of identifying the optimal allocation of resources for the management, operation, preservation and enhancement of the highway infrastructure in order to meet the needs of current and future users of the transport network.

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- **Air Quality Action Plans** – The Environment Act 1995 placed a duty on local authorities to review and assess air quality in their areas in respect of seven key air pollutants which are known to be harmful to human health and the environment. This assessment may lead to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) being declared. At the current time, 14 AQMAs have been declared across the SE Wales Valleys area. Air Quality Action Plans are prepared by the relevant local authority, setting out the measures to address the particular air quality issues that have been identified in each AQMA. The main source of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the SE Wales Valleys is road traffic and concentration levels are often highest where there is severe traffic congestion, often accentuated by local topography and urban layout. Consequently, the Air Quality Action Plans that have been produced in the SE Wales Valleys are relevant to this LTP as the measures for tackling nitrogen dioxide levels are often transport related.
- **Rights of Way Improvement Plan** – The Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000 requires every local authority to prepare and publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) for the management, provision and promotion of the public rights of way in their areas. The aims of each RoWIP are to extend the network and improve the connectivity of the routes, to improve accessibility for all users and to improve local awareness of the Public Rights of Way Network within each area. Public Rights of Way contribute to the wider transport network through providing recreational paths for use by those on foot, horseback or pedal cycle, thereby supporting a safe walking, riding or cycling environment.
- **Flood Risk Management Plan** – The SE Wales Valleys is one of the areas in the UK that has been identified as being at an increased risk of flooding during periods of severe inclement weather. As part of a European Union requirement, and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Environment Agency, each local authority is currently preparing a Flood Risk Management Plan. The aim of this document is to identify a hierarchy of locations across the network that are at risk of flooding from local sources such as surface water, ordinary water courses and groundwater courses. It is anticipated that the Flood Risk Management Plans of each local authority will be adopted by the end of December 2015.

1.5.2 Links to Wider Service Areas

Issues relating to transport and accessibility have close links to wider service areas. The key links are highlighted below. Better coordination between transport and these service areas will be crucial if a significant impact is to be made on changing long-term travel patterns and behaviours.

- **Planning**

Land use allocations through the planning process have a major bearing on travel demand. LDP proposals will have a key impact on future travel patterns e.g. they can set down a pattern of land use that reduces the need to travel

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and maximises the potential for sustainable transport infrastructure. Development control processes also play a key role in securing developer contributions towards improvements to the transport network, ensuring appropriate and sustainable transport infrastructure is provided to support new developments and that all significant development proposals are accompanied by effective travel plans.

In order to address the transport issues identified in this LTP, planning decisions made at the national and local levels will be key to ensure e.g. accessibility is a primary consideration in determining the location of future major sites of employment and key services, and that they are located in areas that minimise car travel and are accessible by sustainable transport modes.

- **Health**

The link between car dependency and the health problems created by sedentary lifestyles is now widely accepted. Such trends have serious long-term implications for the health of the population in the SE Wales Valleys area and will impact significantly on future NHS budgets. There are clear social and economic benefits across service areas for reducing levels of car use and encouraging greater levels of active travel.

Health facilities within the SE Wales Valleys area are largely provided and administered by the Aneurin Bevan and Cwm Taf Local Health Boards. In recognition of the area's significant health inequalities, growing and ageing population, and in response to the Welsh Government's five year 'Together for Health' strategy, consideration is being given to new ways of providing healthcare. Part of the vision for healthcare in the SE Wales Valleys area includes improving the health of the population and ensuring sustainable access to high quality, patient-centred services, both of which are closely aligned to the strategic goals in this LTP. However conversely, the centralisation of healthcare facilities, due to economies of scale, can lead to the need to travel greater distances to facilities and often impacts negatively on the accessibility of services, especially for those without access to a car.

The South Wales Health and Transport Accessibility Group has been established to consider the patient and transport implications arising from actual and proposed changes to hospital services. This will provide an opportunity for improved coordination between service areas and there is the potential for the recommendations and proposals put forward by the group to be implemented through the SE Wales Valleys LTP.

- **Education**

It has been widely reported that around 20% of peak time congestion is created by 'school run' traffic in the UK. Larger schools and colleges are major trip generators and traffic problems around school sites are often a cause of community concern. The accessibility of educational establishments will often

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have a major bearing on how pupils and parents choose to travel to school and college.

The well-established Safe Routes in Communities programme provides a means of improving routes to schools to encourage greater levels of sustainable and active travel. School Travel Plans also play an important role in encouraging a change in travel behaviour from a young age. Such links across service areas will continue to be important. However it is the future location of schools and colleges that could have the greatest impact on journey patterns and travel modes. The 21st Century Schools programme will alter travel patterns within and between communities and there will need to be close links with the programme to ensure that transport and accessibility requirements are a key consideration in future proposals.

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2. Issues, Opportunities and Interventions

As detailed in 1.4.2, this LTP takes forward the vision, goals and objectives of the South East Wales RTP. The LTP objectives will guide the direction of LTP activity and provide direct links between the issues affecting the SE Wales Valleys area and the outcomes that the LTP is striving to achieve. The vision, goals and objectives of the SE Wales Valleys LTP are as follows:

2.1 Vision of the Local Transport Plan

The vision for the SE Wales Valleys LTP provides a focus and motivation for the 5 local authorities of the Eastern Valleys LTP.

A modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system for the SE Wales Valleys and beyond which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling, public transport and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives.

2.2 Wider Goals of the Local Transport Plan

Transport plays a key role in shaping daily lives. It affects and is affected by a number of other government policies, especially those on economic development, social inclusion and equality, and the environment. In order to positively contribute to delivering these wider transport government policies this LTP aims to:

- Develop the economy, through improving connectivity for business and freight, making transport more effective and efficient, providing access to employment, education, shopping and leisure, and improving transport integration;
- Promote social inclusion and equality, by providing a transport system that is safe, accessible, and affordable to all sections of the community; and
- Protect the environment, by minimising transport emissions and consumption of resources and energy, by promoting walking, cycling, quality public transport, modal shift and minimising demand on the transport system.

Due to the nature and importance of the transport system to individuals and society as a whole, these wider goals are closely interlinked. Efforts to improve connectivity and accessibility and encourage higher levels of sustainable and active travel will have positive benefits across economic, social and environmental policy areas.

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2.3 Objectives of the Local Transport Plan

The LTP objectives build on the vision and are long-term (20+ years) objectives for transport in the SE Wales Valleys area. The 13 objectives detailed below set the direction of the LTP and form the basis for activity in addressing the area's transport issues.

Safety and Security

- 1 To reduce the number and severity of road traffic casualties.
- 2 To improve actual and perceived level of personal security when travelling.

Connectivity and Accessibility

- 3 To improve access for all to employment opportunities, services, healthcare, education, tourism and leisure facilities.
- 4 To improve connectivity by sustainable transport between the SE Wales Valleys and the rest of Wales, the UK and Europe.

Quality and Efficiency

- 5 To improve interchange within and between modes of transport.
- 6 To improve the quality, efficiency and reliability of the transport system.
- 7 To reduce traffic growth, traffic congestion and to make better use of the existing road system.

Environment

- 8 To achieve a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport for moving people and freight.
- 9 To reduce significantly carbon emissions from transport.
- 10 To reduce the impact of the transport system on the local street scene and the natural, built and historic environment.
- 11 To promote sustainable travel and to make the public more aware of the consequences of their travel choices on climate, the environment and health.

Land Use and Regeneration

- 12 To ensure developments in the SE Wales Valleys are accessible by sustainable transport
- 13 To make sustainable transport and travel planning an integral component of regeneration schemes

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2.4 Analysis of Issues, Opportunities and Interventions

The LTP has involved an analysis of issues and opportunities affecting the SE Wales Valleys area. Table 1 below summarises all issues, opportunities and interventions identified. This table includes the 14 issues and opportunities identified by Welsh Government in the LTP guidance and an additional 6 issues and opportunities identified as being relevant to the SE Wales Valleys area.

In line with the LTP guidance, the table below does not identify interventions that are not within the local authorities' remit i.e. those relating to the rail network or trunk roads. However it is felt that the future rail programme in particular has a key role to play in targeting many of the issues and opportunities identified. Appendix 2 sets down the key improvements to the rail network within the SE Wales Valleys area that it is felt would contribute to targeting the identified issues and opportunities. Delivery of the LTP programme alongside the future rail programme will maximise the impact of transport infrastructure investment.

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Table 1 – Issues, Opportunities and Interventions in the South East Wales Valleys area

Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
1	Existing and planned out of centre employment sites may be poorly served by public transport Example: Rassau Industrial Estate, Ebbw Vale, is not served by public transport	Bus network maps and timetable information	Improved access to jobs	Improve public transport infrastructure and services Improve access to complementary facilities such as park and ride and the active travel network Develop innovative transport schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport • Active Travel schemes • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes
2	Lack of evening and weekend bus provision leads to difficulties in accessing employment opportunities and reliance on the private car Example: Hirwaun Industrial Estate has a 75% reduction in bus frequency during the evenings	Bus timetable information	Increased take up of active and sustainable travel Improved access to jobs and services	Improve public transport infrastructure and services Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage Extend access to park and ride opportunities Increase opportunities for active travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community and demand responsive transport, taxis • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes • Active travel schemes

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
3	<p>Bus access to existing and emerging employment sites requires interchange and multiple operator trips making journeys more complex and less attractive</p> <p>Example: A 10-mile journey from Risca to the employment sites at Tredomen requires a ticket to be purchased from 2 different bus operators</p>	<p>Bus network information and timetable data</p>	<p>Improved access to jobs</p> <p>Easy to use public transport services</p> <p>Integrated ticketing</p>	<p>Work with operators to deliver simplified ticketing arrangements</p> <p>Improve public transport information</p> <p>Contribute to the development of integrated ticketing</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and enhance existing bus stop and interchange facilities • Simplify ticketing structures through integrated ticketing • Introduce easier to understand fares e.g. through a Fair Fares pilot • Incentivise operators to become part of the Network Rider product and schemes such as Plusbus
4	<p>People without access to a car may be excluded from accessing some job and leisure opportunities</p> <p>Example: The '% households with no car or van' in each of the 5 LAs is higher than the Wales average of 22.9%. Highest is Merthyr with 29.7% and lowest is Torfaen with 23.6% (Census 2011)</p>	<p>Multiple Index of Deprivation</p> <p>Car ownership data</p>	<p>Bus services that enable communities to access employment/ services</p> <p>Improved non-car travel opportunities between communities, employment and healthcare sites</p>	<p>Improved public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Incentivise bus operators to expand local networks and coverage • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community and demand responsive transport, taxis • Active Travel schemes linkin

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
5	<p>Dispersed settlement patterns have implications for accessibility and access to key services, consequently there is greater dependence on the private car</p> <p>Example: Due to the linear nature of valleys communities, north-south transport links are better than east-west links across the area</p>	<p>Census data</p> <p>Mode share data</p>	<p>Improved access to jobs and services by sustainable and active travel</p>	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport • Active Travel schemes • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes
6	<p>Changes in locations of key services such as health are likely to increase car travel and may isolate some communities</p> <p>Example: The relocation of healthcare services, e.g. the hospital Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr in Ystrad Mynach, leads to changes in travel patterns and behaviours</p>	<p>NHS consolidation</p> <p>Rail and bus network plans and timetable information</p>	<p>Improved access to jobs and services by sustainable and active travel.</p>	<p>Improved public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p> <p>Better coordination with Local Health Boards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport • Active Travel schemes • Workplace and visitor travel plans

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
7	<p>Lack of available affordable transport for some communities. Need to tackle the problems many people encounter in accessing work, education and healthcare</p> <p>Example: Reduction in Bus Services Support Grant is resulting in higher fares across the SE Wales Valleys area.</p>	Rail and bus network plans, timetable and fare information	Affordable access to jobs, services and education	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network/ offer discounted travel • Smart cards and easier to understand fare structures • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport • Active Travel schemes
8	<p>A high proportion of commuter trips are less than 5km and could potentially be undertaken by active travel modes</p> <p>Example: 27% of commuting journeys in RCT are under 5kms (2011 Census)</p>	Travel to Work data	Improved access by active travel modes	<p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p> <p>Improve active travel-related facilities at employment sites e.g. cycle shelters, changing facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel schemes • Workplace and visitor travel plans

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
9	<p>Declining population can result in withdrawal of local services, reducing access to key services resulting in further depopulation</p> <p>Example: Deprived areas in the SE Wales Valleys area characterised by high levels of unemployment, social deprivation and population loss – 25% of Merthyr's and 23% of Blaenau Gwent's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are in the most deprived 10% of all Welsh LSOAs.</p>	<p>Population decline in some areas</p> <p>Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011</p>	Improved access to key services	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport • Active Travel schemes
10	<p>Opportunities to increase mode share of public transport and active travel</p> <p>Example: Only 4.3% of adults in RCT walk as their main mode of travel to work (2011 RTP Monitoring)</p>	<p>Census data</p> <p>Mode share data</p>	Increased opportunities to access employment in town centres by public transport and active travel	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure, information and services</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p> <p>Promote and encourage development of Travel Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Simplify ticketing structures through integrated ticketing • Smart cards and easier to understand fare structures • Active Travel schemes • School and workplace travel plans

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
11	<p>Increased need to travel and for longer distances to access job opportunities</p> <p>Example: In Caerphilly County Borough 50% of working residents commute out of the LA to work – the majority are commuting to Cardiff (12,900 people) and Newport (9,000) (Annual Population Survey 2012)</p>	<p>Employment growth areas not aligned with housing growth areas</p>	<p>Good public transport links to employment growth areas</p>	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange opportunities and access to park and ride</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes • Public transport interchange improvements • Active Travel schemes • Workplace Travel Plans • Highways Improvement schemes
12	<p>Increased congestion on strategic road network, increased journey times and reduced journey time reliability for the movement of people and goods</p> <p>Example: Across the region data shows key strategic highway junctions are operating at capacity at peak times</p>	<p>High proportion of journeys made by car</p> <p>Strategic highway network is congested</p>	<p>Reduced congestion, improved journey time reliability, greater resilience of the strategic road network</p> <p>Improved potential for travel by non-car modes for commuting and other purposes</p>	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange opportunities and access to park and ride</p> <p>Deliver improvements to 'make better use' of the strategic highway network</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes • Public transport interchange improvements • Active Travel schemes • Workplace Travel Plans • Highways Improvement schemes

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
13	<p>Provision for freight vehicles inadequate on a number of key strategic corridors</p> <p>Example: Renovation and strengthening of Victoria Bridge in Pontypridd Town Centre to ensure continued access for heavy vehicles</p>	Freight user groups	Improved access for freight	<p>Improved opportunities for freight parking</p> <p>Improved information provision to enable safe, reliable and sustainable deliveries to take place</p> <p>Reducing instances of freight vehicles diverting along unsuitable lower category roads</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess opportunities for improved freight parking • Highway Improvement schemes
14	<p>Lack of accessible and seamless ticketing hinders encouragement of modal shift and limits travel horizons, particularly for more deprived communities</p> <p>Example: Across the region user feedback suggests that fare structures and ticketing arrangements are complex and confusing</p>	Feedback from user groups	Seamless journeys and integrated ticketing	<p>Work with operators to deliver simplified ticketing arrangements</p> <p>Improve public transport information</p> <p>Contribute to the development of integrated ticketing</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and enhance existing bus stop and interchange facilities • Simplify ticketing structures through integrated ticketing • Introduce easier to understand fares e.g. through a Fair Fares pilot • Incentivise operators to become part of the Network Rider product and schemes such as Plusbus

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
A	<p>Transport is a major source of pollution that can impact on public health and welfare</p> <p>Example: In the SE Wales Valleys area, Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared in RCT (12 AQMAs) and Caerphilly (2 AQMAs), with traffic being the main source of pollutants</p>	Air Quality Management Areas	Reduction in the negative environmental impacts of transport e.g. visual, noise and air pollution	<p>Deliver improvements at key locations on the highway network to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion</p> <p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange opportunities and access to park and ride</p> <p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes • Public transport interchange improvements • Active Travel schemes • Workplace Travel Plans • Highways Improvement schemes
B	<p>Personal injury accidents resulting from travel on the highway</p> <p>Example: The number of casualties recorded in Caerphilly, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent has reduced by 36% during 2013 from the 2004-08 baseline average, compared with an all Wales reduction of 33%.</p>	WG casualty statistics	Reduction in casualties in line with WG road safety targets	<p>Deliver a combination of education and engineering road safety schemes</p> <p>Work with partners to deliver road safety interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road Safety Capital/ Accident remediation schemes • Road safety education and training initiatives

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
C	<p>Fears relating to personal safety and security when making journeys by public transport and active travel</p> <p>Example: 31% of women feel unsafe on public transport after dark (National Survey for Wales 2013/14)</p>	<p>User Feedback</p> <p>Crime statistics</p>	<p>A more attractive and secure transport network for all users</p>	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and interchanges to improve the perceived safety and security of users</p> <p>Consider vulnerable users in the design of schemes e.g. through appropriate lighting and CCTV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and enhance public transport interchange facilities • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes • Active Travel schemes
D	<p>Economic and social disparities between the northern and southern areas of the SE Wales Valleys</p> <p>Example: Heads of the Valleys area characterised by the highest levels of unemployment and social deprivation. Pressure for development and housing focussed in the southern areas of the SE Wales Valleys.</p>	<p>Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2011</p> <p>Census data</p> <p>LDPs</p>	<p>Reduction in disparities between areas</p> <p>Improved access to jobs and key services</p> <p>Regeneration of the Heads of the Valleys area</p>	<p>Improve public transport infrastructure and services</p> <p>Improve public transport interchange opportunities and access to park and ride</p> <p>Work with operators to increase public transport network coverage</p> <p>Increase opportunities for active travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Park and Ride/ Park and Share schemes • Public transport interchange improvements • Incentivise public transport operators to improve services/ expand network • Active Travel schemes • Highway Improvement schemes

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
E	<p>Congestion and traffic problems caused by the school run</p> <p>Example: Evidence from School Travel Plans across the region indicate increased problems of school gate congestion</p>	Increased congestion levels at start/end of school day	Reduce congestion and increase the number of pupils walking and cycling to school	<p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities e.g. improve active travel links to schools</p> <p>Promote and encourage development of Travel Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel schemes • School travel plans • Safe Routes in Communities schemes
F	<p>Inactive and car-based lifestyles leading to poor health</p> <p>Example: The % of the adult population classified as overweight or obese ranges from 62% to 64% across the SE Wales Valleys LAs, which is significantly higher than the Wales average. (Wales Health Survey 2012 and 2013)</p>	Wales Health Survey	Increase the number of journeys undertaken by active travel modes	<p>Promote and develop active travel opportunities e.g. to key employment, education and healthcare facilities and public transport interchanges</p> <p>Promote and encourage development of Travel Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel schemes • Improve and enhance public transport interchange facilities • School and workplace travel plans • Safe Routes in Communities schemes

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Ref	What is the Issue?	Evidence	What do we want to achieve? (Outcome)	How do we intend to achieve this? (High Level Intervention)	Action Required (Schemes)
G	<p>Lack of sustainable transport access to tourist destinations results in car travel being the dominant mode of travel of tourists</p> <p>Example: 91% of visitors to Big Pit in Torfaen travel by car (2012/13 figures)</p>	<p>High percentage of tourist trips are car based</p>	<p>Increase the number of journeys to tourist destinations by sustainable and active travel modes</p>	<p>Work with tourism organisations to develop and promote sustainable and transport opportunities</p> <p>Improve public transport and active links to tourist destinations</p> <p>Promote and encourage development of Travel Plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus infrastructure improvements/ corridor schemes • Improve and enhance public transport interchange facilities and information • Develop innovative flexible alternatives e.g. community transport, demand responsive transport • Active Travel schemes • Attraction-based travel plans

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3. Plan Period 2015 – 2020

The following section sets out each of the local authorities' priority areas for short-term capital transport investment for the period 2015 -2020. In line with the LTP guidance, the short-term priorities have been listed by each local authority in priority order. These priority schemes are detailed in tables 2 – 7 below. Each local authority has used its own method for prioritising schemes, but in each case there has been a focus on issues such as scheme deliverability and the potential of securing funding. The majority of schemes in this LTP, both short-term and longer-term priorities, will require funding for development and design prior to delivery on the ground.

3.1 Funding the LTP

The LTP guidance states that local authorities should be creative in seeking additional funding to support transport spending e.g. through their own resources, private sector financing, European Union funding or securing funding from beneficiaries. All opportunities for transport funding will be sought to support delivery of schemes within this LTP. This will include opportunities for match funding through e.g. developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

An important source of transport funding in recent years within the SE Wales Valleys area has been the European Union's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). This funding source has supported the delivery of a number of rail park and ride, bus interchange and active travel schemes across the area. The next round of ERDF funding has the potential to be a key source of funding to assist the delivery of this LTP. However the success of ERDF funding bids is dependent on the availability and assurance of match funding to support delivery of the project. Due to the lead in time required for the approval of ERDF funding bids, the SE Wales Valleys local authorities would welcome the opportunity to work with the Welsh Government to identify potential ERDF match funding opportunities.

The delivery of capital transport investment is a relatively short-term funding commitment but has longer-term implications for revenue funding. All the capital schemes within this LTP will require an ongoing revenue commitment from the local authorities. It will be for the local authorities to meet the revenue consequences of the capital investment, which is in line with the Welsh Government's LTP Guidance. Of those schemes detailed in the tables below, the individual local authorities in which the schemes are located will be responsible for the future revenue consequences of the capital infrastructure e.g. ongoing maintenance costs. However revenue funding from the Welsh Government will continue to be required to support e.g. non-commercial, socially necessary bus services and road safety education, training and publicity.

It should be noted that a significant part of the SE Wales Valleys LTP area is experiencing high levels of deprivation compounded by low levels of economic activity, house building and a declining population. A number of the potential funding sources that may be available to more affluent areas may not be available for this area. As such transport investment will continue to be dependent on the availability of Welsh Government grant funding to support scheme delivery.

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Table 2 – Short Term Programme (2015 – 2020) – South East Wales Valleys Area Schemes

The following 5 schemes are applicable across the SE Wales Valleys area. Specific schemes and projects under each heading will be developed and delivered each year by each of the SE Wales Valleys LAs. The exception is the interchange signage scheme, which is a project that can be delivered within each of the individual LAs but would have greater impact on sustainable travel if delivered as a project covering the whole SE Wales Valleys area.

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Funding Source(s)
Active Travel	Active Travel schemes identified through the implementation of the Active Travel (Wales) Act. Schemes will improve walking and cycling links to key services and facilities and improve accessibility within and between communities.	Identified through implementation of Active Travel Act requirements	Local, Regional	Welsh Government (WG) – Active Travel, WG – Local Transport Fund (LTF), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Local Authority (LA)
Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity (ETP)	Road Safety revenue schemes that deliver Road Safety ETP across the SE Wales Valleys area. Schemes will include Kerbcraft, National Standards Cycle Training, Megadrive, Pass Plus Cymru, Motorcyclist Training, Older Drivers and other ETP schemes that are developed and become eligible for Welsh Government funding in the future.	LA Officers, Welsh Government, Casualty statistics	Local, Regional	WG – Road Safety Grant, LA
Accident Remediation/ Road Safety	Road Safety capital schemes targeting sites and routes that have been identified through the monitoring of collision data	Identified through collision data monitoring and analysis undertaken in partnership with the police	National (will contribute to national casualty reduction targets)	WG – Road Safety Grant, LA

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Funding Source(s)
Safe Routes in Communities	Schemes to improve accessibility within communities with a specific focus on providing safe, sustainable routes to schools to encourage a greater use of active modes of travel (in line with SRiC guidance).	School Travel Plans, LA Officers and Members, Local communities	Local	WG – Safe Routes in Communities, LA
Public Transport Interchange Signage (Rail and Bus)	A study to develop and deliver a standard for signage of transport hubs includes the audit of existing signs, facilities and development of a consistent standard. Needs to consider the Metro branding and bus/rail marketing strategies.	Sewta Interchange Study, Metro	Regional	WG – Metro, LA

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Table 3 – Short Term Programme (2015 – 2020) – Blaenau Gwent CBC Schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Active Travel – National / Valleys Cycle Network Cwm to Aberbeeg	Key missing section of the National Cycle Network Route 466 / Valleys Cycle Network from Cwm to Aberbeeg. The route will join up the communities and rail facilities at Ebbw Vale to the north and Llanhilleth to the south. The Phase 1 northern section of the route has just received planning consent (Sept 2014) whilst the southern section (Phase 2), including a river crossing of the Ebbw Fach, is being developed with the assistance of NRW. Funding required for detailed design prior to phased delivery. Phase 1 deliverable from 2015/16 onwards.	RTP, LDP	1	National (missing link on the National Cycle Network)	Phase 1 £100k-£500k Phase 2 £500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA
Bus Priority Corridor Improvements – Abertillery to Blackwood to Newport	Improvements to this key strategic bus route (e.g. junction priority improvements) to improve bus reliability along the Abertillery, Blackwood to Newport corridor. Improvements will be on-highway. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery, in partnership with Caerphilly and Newport Councils.	RTP, Sewta Bus Strategy	2	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – LTF, WG – Metro

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Active Travel – National / Valleys Cycle Network Llanhilleth to Royal Oak	Key missing section of the National Cycle Network 466 / Valleys Cycle Network from Llanhilleth to Royal Oak. The route will join up the community and rail facilities at Llanhilleth to the north and Royal Oak and Swffrydd to the south. Route feasibility and initial designs have been undertaken, that includes a rail bridge just north of Royal Oak. Early discussions with Network Rail have suggested that the scheme can be developed alongside the proposed VLE electrification process. Funding required for detailed design; delivery to coincide with VLE works.	RTP, LDP	3	National (missing link on the National Cycle Network)	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA
Active Travel – National / Valleys Cycle Network Upper Sirhowy Valley Bedwellty Pits to Hollybush	Key missing section of the National Cycle Network 467 / Valleys Cycle Network from Bedwellty Pits to Hollybush and the Caerphilly county boundary, including links to the NCN 46 at Tredegar. The route will join up the communities of Sirhowy, Georgetown and Tredegar to the north and Hollybush to the south. Route feasibility and initial designs have been undertaken, however third party land issues both sides of the county boundary are proving particular obstacles to the development of this key route. Funding required for further route development in partnership with Caerphilly CBC.	RTP	4	National (missing link on the National Cycle Network)	£100k - £500k	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, Developer Funding, ERDF

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Table 4 – Short Term Programme (2015 – 2020) – Caerphilly CBC Schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Highway and Bus Corridor Improvement – A468/A469 Pwlllypant Roundabout	Pwlllypant Roundabout is a key junction on the A468/A469 Caerphilly northern bypass. The A468/A469 links settlements in the north of the borough to the trunk road network (A470, M4) and Cardiff. Heavily trafficked and at capacity through the peak period the junction creates significant journey time delay. Improvements to this key six-arm junction are required to provide additional capacity in order to improve efficiency of the network, reduce congestion and improve the reliability of bus services. The scheme will involve increasing the approach widths to the roundabout, reshaping the central island and signalling several arms of the roundabout. Scheme deliverable within 2 years.	RTP, LDP, Metro Phase 1	1	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – Metro Phase 1, Developer Funding, LA
Active Travel – Rhiw Syr Dafydd Primary School, Oakdale	Scheme will provide traffic calming features, a 20mph zone and a formalised crossing point. The scheme will reduce traffic speeds and improve the pedestrian environment to remove barriers to walking to school. Detailed design ongoing. Scheme deliverable in 2015/16.	School Travel Plan, LA officers and Members	2	Local	£100k - £500k	WG – Safe Routes in Communities, WG – Active Travel

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Active Travel – Rhymney Valley Linear Cycle Route (Pengam to Caerphilly)	Key missing section of the Rhymney Valley Linear Route from Pengam to Caerphilly/ Bedwas including links to NCN 47 at Maesycwmmer. The route will join up a number of communities (e.g. Fleur-de-Lis, Llanbradach), improve access to key facilities (e.g. Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr, Ystrad Mynach rail station) and the wider cycle network. Options assessment ongoing. Funding required for detailed design prior to phased delivery. Phase 1 deliverable from 2016/17 onwards.	RTP, LTP	3	National (missing link on the National Cycle Network)	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA
Bus Priority Corridor Improvements – Abertillery to Blackwood to Newport	Improvements to this key strategic bus route (e.g. junction priority improvements) to improve bus reliability along the Abertillery, Blackwood to Newport corridor. Improvements will be on-highway. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery.	RTP, Sewta Bus Strategy	4	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – LTF, WG – Metro
Bus Stop Enhancements – Caerphilly Basin area	Enhancements to bus stops in the Caerphilly basin area to improve facilities and information for passengers. Scheme will include the provision of approximately 140 new/ enhanced bus stops and 54 new shelters. Deliverable over 2 years.	RTP, Sewta Bus Strategy	5	Local	£500k - £1m	WG – LTF, WG – Metro LA, Developer Funding

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Rail Park and Ride – Ystrad Mynach Park and Ride Extension	Provision of additional rail park and ride capacity at Ystrad Mynach station to complement ongoing station improvement works. Existing park and ride is operating at capacity. Funding required for feasibility/ design work to investigate options.	LA Officer	6	Regional	£500k - £1m	WG – Metro
Bus Stop Enhancements – Mid Valleys area	Enhancements to bus stops in the Mid Valleys area to improve facilities and information for passengers. Scheme will include the provision of approximately 100 new/ enhanced bus stops and 40 new shelters. Deliverable within 1 year.	RTP, Sewta Bus Strategy	7	Local	£500k - £1m	WG – LTF, WG – Metro LA, Developer Funding
Active Travel – Caerphilly Basin Radial Routes	Network of routes linking Caerphilly Basin/town centre with neighbouring communities e.g. Llanbradach, Bedwas, Machen, Nantgarw and NCN Route 4. The network of routes will improve community access and provide walking and cycling links to public transport interchanges, employment areas, tourism locations and other key attractors. Some preliminary design undertaken. Funding required for detailed design prior to phased delivery. Phase 1 deliverable from 2016/17 onwards.	RTP, LDP	8	Local	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Active Travel - Link from Penallta Park to Ystrad Mynach	Active Travel link from Penallta Park to Ystrad Mynach including a link to the NCN 47 at Maesycwmmer. The route will improve community access to public transport interchanges and other services. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery. Deliverable within 2 years.	LDP	9	Local	£100k - £500k	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, Developer Funding, ERDF
Active Travel – Links to Bargoed Town Centre	Provision of missing links from existing cycle network to Bargoed town centre. Links will improve access for local communities and join up existing routes to enable longer journeys on the cycle network. Funding required for detailed design. Deliverable within 2 years.	LDP	10	Local	<£100k	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA
Rail Park and Ride – Crumlin Park and Ride (dependent on the provision of a new rail station at Crumlin)	Provision of a rail park and ride facility should a new rail station be provided at Crumlin on the Ebbw Valley Line. Land is safeguarded for a park and ride at Crumlin on the Ebbw Valley line (dependent on station being built). The establishment of a station would benefit the main employment site at Oakdale. Some preliminary design work has been undertaken. Timing of delivery will be dependent on the delivery of a new station at Crumlin.	LDP, RTP	11	Regional	£500k - £1m	WG – Metro

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Flexible Transport Services – Connect2	The Connect2 flexible transport service provides residents across the county borough with travel opportunities where conventional services do not meet their needs. The project is self-sustaining but is not generating sufficient income to enable the renewal of vehicles. Funding is required to replace/upgrade the existing fleet to respond to user requirements and to ensure continuity. Deliverable within 1 year.	Existing CCBC project	12	Local	<£500k	LA, WG – LTF
Active Travel – Network of links from Blackwood/ Pontllanfraith	Improved links between Blackwood town centre and Pontllanfraith and to the NCN 47 at Gelligroes. The routes will provide improved community access, links to employment areas, the countryside and links to the existing cycle network. Funding required for feasibility/ design work prior to delivery.	LDP, RTP	13	Local	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA
Active Travel – Newbridge to Crumlin to Crosskeys and Sirhowy Valley/ Pontllanfraith cycle links	Links from Pontllanfraith to Newbridge and Crumlin and also part of the link to south to Crosskeys. The routes will improve community access, further developing the local cycle network, which will provide greater opportunities to use public transport and NCN 47. Funding required for feasibility/ design work prior to phased delivery.	LDP, RTP	14	Local	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF, LA

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Highway Improvement – A468 Bedwas Bridge Roundabout	A468/B4600 Bedwas Bridge Roundabout is a key junction on the northern distributor road around Caerphilly town centre, linking Bedwas and Trethomas to the northern by-pass. Congested through peak periods, enhancements will improve efficiency and reduce traffic in the town centre, which is an AQMA. A major constraint in improving the operation of the roundabout is Bedwas Bridge and the scheme will require the provision of a second river crossing. Some preliminary design work undertaken. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery.	LDP	15	Regional	>£5m	Developer Funding, WG – Metro
Highway Improvement – Piccadilly Gyratory, Caerphilly town centre	Piccadilly Gyratory is a key junction in managing and distributing traffic within and through Caerphilly town centre. Traffic growth has resulted in the need for efficiency enhancements at this junction to provide additional capacity. The area is within an Air Quality Management Area and better distribution and reduced traffic delay will assist with air quality matters. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery.	LDP	16	Local	<£500k	Developer Funding

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
A467 Newbridge to Crosskeys	The A467 is a key route linking communities in the Ebbw Valley to the M4, Newport and Cardiff. The junctions along the route experience significant pressure and congestion during the peak hour period. Junction and on-line improvements along the A467 are required to maintain the efficiency of the network. An initial feasibility study has been undertaken to identify congestion hotspots along the route. Funding required for design work prior to delivery.	LDP	17	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – Metro, Developer Funding LA
Bus Priority Corridor Improvements – Blackwood to Caerphilly to Cardiff	Improvements to this key strategic bus route (e.g. junction priority improvements) to improve bus reliability along the Blackwood, Caerphilly to Cardiff corridor. Improvements will be on-highway. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery.	RTP, Sewta Bus Strategy	18	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – LTF, WG – Metro
Active Travel – Bargoed Country Park to Bowen Industrial Estate	Provision of a short link from existing routes in Bargoed Country Park to Bowen Industrial Estate. Link will increase opportunities for access to employment by walking and cycling. Some preliminary design work undertaken. Funding required for detailed design prior to delivery. Scheme deliverable in 1 year.	LDP, RTP	19	Local	<£100k	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Active Travel – Completion of National Cycle Network Route 46	Missing link in the Heads of the Valleys NCN 46 in Caerphilly County Borough. The route would link into the existing NCN 46 in Merthyr in the west, routes in Brynbach Park in the east and to the Rhymney Valley Linear Route at Bute Town/ Rhymney Bridge. The route will build upon the existing cycle network and provide a long-distance, cross-boundary route. Two route options previously developed. Further detailed design work required prior to delivery.	LDP, RTP	20	National (part of National Cycle Network)	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF
Active Travel – Extension to the Sirhowy Valley Cycle Route	Route would provide a continuation of existing north-south routes and provide a cross-boundary route north of Hollybush into Blaenau Gwent. This is an important link for accessibility and for access to existing routes to the south and to NCN 47. Some design work has been undertaken previously. Further design work and resolution of land matters required prior to delivery.	LDP, RTP	21	Regional	£500k - £1m	WG – Active Travel, WG – LTF, ERDF
Highway Improvement - Tafwys Walk Junction, Caerphilly town centre	The scheme involves signalisation of the Tafwys Walk/Nantgarw Road junction, which is important in managing traffic in the vicinity of the Piccadilly Gyratory. Provides an opportunity to secure efficiency improvements on the network. Design work and resolution of land matters would be required prior to delivery.	LDP	22	Local	<£500k	Developer Funding

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Table 5 – Short Term Programme (2015 – 2020) – Merthyr Tydfil CBC Schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Bus Station Improvement	New bus station in Merthyr Tydfil	Local Transport Study	1	Regional	£5m plus	Community Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund ERDF
Rail Park and Ride	Provide car park at Pentrebach Railway Station and encourage extra usage of the Railway Network	Local Transport Study	2	Regional	£500k - £1m	Community Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund WG (Metro) ERDF
Junction improvements	Improvements to enhance traffic flow and safety at key junctions	Local Transport Study	3	Local	£100k - £500k	WG Local Transport Fund Community Infrastructure Levy

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Bus Corridor Schemes - Bus Stop Enhancement	Continuation of policy BUS01 from SEWTA RTP 2010-2015	Local Transport Study	4	Local	£100k	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund
Merthyr College to Town Centre Link	Provide new footbridge across the Taff and A4054 between Merthyr College and the Centre. Improves pedestrian access for learners and others with Merthyr's retail area and stations	Local Transport Study	5	Local	£500k - £1m	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund ERDF
Swansea Road to Baverstocks Cycle Link	Missing link of the heads of the valley cycle route, NCN 46	Local Transport Study	6	Local / Regional	£100K	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund
Town Centre to Cyfarthfa Retail Park Link	Active Travel Scheme – Creating a new pedestrian and cycle way linking Stations, Town Centre and College with the Retail Park	Local Transport Study	7	Local	£100k - £500k	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Mill Road Highway Improvements	Road Widening through the installation of passing places. This Road links Quakers Yard and Treharris	Local Transport Study	8	Local	£100k - £500k	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund WG (Metro) ERDF
Taff Trail, Ffynon Dwyn to heads of the valley cycle way at Pant	There is currently no off road link from the Taff Trail to the Heads of the valley route at Pant	Local Transport Study	9	Local	£100k - £500k	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund
The Taff Trail to Cyfarthfa Park and the leat.	A link is required from the trail to the castle and Cyfarthfa heritage area.	Local Transport Study	10	Local	£100k	Infrastructure Levy WG Local Transport Fund

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Table 6 – Short Term Programme (2015 – 2020) – Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Pontypridd - Church Village - Talbot Green - Llanharan - Bridgend Bus Priority Scheme	Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters. Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.	RTP, Local Transport Study	1	Regional	£1M - £5M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)
Aberdare - Tonypany - Tonyrefail Bus Priority Scheme	Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters. Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.	Local Transport Study	2	Local	£100k - £500k	Community Infrastructure Levy ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Aberdare Community Route Access Improvements	<p>Although largely completed, as part of Aberdare town centre regeneration and public realm works and the new Sobell Leisure complex, a short but important section of this route near the town centre is prone to flooding and requires remedial work.</p> <p>It will also be necessary to ensure that the route complies with the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	RTP	3	Local	< £100k	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p>
Pontypridd - Blackwood - Pontypool Bus Rapid Transit Scheme	<p>Development of a bus rapid transit scheme providing improved cross-valley links between key settlements outside Cardiff and Newport.</p> <p>Where feasible, construction of segregated sections of guideway to enable buses to have priority over traffic and by-pass pinch points along the corridor. Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters.</p> <p>Implement measures at key junctions to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows.</p>	Cardiff Capital Region Metro Study	4	Regional	£1M - £5M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt (Metro)</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Aberdare - Mountain Ash - Pontypridd Bus Priority Scheme	<p>Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters.</p> <p>Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.</p>	Local Transport Study	5	Local	£100k - £500k	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)
Porth - Tonypany - Treherbert - Blaencwm / Blaenrhondda Bus Priority Scheme	<p>Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters.</p> <p>Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor (such as Stag Square, Treorchy) to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.</p>	Local Transport Study	6	Local	£500k - £1M	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Maerdy - Porth - Pontypridd - Cardiff Bus Priority Scheme	<p>Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters.</p> <p>Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.</p>	RTP, Local Transport Study	7	Regional	£1M - £5M	Community Infrastructure Levy ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)
Tonypany - Tonyrefail - Talbot Green - Cardiff Bus Priority Scheme	<p>Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters.</p> <p>Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.</p>	RTP, Local Transport Study	8	Regional	£1M - £5M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Taffs Well Park & Ride	Installation of decking at rail station to increase capacity of site.	RTP, LDP	9	Local	£100k - £500k	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)
Porth - Trebanog - Tonyrefail - Gilfach Goch - Bridgend Bus Priority Scheme	<p>Upgrade the bus stops to provide a step change in quality for passengers. Measures include raised kerbs to provide improved access for mobility impaired passengers, new information displays and, where feasible, new seating and shelters.</p> <p>Implement measures at pinch points along the corridor to reduce delays to bus services and improve traffic flows. Bus stops protected by Clearway Order.</p>	Local Transport Study	10	Regional	£1M - £5M	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Cynon Valley Community Trail Phase 3 and beyond	<p>Although largely completed, several 'gaps' remain along this Trail that prevent its benefits from being maximised. There is also a need to link isolated communities in the Cynon Valley to this Trail and ensure that the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 are met.</p> <p>This scheme encompasses the Heads of the Valleys Community Route and links to Hirwaun Industrial Estate.</p> <p>The Heads of the Valleys Community Route is completed, but many sections are along heavily trafficked sections of road and are not segregated from traffic. If off-road sections are to be constructed, further investigation and substantial expenditure are required.</p>	RTP, LDP	11	National	£500k - £1M	Coalfields Regeneration Trust ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund
Cwmaman to Aberaman Community Route	<p>Provision of a community route between Cwmaman and Aberaman, off-road where possible, linking to schools, colleges, industrial estates, local shopping centres and leisure facilities.</p> <p>Route will help encourage sustainable travel journeys in an area that scores high in indices of multiple deprivation and ensure provisions of Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 are met.</p>	LDP	12	Local	£100k - £500k	Coalfields Regeneration Trust ERDF WG Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Pontygwaith to Maerdy Community Route	<p>Continuation of the existing Rhondda Fach Community Route from Pontygwaith to Maerdy. Wherever possible, route will be off-road linking to schools, colleges, industrial estates, local shopping centres and leisure facilities.</p> <p>Route will help encourage sustainable travel journeys in an area that scores high in indices of multiple derivation and ensure provisions of Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 are met.</p>	RTP, LDP	13	Local	£500k - £1M	<p>Coalfields Regeneration Trust</p> <p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p> <p>Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund</p>
Expansion of Park & Ride / Park & Share at Aberdare	Provide an increase in capacity at a key, existing site in the Cynon Valley (Robertstown) that serves Aberdare rail station.	LDP	14	Local	£500k - £1M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Aberdare Bus Station Upgrade	<p>An important interchange for residents and visitors to the Cynon Valley. As a result of extensive bus movements and passenger flows over the last 10 - 15 years, the bus station is in need of refurbishment and upgrade.</p> <p>The upgrade would include new electronic information displays to assist passengers, new seating and waiting areas, better lighting and security features such as CCTV and help points as well as further measures to assist mobility and sensory impaired passengers use this bus station.</p> <p>This will make a significant difference to the public perception of the facility and will enhance personal security. It will also provide a step change in the quality of facilities for bus passengers.</p>	RTP	15	Local	£500k - £1M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Tonypandy Bus Station Upgrade	<p>An important interchange for residents and visitors to the Rhondda Fawr. As a result of extensive bus movements and passenger flows over the last 10 - 15 years, the bus station is in need of refurbishment and upgrade.</p> <p>The upgrade would include new electronic information displays to assist passengers, new seating and waiting areas, better lighting and security features such as CCTV and help points as well as further measures to assist mobility and sensory impaired passengers use this bus station.</p> <p>This will make a significant difference to the public perception of the facility and will enhance personal security. It will also provide a step change in the quality of facilities for passengers.</p>	RTP	16	Local	£500k - £1M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund</p>
Pontypridd to Tonyrefail Community Route via Church Village and Llantrisant Route from Uni of South Wales, Treforest to Llantrisant	<p>Largely completed. However, two significant gaps remain. Thomastown - Coed Ely and Church Village - Talbot Green. Route of latter section dependent on outcome of NW Cardiff - SE RCT Transport Studies.</p> <p>Scheme will help ensure compliance with the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	RTP, LDP	17	National	£1M - £5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>WG Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Pontyclun Park and Ride	Expansion of existing Park & Ride / Park & Share facilities at rail station in order to provide an increase in capacity and accommodate growing demand.	RTP, LDP	18	Local	£500k - £1M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)
Strategic Transport Corridor Management System A4119 / A473	Implementation of measures to reduce delays and improve traffic flows at a key junction on the highway network. Measures could include modifying the junction layout and the installation of a new urban traffic control system.	LDP	19	Regional	£1M - £5M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund
Trallwn to Cilfynydd Community Route	Further development of the Taff Trail Community Route. Conversion of a former rail line into a new, segregated shared section of the Trail for pedestrians and cyclists. Scheme will help ensure compliance with the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.	LDP	20	National	£100k - £500k	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Community Route through the Rhondda Fawr	<p>Provision of a community route along most of the length of the Rhondda Fawr. Wherever possible, route will be off-road linking to schools, colleges, industrial estates, local shopping centres and leisure facilities.</p> <p>Route will help encourage sustainable travel journeys in an area that scores high in indices of multiple deprivation and ensure provisions of Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 are met.</p>	RTP, LDP	21	National	£1M - £5M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>WG LTF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p> <p>Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund</p>
Talbot Green - Pencoed Community Route	<p>Construction of a Community Route linking Talbot Green to Bridgend via Pencoed. To encourage sustainable journeys, route will be segregated from road traffic, where possible, and links provided to schools, colleges, industrial estates, town centres and local leisure facilities.</p> <p>Scheme will help ensure compliance with the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	Local Transport Study	22	Regional	£1M - £5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p>
Porth Interchange Park and Ride / Park and Share	<p>Construction of a Park and Ride / Park and Share facility at Porth station. Sites alongside the northbound and southbound platforms have been identified. Full development is subject to completion of Valley lines electrification and relocation of ticket office.</p>	RTP	23	Local	£500k - £1M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Treforest rail station Park and Ride	Expansion of existing Park & Ride / Park & Share facilities at rail station in order to provide an increase in capacity and accommodate growing demand.	LDP	24	Local	£500k - £1M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund
Pontypridd Bus Station Upgrade	<p>An important interchange for residents and visitors as direct bus links are available to nine of the key regional settlements highlighted in the Wales Spatial Plan. As a result of extensive bus movements and passenger flows over the last 10 - 15 years, the bus station is in need of refurbishment and upgrade.</p> <p>The upgrade would include new electronic information displays to assist passengers, new seating and waiting areas, better lighting and security features such as CCTV and help points as well as further measures to assist mobility and sensory impaired passengers use this bus station.</p> <p>This will make a significant difference to the public perception of the facility and will enhance personal security. It will also provide a step change in the quality of facilities for passengers.</p>	RTP	25	Local	£100k - £500k	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Treforest Connect 2 Community Route	<p>Largely completed. However construction of footbridge over rail line offers an opportunity to provide an alternative shared route for pedestrians and cyclists between Treforest and Pontypridd as well as a new link to Rhydyfelin.</p> <p>Scheme will help ensure compliance with the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	RTP, LDP	26	National	£1M - £5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p>
Pontypridd Community Route Proposed - extension of Connect 2	<p>Undertake further study. The proposed route would be adjacent to the disused Glamorgan Canal and could conflict with separate proposals to restore this feature into recreational use.</p> <p>Scheme will help ensure compliance with the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.</p>	RTP, LDP	27	National	£1M - £5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Welsh Govt Safe Routes in Communities</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
A4059 Aberdare by-pass extension - Cynon Gateway	<p>The development of a new road scheme, in parallel with the dualling of the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road between Hirwaun and Merthyr Tydfil.</p> <p>Scheme will involve the construction of new junction layouts in order to maintain existing access between communities situated to the north of Aberdare and the A465.</p> <p>In addition, this scheme will facilitate the development of a new Park & Ride / Park & Share facility to the south of Hirwaun which is linked to proposals to re-open the freight line to rail passenger services.</p>	RTP, LDP	28	Local	>£5M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund</p>

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Table 7 – Short Term Programme (2015 – 2020) – Torfaen CBC Schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Union Street/Broad Street Abersychan-Junction Signalisation	An improved junction of Union Street/Broad street with relocated lay-by and amended bus kerbs. Subsequent outline scheme development shows a signalised bus priority junction, with enhanced pedestrian crossings leading to upgraded Stops, and dedicated left turn lanes for efficient junction operation and vehicle transit, with a bias towards the X24/other bus services (up to 16 per hour) linking Varteg/Garndiffaith to Pontypool.	North Torfaen Transportation Study Metro Torfaen LDP	1	Local and Regional	£100k - £500k	LTF Grant Metro Funding
Pontypool & New Inn Park and Ride	Improvements to the existing station access, increased car park spaces, DDA compliance and facilities, and a park and ride are predicted to generate an additional 9,000 trips per annum.	Cardiff Metro Torfaen LDP Sewta RTP	2	Local and Regional	£5m +	LTF Grant Metro Funding Development Funding EU funding
Pontypool Railway Station to NCN 492 and business park	This route has 2 arms. Arm 1-New Inn link from rail station to cycle route 492. This route will connect several commercial and industrial estates including the Council's customer and business facing Ty Blaen facility. Arm 2- Rail station to Pontypool town centre walking route improvement. This is the shortest route to the town centre.	Torfaen CBC	3	Local and Regional	£100k - £500k	LTF Metro Funding

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
A4043 - George Street, Pontypool	A4043 George Street Pontypool Junction Signalisation Realignment and further traffic management improvements on A4043. N.B. Pinch point at Broad Street/Snatchwood Road due to on street car parking.	North Torfaen Transportation Study, 2009 Cardiff Metro Torfaen LDP	4	Regional and Local	£100k - £500k	LTF Grant Development Funding. Metro SRiC
George Street School to NCN R492	New AT link over council owned land from school to NCN492	Torfaen CBC	5	Local	£100- £500k	LTF SRiC
B4248 improvements	The B4248 route is single carriageway with poor horizontal and vertical alignment. Therefore the aim of the scheme is realignment and improvement of the B4248 Blaenavon to Brynmawr. This key route for the north of Torfaen. The scheme will improve access to the newly duelled A465 Heads of the Valleys and will encourage access from the north and relieve pressure on routes from the south. This scheme also has the potential to improve the passenger transport experience to an area which is not served by rail. Improvements to the route may also encourage tourism to the Blaenavon WHS and provides road improvements for the residents of Torfaen to access employment opportunities to the Enterprise Zone and the proposed Circuit of Wales at Ebbw Vale.	Torfaen CBC	6	Local and Regional	£100k - £500k	LTF

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Priority	Significance (Local, Regional, National)	Cost (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k-£1m, £1m-£5m, >£5m)	Funding Source(s)
Pontnewydd infrastructure link 1	Small network of AT links through Pontnewydd community west of the existing footbridge over Cwmbran Drive – a busy 60mph urban road.	Torfaen CBC	7	Local	£0-£100k	LTF
Pontnewydd infrastructure link 2	Create an appropriate AT route to replace a dirt track to connect the commercial estates, school and residential communities east of the existing footbridge over Cwmbran Drive – a busy 60mph urban road.	Torfaen CBC	8	Local	£0-£100k	LTF
Ton Road (Upper) from Fairwater community	New cycle and walking infrastructure within Fairwater (Cwmbran) to improve access to community facilities within the area.	Torfaen CBC	9	Local	£500k-£1M	LTF SRiC RSG
Bevans Lane Improvement	A short link to connect the NCN492 to the recently completed Afon Llwydd Greenway AT route	Torfaen CBC	10	Local	£0-£100k	LTF Development Funding
Forgeside, Big Pit, Industrial Estate loop	Connects this outlying community with a direct short route to commercial and business estates. It will also connect to the Blaenavon- Brynmawr AT route being constructed in 2014-15 financial year.	Torfaen CBC	11	Local	£100- £500k	LTF

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4. Medium and Longer Term Aspirations to 2030

The following section (tables 8 – 12) sets out each of the local authorities' medium and longer term aspirations for the period 2020 to 2030.

Table 8 – Medium and Longer Term Aspirations to 2030 – Blaenau Gwent CBC schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Highway Improvement – A4046 South of Cwm	The A40406 south of Cwm requires highway improvements to increase the resilience of the network and improve accessibility to the north of the county borough. Improvements to this route will benefit the regeneration of the north of the county borough. No design work has been undertaken to date.	LDP	Regional	>£5m	WG – Metro
Highway Improvement – A4048 South of Tredegar	The A40406 south of Tredegar requires highway improvements to increase the resilience of the network and improve accessibility to the north of the county borough. Improvements to this route will benefit the regeneration of the north of the county borough. No design work has been undertaken to date.	LDP	Regional	>£5m	WG – Metro

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Highway Improvement – A467 South of Abertillery	The A40406 south of Abertillery requires highway improvements to increase the resilience of the network and improve accessibility to the north of the county borough. Improvements to this route will benefit the regeneration of the north of the county borough. No design work has been undertaken to date.	LDP	Regional	>£5m	WG – Metro
Active Travel - Links from HoV to Trefil, Rassau and Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate; Hilltop to Ebbw Vale to Manmoel; and link to Cwmtillery Lakes	Cycle route links joining up the core NCN/VCN with outlying communities and industrial areas. The routes will provide improved community access and active travel links between settlements and employment sites. No feasibility work has been undertaken to date. Initial funding would be required for a feasibility study.	LDP	Local	£100k - £500k	WG – Active Travel, ERDF

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Table 9 – Medium and Longer Term Aspirations to 2030 – Caerphilly CBC schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Rail Park and Ride - Llanbradach Park and Ride	The scheme would provide a significant new rail park and ride facility to provide approximately 500 new spaces and encourage increased rail use for those in the Mid Valleys area. Due to the location of the proposed facility the scheme would require relocation of Llanbradach rail station.	LDP, RTP	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – Metro
Highway Improvement - A469 New Tredegar to Pontlottyn	The A469 north of Bargoed requires highway improvements to increase the resilience of the network and improve accessibility to the north of the county borough. Improvements to this route will benefit the regeneration of the north of the county borough. Feasibility work is currently ongoing to investigate route options between New Tredegar and Pontlottyn.	LDP	Regional	>£5m	WG – Metro
Highway Improvement – Caerphilly South Eastern Bypass	Increased development in the Caerphilly Basin area is putting increased pressure on the network and contributes to air quality problems in Caerphilly town centre, which is an air quality management area. The scheme will provide a southern bypass for Caerphilly, which will complete the orbital route around Caerphilly town, help remove through journeys from the town centre and improve air quality in Caerphilly town centre.	LDP	Regional	>£5m	Developer Funding

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Highway Improvement - Dualling of A468 Pwlllypant roundabout to Bedwas Bridge roundabout, Caerphilly	The A468 between Pwlllypant roundabout and Bedwas Bridge roundabout is important in managing traffic and congestion in Caerphilly town centre as it completes the northern route around the town. Increased development in the Caerphilly Basin is putting increased pressure on the route and network efficiency improvements will be required to maintain its attraction as a route for through traffic. No design work has been undertaken to date.	LDP	Regional	>£5m	Developer Funding
Highway Improvement - Dualling of A468/A469 Penrhos Roundabout to Pwlllypant roundabout, Caerphilly	The A468/A469 between Penrhos roundabout and Pwlllypant roundabout is a key section of the strategic network linking communities in the north of the borough to the trunk road network (A470, M4) and Cardiff. The route experiences congestion during peak periods. Increased development in the Caerphilly Basin is putting further pressure on the route and network efficiency improvements will be required to maintain its attraction as a route for through traffic. No design work has been undertaken to date.	LDP, RTP, Sewta Highway Strategy	Regional	>£5m	Developer Funding

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Highway and Bus Corridor Improvement - A472 Ystrad Mynach to Nelson	The A472 is the key east-west link in the county borough that provides access to the A470 to the west and Cwmbran/Pontypool in the east. The route is constrained from Ystrad Mynach to Nelson and experiences problems of congestion during peak periods. Increased development in the area and employment sites at Tredomen and Oakdale is putting further pressure on the route. Junction and on-line improvements will be required to maintain efficiency of the route. No feasibility work has been undertaken to date.	LDP	Regional	£1m - £5m	WG – Metro, Developer Funding
Active Travel - Link from Crosskeys NCN47 to Newbridge	Off-road link joining up the communities of Newbridge to Crosskeys. The route will provide improved community access and active travel links between settlements. No feasibility work has been undertaken to date. Initial funding would be required for a feasibility study.	LDP	Local	£100k - £500k	WG – Active Travel, ERDF
Active Travel – Links from Crumlin	Provision of links from Crumlin to neighbouring communities. The routes will improve community access and links to public transport, with opportunities to link to the wider developing cycling network and to neighbouring local authorities. No feasibility work has been undertaken to date. Initial funding would be required for a feasibility study.	LDP	Regional (links to Blaenau Gwent)	<£100k	WG – Active Travel, ERDF

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Active Travel – Link from Oakdale Business Park	Link from the local community to employment areas of Oakdale Business Park and Pen-y-fan Industrial Estate and part of the upland route towards the northern county boundary. Initial funding would be required for a feasibility study.	LDP	Local	<£100k	WG – Active Travel, ERDF
Active Travel - Link from Fochriw to NCN 46 via Rhaslas Pond	Scheme provides a link to NCN 46 for the villages of Deri and Fochriw and improved community access to the countryside together with tourism opportunities. No feasibility work has been undertaken to date. Initial funding would be required for a feasibility study.	LDP	Local	£100k - £500k	WG – Active Travel, ERDF

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Table 10 – Medium and Longer Term Aspirations to 2030 – Merthyr CBC schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Abercanaid – Alternative Road Access	Provide resilience by construction of an alternative vehicular access to the Village	RTP / LDP	Local	£1m - £5m	Welsh Govt
Road Widening at Pentwyn Road, Quakers Yard to Nelson	Road Widening improvement scheme. This road links Quakers Yard to Nelson	MTCBC	Local / Regional	£500k - £1m	Welsh Govt

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Table 11 – Medium and Longer Term Aspirations to 2030 – Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link Road	A multi-span single carriageway bridge forming a cross valley link to divert traffic away from the built up B4275 to the A4059 bringing major traffic relief to Mountain Ash town centre, and to the Miskin and Penrhiwceiber areas.	LDP	Local	£1M - £5M	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund
Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link Road	A cross-river link, which links Fountain Street on the west bank, to New Road on the east bank, to the north of the town bridge. The link will divert traffic away from the built up B4275 to the A4059 bringing major traffic relief to Mountain Ash town centre, as well as to the Miskin and Penrhiwceiber areas.	LDP	Local	£1M - £5M	ERDF WG LTF Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund
Strategic Transport Corridor Management System A470 / A4059	Implementation of measures to reduce delays and improve traffic flows at a key junction on the highway network. Measures could include modifying the junction layout and the installation of a new urban traffic control system.	LDP	Regional	£100k - £500k	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Strategic Transport Corridor Management System A4059 / A465	Implementation of measures to reduce delays and improve traffic flows at a key junction on the highway network. Measures could include modifying the junction layout and the installation of a new urban traffic control system.	LDP	Regional	£100k - £500k	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund
Abercynon Park & Ride / Park & Share land south of Ty Trevithick, adjacent to A470	A new facility that will provide opportunities for people to meet and continue their journey in a single car or by bus for the remainder of their journey, thereby helping to reduce congestion and pollution.	LDP	Local	£500k - £1M	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund
Park & Ride / Park & Share site adjacent to A4119 / B4264, Miskin	Provision of Park & Ride / Park & Share facilities at a site identified adjacent to the junction of the A4119 / B4264 in Miskin, near Talbot Green.	LDP	Regional	£1M - £5M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund
Aberdare - Merthyr Tydfil - Ebbw Vale - Abergavenny BRT Corridor Scheme	Development of a bus rapid transit scheme providing improved cross-valley links between key settlements along the Heads of the Valleys corridor. Where feasible, construction of segregated sections of guideway to enable buses to by-pass congested sections along corridor.	Cardiff Capital Region Metro Study	Regional	£1M - £5M	ERDF Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund Welsh Govt (Metro)

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
A4058/A4061 Gelli /Treorchy Relief Road	<p>Construction of a new, single carriageway road, providing a link between the upper and mid-Rhondda Fawr. The road will be approximately 5.8km in length, by-passing sections of the A4058, A4061 and B4233.</p> <p>It will relieve traffic congestion, and improve air quality, at the junction of the A4058 and A4061 in Treorchy (Stag Square). It will also improve access to communities in the Upper Rhondda Fawr, an area of high social and economic deprivation.</p>	RTP, LDP	Local	>£5M	<p>ERDF</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p> <p>Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund</p>
A470 Northern Corridor Park and Ride / Park and Share	<p>Provision of Park & Ride / Park & Share facilities at a number of locations in close proximity to, and easily accessible from, the A470.</p> <p>Sites will offer enhanced security features as well as an increase in capacity for users in terms of the number of parking spaces available.</p>	RTP	Regional	£1M - £5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>
A4119 - A473 Ynysmaerdy - Talbot Green Relief Road	<p>Construction of an alternative route for a significant volume of through traffic that currently travels along the A4119, between the Upper Ely Valley and Talbot Green town centre.</p> <p>The new road alignment would start at the roundabout at the end of the A4119 at Ynysmaerdy, crossing the River Ely and following the route of the old Coed Ely railway line towards Talbot Green.</p>	RTP, LDP	Local	>£5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Castell Mynach / A4119 junction improvements	<p>Implementation of measures to reduce delays and improve traffic flows at a key junction on the highway network.</p> <p>Measures could include modifying the junction layout and the installation of a new urban traffic control system.</p>	Local Transport Study	Regional	£100k - £500k	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>
A473 Llanharan by-pass	<p>Construction of the eastern section of the Llanharan by-pass. The western section has been constructed by developers.</p> <p>The proposed route would commence at the A473, to the east of Llanharan, and would generally follow a south-westerly alignment for approximately 1.25km towards Llanharry Road, adjacent to the existing concrete plant. The scheme would remove through traffic and bring environmental relief to the communities of Llanharan, Brynna and Dolau. It would also improve the A473 strategic route between the M4 at Pencoed and Llantrisant.</p>	LDP	Local	>£5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>
A473 Talbot Green by-pass	Upgrade approximately 3km of the existing Talbot Green by-pass to dual carriageway standard.	LDP	Local	£1M - £5M	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy</p> <p>Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund</p>

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Park & Ride / Park & Share site at Parc Nantgarw / Penrhos roundabout	Provision of Park & Ride / Park & Share facilities at Parc Nantgarw which is in close proximity to, and easily accessible from, the (A468 / A470) Nantgarw Interchange.	LDP	Regional	£1M - £5M	Community Infrastructure Levy Welsh Govt Local Transport Fund

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Table 12 – Medium and Longer Term Aspirations to 2030 – Torfaen CBC schemes

Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Cwmbran Town Centre Improvements	Improvements of the major intersections that connect the one-way circulatory roads to each other. Studies indicate that the works needed to accommodate development proposals will include but they are not necessarily limited to the junctions of St Davids Road/Edlogan Way, Tudor Road/Llwelyn Road, Cwmbran Drive/Tudor Road and St Davids Road/Tudor Road.	Torfaen LDP	Local – improved highway for local development and retail	£5m +	Development Funding.
Llanfrechfa Grange Link Road	To facilitate development of Llanfrechfa Grange site a new link road may be required thought he site to link the B4236 near Selby Close with the B4236 at Edghill. The requirement is subject to a Traffic Impact Assessment, which should assess specific development proposals for the hospital, housing and employment uses.	Torfaen LDP Cardiff Metro	Regional	£1m - £5m	Development Funding
Pontypool Bus Station	Pontypool is recognised as a bus interchange and future consideration could be given to the development of a bus station within the town.	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£1m - £5m	LTF
Abersychan one-way system	A one way road would offer more flexibility to introduce shared footway/cycleway facilities and sheltered parking.	North Torfaen Transportation Study	Local	£1m - £5m	LTF
Pontypool (New Inn) to Mamhilad business parks via A4042 (T)	New AT route alongside the A4042 (T) dual carriageway linking Pontypool New Inn rail station and Pontypool businesses and residents to the outlying Mamhilad business park	Torfaen	Local and Regional	£500k-£1M	LTF Development Funding

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Cross-boarder NCN 492 link from MCC to Afon Llwyd Greenway and NCN492 (Edlogan Way link)	This urban link connects the MCC cross-country route to the urban areas of Cwmbran and feeds into the Afon Llywdd Greenway AT route and NCN49 and NCN492 routes to Newport in the south and Blaenavon/Brynmawr in the north.	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£500k-£1M	LTF
Cwmbran to Caerleon Greenway (via Ponthir)	An extension of the Afon Llywdd Greenway. Connects the outlying Caerleon & Ponthir communities to Cwmbran. Can be built in several phases as discreet projects	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£1m - £5m	LTF
Cwmbran Drive to town centre route	A bridge for pedestrians and cyclists to over Cwmbran Drive a busy urban 70mph dual carriageway. This will provide direct access east/west across the road between residential communities and for retail, commercial and industrial	Torfaen CBC	Local	£1m - £5m	LTF Development Funding
Ty Coch Lane (South) Cwmbran to The Blackbirds Pentre Lane	Semi-rural AT link to outlying communities south of Cwmbran. Part of the route runs along a quiet stopped-up road	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
Henllys to Cwmcarn cross border link	An AT route developed along drovers trails over the mountain, making a direct connection between large valley communities on either side.	Torfaen CBC	Local	£500k-£1m	LTF
Keepers/Foxhunter – Llanfoist Scenic cross-border corridor	An AT route to link cross border rural areas.	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£500k - £1m	LTF

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Pontypool Park, Pontymoile to New Inn under A4042 bypass	A new AT between Pontypool town centre and the retail strip that has developed alongside the A4042(T) at Pontymoile. These premises currently have no pedestrian or cycle links at all. The proposed route would utilize an existing underpass originally built to channel the river under the bypass.	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
Lower Forgeside to Blaenavon (via lane)	A new link to the outlying community. Requires the prior purchase of a strip of arable land alongside the road.	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
Pontnewynydd – Trevethin	Semi-rural AT link. Part of the route runs along a quiet stopped-up road.	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
Penygarn – Pontypool town centre via Pontypool Park	An alternative off-road AT route to town centre avoiding the busy and narrow existing road	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
New Inn – Llandegfedd reservoir	Link from Pontypool/New Inn to the MCC rural NCN423 route	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
New Inn – Croesceiliog (parallel to A4042 & Crematorium)	Major AT project between New Inn and Cwmbran linking to several comprehensive schools and crossing A4042(T) bypass. Requires a walking and cycling bridge to span the dual carriage way.	Torfaen CBC	Local	£1m - £5m	LTF
Pontyfelin – Pontrhydyrun (Chapel Lane)	A link between the Afon Llwydd Greenway and the NCN492 including junction signalling re-prioritisation.	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF

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Scheme Name	Description	Source	Significance (Local, Regional and National)	Cost Range (<£100k, £100k-£500k, £500k - £1m, £1m - £5m, >£5m)	Potential Funding Sources
Pontnewydd to Upper Cwmbran	Continues an existing cycle route along Maendy Way further into the residential community	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
Graig Road Greenmeadow to Upper Cwmbran	Improves a vehicle-free drivers route as an off road walking and cycling link between communities	Torfaen CBC	Local	£100- £500k	LTF
Llantarnam – Malpas	3 arm walking and cycling bridge providing AT facilities over the busy roundabout at the bottom of Cwmbran Drive. This roundabout has no signalling facilities or opportunity for pedestrian prioritisation.	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£1m - £5m	LTF
NCN Route 492 – Cwmffrwdroer link	A link from the NCN492 to Cwmffrwdroer community and school. This will provide traffic free connections within a valleys community currently experiencing outdated and inadequate infrastructure.	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£100- £500k	LTF SRiC
Llanfrechfa SCCC links to Cwmbran and Caerleon	AT links from Cwmbran and Ponthir to the proposed regional Specialist Critical Care Centre due to be built this decade.	Torfaen CBC	Local and Regional	£500k-£1m	LTF Development Funding

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5. Statutory Checks

5.1 Environmental

To be completed following update of RTP SEA

5.2 Equalities

To be completed following consultation

As public bodies, the local authorities of the SE Wales Valleys must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and within Wales, are also subject to the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which came into force on 6 April 2011.

One of the overall goals of this LTP is to promote social inclusion and equality, by providing a transport system that is safe, accessible and affordable to all sections of the community. Different sections of the community will have different transport and accessibility needs. It is important that such needs are understood and taken into account in the overall direction of the LTP and in the design of individual transport schemes that are delivered through this LTP. There will be the opportunity to consider the needs of all users, including more vulnerable groups, on a scheme by scheme basis as funding becomes available for scheme delivery.

For example, it is estimated that one in four people in the UK either has a disability or is close to someone who has. The local authorities in the South East Wales Valleys have wide ranging responsibilities for improving access for people with disabilities. In close consultation with representative advisors, groups and organisations, the local authorities aim to ensure that footway provision, parking, bus stops and other highway measures take full account of the needs of all people irrespective of movement or sensory ability.

The LTP consultation exercise has included as many representative groups as possible to ensure the consultation on this LTP has been inclusive. A full list of consultees is included as Appendix 3. This will ensure that the impact of this LTP on various groups is considered during planning and development and that the needs of all relevant groups are an integral part of the process from an early stage.

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6. Consultation

To be completed following outcome of consultation exercise

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7. Monitoring and Evaluation

This Local Transport Plan sets out a monitoring and evaluation framework that complements the Welsh Government's LTP guidance. Monitoring is an integral part of the LTP process and will be used to assess the performance of objectives and priorities over the period of the Plan. As this LTP evolves the following framework will be used to produce monitoring and evaluation reports for individual schemes that are delivered.

7.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

In line with the LTP guidance, all transport interventions funded partially or fully through the LTP will be subject to proportionate and appropriate monitoring and evaluation. This Monitoring and Evaluation Plan describes how each type of intervention and its impacts will be monitored.

The following sections will be included in the monitoring and evaluation plans of the schemes that are delivered through the LTP.

- Need – The identified need that the intervention is intended to address
- Project description – A detailed description of the intervention
- Objectives – The objectives of the intervention
- Context – The general context for the intervention over the evaluation period
- Inputs – What resources were used to deliver the intervention
- Outputs – Details of what was delivered
- Outcomes – The intended outcomes from the intervention
- Impact – Details of the realised impacts of the scheme, whether and how they can be measured
- Risks/ lessons learnt – The key risks that might affect the realisation of the proposed benefits, the mitigation of any anticipated adverse impacts and the risks to the recording of the anticipated impacts. The evaluation report should contain a reflection on the implementation of the project and present the lessons learnt.

The Welsh Government guidance suggests possible monitoring techniques and data sources. These are outlined in Table 13 below. These data sources will be used where appropriate and where available to monitor and evaluate the impact of transport investment.

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Table 13 – Monitoring Data

Data Set	Data Purpose	Available from
Automatic traffic counts	Permanent traffic counters; local authority programme of counts	Local authorities
Manual traffic counts	Carried out by DfT for WG Bespoke counts	DfT website, Local authorities
Bus patronage data	Tickets sales data collected by operators	Bus companies
Rail patronage data	Ticket sales data collected by operators (Lennon)	Train operating companies
Highway journey time data	Trafficmaster data	Welsh Government
Accident data	Stats 19	Welsh Government
Queue lengths	From surveys or fixed cameras	Local authorities
Changes in accessibility	Assessed using TRAAC software	Welsh Government
Welsh transport statistics	Range of transport statistics available	http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/?topic=transport&lang=en

Different monitoring activities will be required depending on the scheme type that is delivered. The main scheme types that will be delivered through this LTP can be divided into:

- Active Travel schemes
- Bus Infrastructure schemes
- Park and Ride schemes
- Highway Improvement schemes

This LTP will undertake the monitoring activities detailed in Table 14 below to gather information on the different scheme types proposed within the Plan. Not all monitoring indicators will be relevant to every scheme, but will depend on the objectives of the individual scheme. The scale of the monitoring and evaluation that will be undertaken will be proportionate to the size of the scheme that has been delivered. All monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis and each local authority will be responsible for collecting data for schemes within their local authority area.

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Table 14 – Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Scheme Type	Objective	Indicator	Data Source
Active Travel Schemes	Increase the number of cycle trips	Number of people cycling	Cycle counters Travel Plans
	Increase the number of children cycling to school	Number of school children cycling	School Travel Plans
	Increase off road cycle route provision	Increase in length of off road cycle routes	Local Authorities
	Increase on road cycle route provision	Increase in length of on road cycle routes	Local Authorities
	Increase Active Travel infrastructure and facilities	Increase in number of secure cycle parking facilities Maintain up to date Active Travel mapping	Local Authorities
	Increase the number of cycle stands at public transport interchanges	Increase in number of cycle stands at public transport interchanges	Local Authorities
Park and Ride Schemes	Increase the number of Park and Ride spaces	Increase in number of Park and Ride spaces	Local Authorities
	Increase the number of Park and Ride users	Number of people using Park and Ride	Monitor number of cars using Park and Ride facilities
	Increase the number of Park and Ride locations	Number of new Park and Ride sites	Local Authorities
	Increase the number of people using rail park and ride facilities and the rail network	Rail patronage/ ticket data at a park and ride station	Train Operating Companies

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Scheme Type	Objective	Indicator	Data Source
Highway Improvement Schemes	To reduce the number and severity of road traffic casualties	Headline KSI data	LA's / WG indicators
	To improve journey times and journey reliability	Journey times	Local Authorities
	To reduce congestion at key strategic junctions	Journey times, traffic counts	Local Authorities
	To improve air quality at key strategic junctions or areas	Air Quality Management Area monitoring data	Local Authorities
	To improve the efficient movement of traffic and freight through key strategic junctions	Traffic surveys	Local Authorities
Bus Infrastructure Schemes	To increase passenger numbers	Number of passengers carried along route	Operators
	To improve accessibility to bus services for all users	% of bus stops with raised kerbs	Local Authorities
	To improve reliability and punctuality	% of journeys no more than 5 minutes late or 1 minute early at scheduled timing points	Operators, Local Authorities, Bus Users
	To enhance waiting facilities	% of bus stops with a shelter Number of interchange facilities upgraded	Local Authorities
	To improve opportunities for interchange	Number of new public transport interchanges	Local Authorities
	To improve information provision	% of bus stops with timetable information	Local Authorities
	To improve safety and security	% of buses with CCTV Number of interchanges with CCTV	Bus operators Local Authorities

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Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Accessibility	The ease or difficulty with which people can travel to services and facilities.
Action	A statement of intended delivery to implement or deliver a measure.
Active Travel	Journeys made by walking and cycling and schemes that provide infrastructure to encourage walking and cycling.
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area. An area declared by a local authority in which air quality objectives are not likely to be achieved. Local authorities have a statutory duty to prepare Air Quality Action Plans for such areas, which set out measures to improve air quality.
Bus Priority	Bus priority measures cover a number of traffic management techniques and schemes that improve bus operation with the aim of improving service, reliability and/or reducing bus journey times.
Capacity	The number of users a transport system can handle under normal operating conditions without suffering congestion.
Cardiff Capital Region	The South East Wales region surrounding and including Cardiff.
Capital Spending/ Funding	Expenditure on new physical improvements to the transport system.
Car Sharing	Where two or more people share a car and travel together.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy. A development tax levied against new development in order to raise funds to help local authorities deliver strategic infrastructure (including transport infrastructure).
Civil Parking Enforcement	Control by a local authority of illegally parked vehicles.
CO ²	Carbon dioxide. One of the greenhouse gases that contributes to global warming. Transport is a major source of carbon dioxide emissions.
Community Route	A purpose built shared-use route for pedestrians and cyclists.
Community Transport	Refer to Flexible Transport definition.
Concessionary Fare	A reduced rate or zero fare for a journey, the operator is usually reimbursed for lost income.
Demand Responsive Transport	Refer to Flexible Transport definition.
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund. A European funding source that is able to fund capital infrastructure (including transport infrastructure) in the South East Wales Valleys area.
Flexible Transport	Services usually provided by minibuses targeted at areas or users that are remote from conventional public transport links. These tend to be community focussed and include fixed timetable routes; demand responsive journeys where pre-booking is required, or journeys targeted at particular groups within the community.
Heavy Goods Vehicle	A vehicle of over 7.5 tonnes laden weight.

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Term	Description
Highway	A Highway is a public road, street or pathway owned and maintained by the public purse for the use of the public as per the rules, regulations and restrictions made by the authorities for using the same.
Interchange	The point at which a user changes from using one transport mode to another and the facilities provided to make this switch as easy as possible.
Key Settlement	Towns and cities defined by the Wales Spatial Plan as the focus of activity.
KSI	Killed or Seriously Injured. A person killed or suffering serious injury in a road traffic accident.
Lorry Park	An area of land designated for the parking of heavy goods vehicles overnight.
LDP	Local Development Plan. A local authority's key land use planning document covering a period of 15 years.
LTF	Local Transport Fund. A grant awarded by the Welsh Government to local authorities in 2014/15 to improve the transport system.
Modal Split	The proportion of people using different modes of travel.
Mode	A type of conveyance. The main modes of transport include walking, cycling, rail, bus, car, ship and aircraft.
Monitoring	Collection and analysis of information about how the transport system is being used and is performing. The information is used to check performance and help identify actions to improve it.
Objective	A measurable statement of intent to achieve a particular end related to one or more outcomes.
Outcome	A social, economic or environmental consequence of a transport policy, plan or strategy.
Park and Share	A facility where cars can be parked and the occupants transfer to another car to share the onward journey.
Park and Ride	Car parking provided where a bus or train can be caught for an onward journey.
Peak Hour	The hours during which the highest number of users wish to access the transport system.
Performance Indicator	A measurement of how well an aspect of the transport system works.
Policy	A statement of intent to pursue a particular priority, objective or outcome through a programme of works or actions related to the transport system.
Revenue Spending / Funding	Spending aimed at keeping things up to a specific standard. This covers the day to day management and operation of the transport system.
Right of Way	Comprising Footpaths, Bridleways, Restricted Byways and Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS). All public rights of way are highways, and are shown on the Definitive Map held by local highway authorities.
Smartcard	A plastic card with an embedded microchip used for storing and processing computer data.

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Term	Description
Smarter Choices	A set of mainly soft measures to encourage more sustainable and active travel e.g. school, workplace and individual travel plans, improved public transport information and marketing services, car share schemes, car clubs, teleworking and teleconferencing.
Social Exclusion	A number of linked problems including unemployment, poor educational achievement, low incomes, poor housing, bad health and poor accessibility which tend to have a cumulative and reinforcing effect on each other, preventing people from fully participating in society.
Soft Measure	A transport policy or proposal aimed at achieving more sustainable use of the transport system through changes in personal behaviour.
Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Through Ticketing	A facility to undertake a journey by public transport using several services on one ticket.
Travel Plan	A package of actions set out by a workplace, school, other organisation or new development to encourage sustainable travel by all users to and from the site.
Trunk Road	A highway maintained by the Welsh Government.

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Appendix 2 – Priority Rail Improvements for the SE Wales Valleys Area

Deliverable in the Short Term

- Frequency enhancements on the Rhymney Valley rail line to provide a half hourly service between Rhymney and Bargoed
- Provision of additional trains stopping at Energlyn Station to provide a 15 minute service consistent with other stations between Bargoed and Cardiff
- Provision of additional trains between Caerphilly and Cardiff using the new bay platform at Caerphilly station
- Provision of additional trains between Cardiff and Pontypridd using the new bay platform at Pontypridd station
- Infrastructure improvements, frequency enhancements and associated additional trains on the Ebbw Valley line to facilitate additional train services
- New rail station at Abertillery on the Ebbw Valley line
- New rail station at Crumlin on the Ebbw Valley line with the potential to link to the redevelopment of the Navigation colliery site
- Rail station improvements to enhance facilities for passengers at stations including Bargoed, Caerphilly, Merthyr, Pengam, Treherbert, Treforest Industrial Estate and Rhymney

Medium and Longer Term

- Reopening of the Rail line between Ystrad Mynach and Bedlinog including a new rail station and Nelson and potential new station at Penallta
- Reopening of passenger transport services between Caerphilly, Machen and Newport
- Re-instatement of passenger services along existing freight line between Aberdare and Hirwaun and construction of new stations at Hirwaun and Trecynon. Scope for potential park and ride facilities at key locations.
- Re-instatement of passenger services along disused line between Pontyclun and Tyn y Nant (Beddau) and construction of new stations at Talbot Green, Llantrisant, Gwaun Miskin and Tyn y Nant (Beddau).
- Frequency increase on the Abergavenny line which would have a positive impact on both Cwmbran and Pontypool/New Inn stations
- Electrification of the Marches Line which serves Cwmbran and Pontypool/New Inn station

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Appendix 3 – List of Consultees

To be completed following consultation exercise



COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF MOTION - TAX JUSTICE

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Council is asked to consider the Notice of Motion as set out in Paragraph 3 of this Report. In accordance with Rule 11 (3) of the Constitution, the Mayor has agreed to allow the motion to be dealt with at Council, without being first discussed at an overview and scrutiny committee.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A Notice of Motion has been received from Councillor Jan Jones and is supported by Councillors Nigel Dix, Mrs Pat Cook, Allan Rees and Colin Durham..
- 2.2 The Notice of Motion meets the criteria set out in the Council's Constitution and in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure is now referred to Council for consideration.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 Councillors Jan Jones, Nigel Dix, Pat Cook, Allan Rees and Colin Durham request in their Notice of Motion that:-

"This council resolves to send a letter to all three local MPs asking them to support the following motion and raise this vital issue in Parliament.

While many ordinary people face falling household income and rising costs of living, some multinational companies are avoiding billions of pounds of tax from a tax system that fails to make them pay their fair share. Local governments in developing countries and the UK alike would benefit from a fairer tax system where multinational companies pay their fair share, enabling authorities around the world to provide quality public services. The UK government must listen to the strength of public feeling and act to end the injustice of tax dodging by large multinational companies, in developing countries and the UK".

- 3.2 The following information is provided by the Members in support of their notice of motion.

Reasons for the Motion:

- It has been estimated that the UK Treasury loses as much as £12 billion to tax dodging by multinational companies every year. Developing countries lose three times more to tax dodging than they receive in aid each year - enough to give a basic education to the 57 million children currently missing out.
- The UK has a particular responsibility to end tax dodging, as it is responsible for 1 in 5 of the world's tax havens in the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.
- The use of tax havens by UK companies is rife, with 98 of the FTSE 100 companies routinely using tax havens.

- Large multinational companies pay as little as 5% in corporate taxes globally, while smaller businesses pay up to 30%.

This Council Believes:

- As a local authority we have a duty to provide the best possible public services.
- Our ability to provide quality local services would be significantly enhanced by the increased revenues from the government tackling tax dodging.
- All who benefit from public spending should contribute their fair share.
- The UK must take a lead role in creating a fairer tax system and combating tax dodging.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are financial implications associated with this report.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are personnel implications associated with this report.

7. CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 There has been no consultation undertaken.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Council is asked to consider the Notice of Motion outlined in paragraph 3 above.

Author: Helen Morgan, Committee Services Officer.



COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: WLGA CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

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

-
- 1.1 The report was considered by the Democratic Services Committee on the 15th December 2014.
 - 1.2 Members noted and endorsed the Members Support and Development Strategy 2014/18, as attached in appendix 1 of the Officer's report and having considered its requirements also supported the commitment to reapply for the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.
 - 1.3 The Democratic Services Committee having discussed the report fully endorsed the recommendations contained therein and recommend that Council re-affirm its commitment to the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development and adopt the Member Support and Development Strategy 2015/18.
 - 1.4 Members are invited to consider the report and the above recommendation.

Author: E. Sullivan, Democratic Services Officer, Ext 4420.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Democratic Services Committee Report - 15th December 2014 - Agenda Item No. 5

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DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - 15TH DECEMBER 2014

SUBJECT: WLGA CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek endorsement to the attached draft Member Support and Development Strategy 2015/18 (attached at appendix 1) and confirm commitment to re-apply for Wales Charter for Member Support and Development prior to its presentation to Council.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report seeks endorsement to continue operating member support and development activities in accordance with the WLGA's Wales Charter for Member Support and Development. The Charter is a public statement and quality standard benchmark for delivering effective member support and development.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Member support and development opportunities assist members to discharge their community leader, decision-making and scrutiny roles effectively.

4. WALES CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 On 21st February 2006, full Council agreed that a work programme should be developed to implement the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development. The Charter aims to develop, recognise and share good practice in the support and development of elected Members.
- 4.2 The Charter was developed by the WLGA, in partnership with Members and officers from across Wales. Each section of the Charter contains specific actions to be undertaken. It is divided into the following 4 sections:
- Members roles and responsibilities
 - Member development
 - Member support
 - Member facilities
- 4.3 The Council was the first in Wales to be awarded the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development in 2007. The Council's member development activities were subsequently reassessed by a Peer Review Team led by the WLGA in 2011 and Charter status was reconfirmed. The next review will include a self assessment and audit of documentary

evidence by the WLGA. Following the results of this desktop assessment additional evidence may be requested or alternatively, the Charter will be awarded. Members may wish to note that the Welsh Government has announced its grant funding which supports the WLGA member development initiatives, including Charter, will not be renewed for 2015/16. Therefore, the future of the WLGA's Member support staff is uncertain beyond the end of this financial year.

- 4.4 The Council's Member Development Strategy underpins the Council's approach to Member Support and Development. This has been reviewed to coincide with the re-assessment of Charter status and is attached at appendix 1. A full list of the Charter requirements is attached at appendix 2.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Charter will assist members in their Councillor role and training and development opportunities are open equally to all councillors.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a specific budget allocated to fund Member development activities. For 2014/15 a total of £14,000 was available for conferences and training courses.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been reflected in the recommendation of this report

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to recommend that Council re-affirm their commitment to the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development and endorse the Members' Development Strategy 2015/18 attached at appendix 1.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To provide an agreed recognised standard of member support and development.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Author: Jonathan Jones, Democratic Services Manager
Consultees: Cllr Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance.
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.
Angharad Price, Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Members' Development Strategy 2015/18
Appendix 2 The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development



CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2015/18

FOREWORD FROM GROUP LEADERS

Local Authorities have an obligation to ensure that they support effective elected Members' working to provide and improve corporate governance, local democracy and local services.

Caerphilly County Borough Council recognises that Councillors have a pivotal role in taking forward the improvement agenda and that its success will depend on elected Members having the capacity to provide best possible services to its residents.

The Council is committed to providing the vital democratic arrangements and support services to ensure that Members are able to effectively fulfil the requirements of their office and develop a culture where learning and development are "the norm".

Effective Member Development is essential to ensure that Councillors update their knowledge and learn new skills, because all Members have a common need for continuing development to meet the ever increasing and changing challenges of their individual and political roles as well as contributing to national, local and community demands. The authority wishes to help Members recognise and develop skills and knowledge to help them fulfil their Councillor role and assist them in preparing for more senior positions.

As leaders of the political groups represented on the Council and with the full support of our elected colleagues, the Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team, we are committed to ensuring that the Council provides the best development opportunities for Members to enable them to fulfil the expectations of the electorate. We believe that this strategy will assist Members in providing strong leadership for both the Council and improving services for our communities.

Councillor Keith Reynolds
Leader of Council and the Labour Group

Councillor Colin Mann
Leader of the Plaid Cymru Group

Councillor Dave Rees
Leader of the Independent Group

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1. Introduction

1.1 Where ever possible, Caerphilly County Borough Council aims to provide continuously improving services which inevitably means the need for Councillors to learn and embrace new roles and responsibilities.

1.2 The Council is operating in a constantly changing environment, having to respond to reducing budgets while taking on new responsibilities. This requires elected Members and a workforce that is flexible and responsive to change. Recent Welsh Government announcements have presented the Council with an extremely challenging and demanding programme which includes:-

- The possibility of local government re-organisation.
- Responding to significant budget cuts year on year.
- Collaborating with other local authorities and agencies to improve service delivery.
- New and challenging roles for elected Members.
- The expected new duty to scrutinise other public service providers.

1.3 In embracing these challenges, the Council must continue to develop its Members so that they:

- Are responsive to change and able to prioritise.
- Maximise the use of all available resources.
- Can challenge the Council and other organisations fairly and identify best practise.
- Are focussed on maximising the outcomes provided by public services within the challenging climate of diminishing financial resources.
- Are influential and effective community leaders.

2. Purpose

2.1 To enable Councillors to operate efficiently and effectively in fulfilling their various roles it has been the Council's policy to identify the learning and development needs of all Councillors.

2.2 For a number of years Caerphilly County Borough Council has adopted a proactive approach towards Member Development and support in the form of internally and externally facilitated presentations, seminars and workshops as well as through specific training courses. The Council has supported Members' development through the allocation of a specific budget and applied its policy on an equal basis to all 73 Members as well as supporting co-opted members of the standards and scrutiny committees. This system was formalised in 2007 when the Council was awarded the WLGA's Charter for Member Support and Development.

2.3 The Council recognises the need to provide opportunities and support for members and their learning and development needs. Charter status underlines the continuing importance of training and development for Members and ensures future provision will be based on need, provided by suitably qualified personnel where the quality of training is monitored for quality and provided to members on an equal basis,

3. Member Development Strategy – Aims and Objectives

3.1 Member Development refers to any development activities or training programmes specifically designed to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of elected Members in their varied roles.

3.2 This strategy aims to equip Members with the skills and knowledge they need in their current (as set out in their role descriptions) and future roles. To ensure that this strategy meets the needs of members and the Council, activities will be properly planned, resourced, monitored and evaluated.

3.3 The strategy's main objectives are:

- To achieve a clear and shared understanding of the various Member roles;
- To improve the performance of senior post holders aided by annual Personal Support and Development Interviews;
- To provide an integrated induction and on going role skills and knowledge programme of development opportunities for all Members;
- To provide support tailored to the needs of Members based on individual training needs analysis;
- To monitor the impact of the strategy and use feedback to improve over time and celebrate success.

3.4 The Council will provide elected Members with flexible and responsive training and development that is based on individual and organisational needs. This will maximise the effectiveness of Members in their various roles to ensure that Caerphilly County Borough Council will be regarded as a leader in the provision of support to elected Members and deserving of Charter status.

3.5 On 22nd April 2014 full Council approved the introduction of 3 specific levels of member training; Mandatory, Recommended and Requested.

- a. Mandatory Training involves training associated with Members' statutory responsibilities, Audit Committee and regulatory committee membership and committees with personnel functions to ensure all councillors have the necessary

knowledge to enable them to operate within the Council's Code of Conduct, have an understanding of the Council's constitution, undertake common essential duties and, where appropriate, discharge regulatory or personnel committee functions.

- b. Recommended Training is training targeted at specific roles, and will include; chairing skills for committee chairs, scrutiny training for scrutiny committee members, cabinet member training on their roles and responsibilities, performance review training for those in receipt of a senior salary, members of committees will receive specific training on the changes to legislation and committee skills.
- c. Requested Training – This type of training would be identified by individual Members as part of the councillor training needs analysis undertaken every 2 years.

4. **Implementing the Charter Requirements**

- 4.1 It is fundamental to its success that Members take a leading role in its development, will oversee its implementation, willingly participate with the requirements of the Charter and play a full role in evaluating and monitoring its progress and effectiveness.
- 4.2 The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development sets out a rigorous and structured approach for member development. Set out below are the Charter's main requirements and the Council's approach to their implementation:
- 4.3 **Members committing support to the strategy and a learning culture by participating in Charter requirements** – At a meeting of full Council in February 2006 Members unanimously agreed that the Council should aim for Charter status. Members re-affirmed their commitment to the provisions of the Charter at full Council in October 2010 and (date to be inserted). Members will be fully involved in the development and monitoring of this strategy going forward.
- 4.4 **Undertaking a training and development needs analysis with each Member to identify individual and collective development requirements.** These will be undertaken through personal development questionnaires and an invitation to attend a subsequent interview if this is preferred. This exercise will be undertaken with Members, every 2 years to ensure that the authority remains up-to-date with Member requirements and can be responsive to new organisational changes as they emerge.
- 4.5 **Creating Personal Development Plans for all Members within six months of the Charter submission.** This will be completed following each biennial training needs analysis survey.
- 4.6 **Responding to the development needs of Members** identified in their Personal Development Plans on the basis that activities may need to be prioritised according to demand and within available resources.

- 4.7 **Devising and publishing a biennial Member Development Programme** that is based on Members training needs analysis and sets out development opportunities available to Members. The programme will be approved by the Democratic Services Committee.
- 4.8 **Personal Support and Development Interviews (PSDIs)** will be undertaken on a Member to Member basis. These will begin with Cabinet Members having PSDIs and followed by all Members in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance. There is an agreed cascading structure for undertaking the PSDIs. The outcome of the PSDIs will inform Members' Personal Development Plans and, subsequently, the training programmes provided by the Council.
- 4.9 **Members are Supported with Role Descriptions** – These have been drafted and agreed for the following roles; Leader; Deputy Leaders; Cabinet Members; Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, Planning, Licensing, Rights of Way, Democratic Services and Audit Committees and all other Members to include their local ward role.

5. Strategy Delivery

- 5.1 The Member "Champion" for this strategy is Councillor Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance. The Democratic Services Committee will oversee the implementation of this strategy and agree and review training and development activities for elected Members by:
- Ensuring that Member Development becomes part of the overall mainstream organisational activity.
 - Providing advice on Members Support Services, particularly Member Development.
 - Coordinating the Member Development Programme.
 - Monitoring progress against the Strategy's objectives and the implementation of members training, support and development more widely.
- 5.2 All Member training and development activities provided as a result of this Strategy will:
- Be secured from effective and appropriate training providers or facilitators from within or outside the authority.
 - Respond to the needs of Members for method and style of delivery.
 - Be provided taking into account the principles of the Council's Equality of Opportunity Policy and be arranged at convenient times and locations.

6. Evaluation of the Strategy

- 6.1 Progress within the strategy will be monitored and evaluated by the Democratic Services Committee.
- 6.2 The development of Members as a result of the activities will be assessed by themselves with support of senior members if participating in the Personal Support and Development Interviews.

7. Resources

- 7.1 A amount is included in the Member Services budget for Members Training and Development activities. The Head of Democratic Services has statutory responsibility for Member Development and is supported in this on a practical day-to-day basis by the Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer. Other officers will be expected to support this Strategy by providing in-house development activities.

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The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development

A. Member Roles and Responsibilities	Charter Requirement
1. Members are supported with role descriptions.	<p>Role descriptions are adopted for the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader • Deputy Leader • Cabinet Members • Scrutiny members • Scrutiny Chairs • Scrutiny Co-optees • Chairs of statutory committees • Chairs of area committees • Chair of the Audit Committee • Members of Audit Committee • Chair of Democratic Services • Member of Democratic Services • Ward Member, including community leadership and case work • Chair of Standards committee • Member of Standards Committee • Leader of the Opposition • Member Champion <p>Guidance is provided to members on their role on outside bodies.</p>
2. Members are supported in undertaking their duties according to high standards of conduct.	<p>All members are provided with training and development in the detail of the local code of conduct, taking into account any changes in the model or local codes as they emerge.</p>
3. Members are supported in understanding their roles and responsibilities as set out in the Constitution.	<p>All members have received training on and understand the contents of the constitution, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the roles, responsibilities and limits to the roles of committees • the role of individual members and officers • Member/officer protocols • meeting practice • standing orders • rules of debate
B. Member Development	
B1. A member learning and development strategy has been adopted.	<p>A local member development strategy is in place. The strategy sets out the approach that the authority and the Democratic Services Committee takes to member development. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a commitment to and methodology for undertaking development needs analyses through a PDR scheme or TNA for those members not requesting a PDR, which identifies the local and national, collective and individual development

	<p>needs of all members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a commitment to and methodology for developing members according to the needs of the organisation. • a commitment to and methodology for creating personal development <u>plans</u> for all members. • a methodology for responding to the development needs of members identified in their personal support and development reviews or TNAs.
<p>B2. Arrangements are in place for <u>all</u> members to be offered a PDR.</p>	<p>Personal support and development reviews which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • based on role descriptions • contribute to personal development plans • are conducted by senior members or other deemed suitably qualified as set out in the Measure guidance • are <u>made available</u> for all members and <u>must</u> be undertaken by members in a receipt of a senior/civic salary. <p>Note, although the measure does not require the leader to undertake a review, the Charter does. The Charter requires that all members in receipt of a senior salary undertake this. The Measure is voluntary but for all members.</p>
<p>B3. A development programme for councillors is in place with a mechanism for its annual review.</p> <p>All councillors are made aware of, guided to and are able to access the development activities equally.</p>	<p>An annual development programme informed by the member development strategy is in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual development programme is planned and publicised in advance. • Members are made aware of development opportunities provided in response to their needs. <p>The timings and settings of activities are varied to enable equal access by all, including those members who are working, are carers or have child care responsibilities.</p>
<p>B4. Prospective candidates, candidates and new members are informed of their role and responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council uses the national guidance and support materials available for candidates and prospective candidates. ▪ All new or returning members are provided with a programme of induction.
<p>B5. Development activities are relevant and of high quality.</p>	<p>Learning activities are provided in appropriate styles and settings based on the learning needs and styles of individuals and committees. The authority has a systematic and effective approach to commissioning, developing, providing and evaluating its training and development activities. This could include internal, external and collaborative arrangements.</p>

B6. There is a clear responsibility for leading the programme, driving the strategy and monitoring the out comes.	The Authority has clearly defined the arrangements for developing, implementing and monitoring its strategy for member support and development. Individual members and officers have clear roles in leading and championing this area. The needs of all political groups and independent members are taken into account regardless of political affiliation.
B7. Resources are identified and provided for member development.	Dedicated resources are identified and provided for member development activities. The authority provides the "reasonable level" of development required by the Measure.
B8. Members are offered the opportunity to be mentored by member peers.	The authority is exploring the needs of members to be mentored. Any member who has requested a mentor is provided with one. Mentors are trained in mentoring skills.
C. Member Support	
C1. Officer support is provided for member development, support and scrutiny.	Every member committee, panel, forum etc. has officer support provided. Members are also supported in their case work. Overview and scrutiny committees have dedicated support from officers who can provide impartial research, support and advice. The nature of the support has been clearly articulated to members
C2. Arrangements made for the business of the Council are flexible and enable members to participate fully regardless of personal circumstances	A review of the arrangements for council business has taken place and as a result, meeting times, arrangements and venues reflect the needs of members as closely as possible. Members have been involved in developing the approaches to remote attendance as set out in the standing orders as/when required by the Measure.
C3. Contact management and communication	Systems are in place to enable members to liaise with council officers regarding services provided both within and outside the authority. Community groups and individuals are also assisted in contacting local members. Members are able to contact stakeholders.
C4. Annual reports	The authority makes arrangements for all members to be able to publish annual reports, according to the guidance in the measure.
C5. Personal support for members	Members are provided with access to guidance on their rights and benefits as members.
D. Member Facilities	
D1. All members are provided with adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members are provided with the equipment, or connectivity required to undertake their role.

<p>access to ICT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic training is provided in its use and help desk facilities are available. ▪ Members are supported in remote working through the use of remote access codes and Skype etc. ▪ Members are provided with support to enable them to remotely attend meetings according to the standards set out in the standing orders (when implemented through the Measure). ▪ Members are able to communicate with the council and the public electronically.
<p>D2. Information resources are provided</p>	<p>A central collection of information dedicated to member needs is provided as part of the information and research support available to members.</p>
<p>D3. Facilities for members to work in the Council are available.</p>	<p>Member needs have been reviewed and where required the following are provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared areas for example for each political group. ▪ Private rooms for meetings. ▪ Offices for senior office holders.

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COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: GROUNDWORK WALES REPRESENTATION

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Caerphilly County Borough Council has been accepted onto the Groundwork Wales Board, and is now able to make one nomination to the Board, which Council is requested to nominate.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Cabinet (12th November 2014) gave permission for officers to take appropriate steps in ensuring the merger of Groundwork Caerphilly into Groundwork Wales. Caerphilly County Borough Council has now been accepted as a Member on to the Groundwork Wales Board, and Council is requested to agree the Council's representative on the Board through its one nomination.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The work of Groundwork links to the Greener outcome of *Caerphilly Delivers the Single Integrated Plan 2013-14*. Katy Stevenson Groundwork Caerphilly's Executive Directive (and current Acting Director Groundwork Wales) is the Lead for the Greener Outcome sitting on the Single Integrated Plan leads group.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 At the Groundwork Wales Board meeting 28th November 2014 Caerphilly County Borough Council was accepted as a Member on to the Board of Groundwork Wales. Council is now requested to nominate one representative to sit on the Groundwork Wales Board.
- 4.2 For the time being the Groundwork Caerphilly Board will continue to meet with the following Council representatives in place:
- Cllr Mann (nominated)
 - Cllr P Cooke (nominated)
 - Cllr P Leonard (nominated)
 - Cllr Woodyatt (co-opted)

Together with:

- Phil Davy (company secretary, co-opted member on personal basis)
- Paul Cooke (advisor, CCBC)

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Equalities implications are fully taken into account by the work of Groundwork, which is based on improving life chances of local people, and improving the living environment of the borough.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council currently provides core funding for Groundwork Caerphilly, which for 2014-15 stands at £43,860.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Relations with Groundwork Caerphilly are managed through the Groundwork Caerphilly Liaison Group, which meets quarterly with the Acting Chief Executive Officer of Groundwork Wales. Sitting on the Liaison Group are the Council's Policy & Research Manager, Team Leader, Sustainable Development & Living Environment, and Group Manager (Strategy Funding & Support).

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The views of the consultees commenting on the report's content have been incorporated into the report. The names of all consultees are given at the end of the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 For Council to nominate the representative to sit on the Groundwork Wales Board.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 For the Council to have a nominated representative sitting on the Groundwork Wales Board.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Jackie Dix, Policy & Research Manager
Consultees: Katy Stevenson, Executive Director of Groundwork Caerphilly (also currently Acting Director Groundwork Wales)
Mr. Bryn Davies, Chair of Groundwork Caerphilly
Cllr Keith Reynolds
Cllr Robin Woodyatt
Cllr Colin Mann
Cllr Philippa Leonard
Cllr Patricia Cook
Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director Corporate Services
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Colin Jones, Head of Property and Performance
Phil Davy, Head of Programmes
Paul Cooke, Team Leader, Sustainable Development & Living Environment
Antony Bolter, Group Manager (Strategy Funding & Support)



COUNCIL - 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT OF COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION - REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COUNCIL SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

REPORT BY: INTERIM HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES/MONITORING OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend to Members amendments to the Council's Constitution to reflect interim working arrangements.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Council is required to maintain an up-to-date Constitution to ensure that decisions and its procedures are made effectively in an open and transparent manner.

3. THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council's operates, how decisions are made and the procedures, which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that the Council's Constitution is reviewed and revised periodically on an ad hoc basis to take into account such matters as changes to secondary legislation, to update protocols and procedures and to review the responsibility of functions.
- 3.3 As a result of the recent changes to the Interim Management arrangements currently in operation within the Authority it is necessary to make consequential amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Council's Health Social Care and Well Being and Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committees (on a temporary basis).
- 3.4 Members are asked to note that the temporary consequential amendments proposed will be effective for as long as the interim management arrangements continue to operate, when the arrangements cease it is proposed a further Report will be presented to Members regarding the constitutional arrangements.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's Constitution takes account of all equality related issues.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no personnel implications.

7. CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The views of the consultees have been reflected in the report (where appropriate).

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members are asked to note and approve the track changes proposed in the relevant extract from the Council's Constitution attached at Appendix 1 and to authorise the Council's Interim Monitoring Officer to update the Council's Constitution.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To ensure that the Council's Constitution is up-to-date and reflects current arrangements.

10. STATUTORY POWER

10.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2000.

Author: Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Dave Street, Director of Social Services
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services
Councillor K. Reynolds, Leader
Councillor G. Jones, Deputy Leader
Councillor C. Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance/
Business Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Extract from Article 2 of the Council's Constitution, shown in italics and track changes

Terms of Reference: Health, Social Care and Well-Being Scrutiny Committee

The Caerphilly Delivers Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017 Responsibilities

“Caerphilly Delivers” is the LSB Single Integrated Plan for 2013-17, which replaces the following strategic plans:

- Community Strategy
- Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy
- Children and Young People’s Plan
- Community Safety Strategy

The Single Integrated Plan is the shared strategic vision for the county borough developed by the LSB and its partners, including CCBC.

It identifies that this vision will be achieved by the delivery of 5 inter-dependent and inter-related Outcomes, namely:

- Prosperous Caerphilly
- Safer Caerphilly
- Learning Caerphilly
- Healthier Caerphilly
- Greener Caerphilly

Under each of these Outcomes a range of Priorities have been identified for action.

The Priorities for the Healthier Outcome are:-

H1: Address the inequities in the rate of low birth weight babies across the county borough.

H2: Improve lifestyles of the population in the county borough so that people recognise and take responsibility for their own health and well-being, and make use of the opportunities and support available to them.

H3: Reduce the variation in healthy life expectancy in the county borough so that the health and well-being of individuals experiencing disadvantage improves to the levels found among the advantaged

H4: Improve the education, information, early intervention, prevention and harm reduction in relation to substance misuse in the county borough

H5: Ensure people are supported to live in their own communities to lead safe, fulfilled and independent lives

	The priority for the Safer Caerphilly Outcome is S4: Ensure people are supported to live in their own homes and communities in safety
	Provision of Children's & Adults Social Care under statute
	Provision of advice, guidance and support.
	The assessment, care planning and reviewing of all support packages for service users meeting the defined eligibility thresholds in line with current legislation regulation and statutory guidance
	Commissioning and contracting for Social Services
Directorate of the Environment Responsibilities	Public Health (including infectious diseases and health promotion/education)
	Food Safety Enforcement
	<i>Pollution Control (including noise, litter and illicit tipping, air and water quality, contaminated land)</i>
	<i>Public Health (statutory nuisance and sewer/drains)</i>
	<i>Trading Standards</i>
	<i>Health and Safety of commercial premises</i>
	<i>Community Safety, CCTV & Community Safety Wardens</i>
	<i>Pest Control, Dog Warden, Animal Trespassing Services</i>
	<i>Animal Health and Welfare Enforcement</i>
	<i>Licensing</i>
	<i>Registrar of Births, Deaths, Marriages/Civil Partnerships</i>
	<i>Building Cleaning</i>
	<i>Education & Social Services Transport Operations</i>
<i>Catering</i>	

Cabinet Members Reporting to Health, Social Care and Well-Being Scrutiny Committee:

- Cabinet Member for Social Services
- Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure Services

Terms of Reference: The Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee	
The Caerphilly Delivers Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017 Responsibilities	<p>"Caerphilly Delivers" is the LSB Single Integrated Plan for 2013-17, which replaces the following strategic plans:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Strategy • Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy • Children and Young People's Plan • Community Safety Strategy <p>The Single Integrated Plan is the shared strategic vision</p>

	<p>for the county borough developed by the LSB and its partners, including CCBC.</p> <p>It identifies that this vision will be achieved by the delivery of 5 inter-dependent and inter-related Outcomes, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous Caerphilly • Safer Caerphilly • Learning Caerphilly • Healthier Caerphilly • Greener Caerphilly <p>Under each of these Outcomes a range of Priorities have been identified for action.</p> <p>The Priorities for the Prosperous Caerphilly Outcome are:-</p> <p>P1: Improve local employment opportunities including access to opportunities across a wider geographical area P2: Improve standards of housing and communities, giving appropriate access to services across the county borough P3: Provide support to enable local people to compete for all employment opportunities</p> <p>The Priorities for the Greener Caerphilly Outcome are:-</p> <p>G1: Improve local environmental quality G2: Reduce the causes of and adapt to the effects of climate change G3: Maximise the use of the environment for health benefits</p>
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Directorate of the Environment Responsibilities	Waste Collection, Waste Treatment & Disposal and Street Cleansing
	Pollution Control (including noise, litter and illicit tipping, air and water quality, contaminated land)
	Public Health (statutory nuisance and sewer/drains
	Trading Standards
	Health and Safety of commercial premises
	Community, Safety, CCTV & Community Safety Wardens
	Pest Control, Dog Warden, Animal Trespassing Services
	Animal Health and Welfare Enforcement
	Licensing
	Registrar of Births, Deaths, Marriages/Civil Partnerships
	Burials, Cemeteries and Bereavement Services
	Highways Maintenance
	Street Lighting
Engineering Services	

Land Drainage
<i>Building Cleaning</i>
Fleet Management & Maintenance
Parks & Outdoor Spaces Facilities
Leisure & Sports Development
Public Conveniences
Planning – Strategic & Development Plan Policy
Planning – Urban Renewal & Town Centre Management
Planning – Development & Building Control (excluding those matters set out in the Terms of Reference of the Planning Committee)
Planning – Countryside & Landscape Services
Economic Development & European Programme Funding
Arts Development
Public Transport
Land Reclamation & Tips
Road Safety
Traffic Management (including Traffic Regulation Orders & Notices)
<i>Education & Social Services Transport Operations</i>
Highway Development Control
Car Parking
Civil Engineering Design & Procurement
Structures
Transportation & Planning Improvements
Tourism
<i>Catering</i>

Cabinet Member Reporting to The Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee:

- Cabinet Member for Highways, Transportation & Engineering
- Cabinet Member for Community & Leisure Services
- Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Sustainable Development



COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE REPORT – FOLLOW UP OF SPECIAL INSPECTION AND REPORTS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 A report has been published by the Wales Audit Office (WAO), detailing their findings following a review undertaken during October 2014.
- 1.2 The report from the Auditors requires a formal response. Their report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 This Council report includes a high level Action Plan for Members to consider and approve, to ensure that the one recommendation and the proposals for improvement are considered, actioned and that there is a robust monitoring process in place to ensure a successful outcome.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report refers to the follow up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest, and includes a high level Action Plan proposed to Council for approval.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Good governance is a pre-requisite of the activities of any Local Authority, along with the requirement to continually improve the Authority's services.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 During October and November 2013, the Auditor General undertook a Special Inspection into the corporate governance arrangements at Caerphilly County Borough Council (the Council). The Special Inspection was to follow up the findings of the Appointed Auditor who issued a Report in the Public Interest in March 2013.
- 4.2 That report, published in March 2013, highlighted failures in governance arrangements and inadequacies in the processes followed by the Council to set the pay of Chief Officers. The Special Inspection also examined the wider governance issues highlighted in the Auditor General's Annual Improvement Report, published on 10 September 2013.
- 4.3 A second Report in the Public Interest on the Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances was published in December 2013. Court proceedings and disciplinary investigations are continuing in relation to the issues reported in the first Report in the Public Interest.

- 4.4 The report on the Special Inspection was published in January 2014 and concluded that a combination of a number of weaknesses inevitably led to governance failings at the Council and whilst the Council was making encouraging progress in improving its governance arrangements, it was too early to conclude whether these improvements could be sustained.
- 4.5 The Auditor General made eight recommendations in the Special Inspection Report of January 2014. The Appointed Auditor also made a series of recommendations in his two Reports in the Public Interest.
- 4.6 During October 2014, the WAO conducted reviews to:-
- Examine the Council's progress in addressing the recommendations made in the Special Inspection Report and the recommendations made by the Appointed Auditor in his second Report in the Public Interest.
 - Assess the Council's progress since the Special Inspection in addressing the recommendations made by the Appointed Auditor in his first Report in the Public Interest.
 - Follow up the Council's progress since the Special Inspection in addressing the four proposals for improvement identified in the WAO's Human Resources (HR) and workforce planning thematic review undertaken in 2011.
 - Provide a baseline assessment of the Council's progress in developing its approach to self-evaluation. This is a review carried over from the WAO's 2013-14 Regulatory Programme of Work.
- 4.7 The WAO's overall conclusion is that the Council has made good progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the Special Inspection Report and the Reports in the Public Interest. However, the Council still needs to take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential user car allowances and to further improve other areas, particularly scrutiny.
- 4.8 The WAO recognises that the Council has addressed the majority of the WAO's recommendations, recognising that some of those outstanding are due to be completed within the next three to four months. The WAO has identified that further work is needed to more fully address other areas, such as Internal Audit, Scrutiny, Self-Evaluation, and to develop an HR Strategy and workforce planning.
- 4.9 To assist the Council in making the required improvement, the WAO have set out a list of eight proposals for improvement in addition to the one recommendation. Council are required to consider and accept these eight proposals and agree the Action Plan attached as Appendix 2. The one recommendation has previously been accepted by Council.
- 4.10 Council are requested to note that further progress in respect of the proposals for Improvement P1 to P8 have been made since the external audit work was concluded. These are identified for each proposal in Appendix 2. In addition, a report is included on the Agenda for debate and determination at Council in respect of the one recommendation (R1).
- 4.11 The WAO have acknowledged to date how the Improving Governance Programme Board (IGPB) has successfully driven the Council's Action Plan to improve its governance arrangements. The Board is now well established, with a regular reporting format to ensure that Corporate Management Team, along with Cabinet, play a key active role in monitoring progress. There are also periodic updates to the Audit Committee. The strong project management arrangements driven by a Senior Project Officer have been essential to ensure the pace of improvement has been maintained.
- 4.12 Hence, to ensure that this impetus is continued, it is proposed that the IGPB continue to monitor progress in respect of completing those outstanding actions.

- 4.13 Cabinet reports will be presented quarterly and where appropriate, reports will be presented to Council along with progress reports to the Audit Committee. These reports will include detail of how any remaining recommendations can be completed and monitored.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Corporate governance is directly linked to the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives (in particular SEO 7 - Corporate Compliance), which stem from duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 5.2 Equalities Implications are a standard part of all committee reports, in order to ensure that due regard has been given to the outcomes of decisions on individuals and groups from all communities of Caerphilly County Borough, regardless of their backgrounds and circumstances. Consultation and Engagement practices also reflect this due regard.
- 5.3 Guidance documents and a comprehensive training programme are available to staff members and elected members on the Equalities and Welsh Language aspects of undertaking their roles.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is not anticipated that there will be any additional costs that are not already incorporated into the mainstream budget provision to implement the one recommendation and the eight proposals for improvement.
- 6.2 WAO costs associated with the work they have undertaken can be accommodated within the Revenue Budget for External Audit fees.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Council accept the "Wales Audit Office Follow Up Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest" Report including the one recommendation R1 and the proposals for improvement P1 to P8.
- 9.2 Council approves the Action Plan at Appendix 2 along with the approval to continue with the IGPB arrangements as detailed in Para 4.12 in respect of monitoring arrangements and delivery of the Action Plan.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To accept the "WAO Follow Up Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest" Report to ensure that progress can be made in addressing one outstanding recommendation and the 8 proposals for improvement.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and 2000.

Author: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Consultees: Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S 151 Officer
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Councillor Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member for HR & Governance / Business Manager
Gareth Hardacre, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development
Stephen Harris, Acting Head of Corporate Finance
Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property
Alessandra Veronese, E Government Team Leader / Project Manager IGPB

Background Papers:
File WAO CGI Inspections

Appendices:
Appendix 1 "WAO Follow Up Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest" Report –
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Appendix 2 Summary of Actions required for the one Recommendation R1 and the eight proposals
for improvement P1 to P8



WALES AUDIT OFFICE

SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Audit year: 2014-15

Issued: January 2015

Document reference: 696A2014

Status of report

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Huw Vaughan Thomas, the Auditor General for Wales, was supported by Anthony Barrett, Alan Morris, Non Jenkins, Martin Gibson and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP in conducting the follow-up and producing this report.

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Summary report

Summary

1. During October and November 2013, the Auditor General undertook a Special Inspection into the corporate governance arrangements at Caerphilly County Borough Council (the Council). The Special Inspection was to follow up the findings of the Appointed Auditor who issued a Report in the Public Interest in March 2013.¹ That report highlighted failures in governance arrangements and inadequacies in the processes followed by the Council to set the pay of chief officers. The Special Inspection also examined the wider governance issues highlighted in the Auditor General's Annual Improvement Report, published on 10 September 2013².
2. A second Report in the Public Interest on the Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances was published in December 2013³. Court proceedings and disciplinary investigations are continuing in relation to the issues reported in the first Report in the Public Interest.
3. The report on the Special Inspection was published in January 2014⁴ and concluded that a combination of a number of weaknesses inevitably led to governance failings at the Council and whilst it was making encouraging progress in improving its governance arrangements, it was too early to conclude whether these improvements could be sustained.
4. The Auditor General made eight recommendations in the Special Inspection report. These are set out in [Appendix 1](#). The Appointed Auditor also made a series of recommendations in his two Reports in the Public Interest. These are set out in [Appendix 2](#).
5. During October 2014, we conducted reviews to:
 - Examine the Council's progress in addressing the recommendations made in the Special Inspection report and the recommendations made by the Appointed Auditor in his second Report in the Public Interest.
 - Assess the Council's progress since the Special Inspection in addressing the recommendations made by the Appointed Auditor in his first Report in the Public Interest.

² [Audit of accounts 2012-13 Report in the Public Interest](#)

³ [Caerphilly County Borough Council Annual Improvement Report 2013](#)

³ [Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances – Report in the Public Interest](#)

³ [Caerphilly County Borough Council – Special Inspection 2013-14](#)

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- Follow up the Council's progress since the Special Inspection in addressing the four proposals for improvement identified in our Human Resources (HR) and workforce planning thematic review undertaken in 2011.
 - Provide a baseline assessment of the Council's progress in developing its approach to self-evaluation. This is a review carried over from our 2013-14 Regulatory Programme of Work.
6. Our overall conclusion is that **the Council has made good progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the Special Inspection report and the Reports in the Public Interest. However, the Council still needs to take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances and to further improve other areas, particularly scrutiny.**
 7. The Council has addressed the majority of our recommendations. Some of those outstanding are due to be completed within the next three to four months. Further work is needed to more fully address other areas, such as Internal Audit, scrutiny, self-evaluation, and to develop an HR strategy and workforce planning.
 8. We have made some new proposals for improvement and one recommendation. A summary of our findings is set out below. Our detailed assessment of the Council's progress in addressing each of our recommendations is set out in [Appendix 3](#).

The Council has implemented most of our recommendations but still needs to take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances

9. The Council's Improving Governance Programme contains over 20 recommendations or workstreams with over 90 actions to address the recommendations made in the Special Inspection and two Reports in the Public Interest, and to strengthen other areas of governance. Approximately 80 per cent of these actions have been completed.
10. The Council has clarified and reinforced governance and decision-making roles. It has developed clear guidance setting out the roles and responsibilities of its key bodies and committees. Decision-making powers and delegations are clear and neither the Corporate Management Team (CMT) as a body nor informal Cabinet meetings have decision-making powers.
11. The Council has provided training to members and officers on governance and decision-making powers and it is evident that there is greater awareness of and adherence to the rules and regulations. Both officers and members seek advice if in doubt.
12. The Improving Governance Programme Board (IGPB) has continued to be effective in driving the implementation of the Council's Improving Governance action plan. It has continued to report regularly to members. The Cabinet has decided to maintain the

Board until all actions have been addressed sufficiently and the findings from the Special Inspection follow-up have been shared with the Council.

- 13.** The Council has strengthened its procurement policies and procedures and the profile and role of the procurement function have been enhanced. An action plan has been devised to address the recommendations made following the Welsh Government procurement fitness check. The action plan has been incorporated into the procurement service's delivery plan. The Council has developed key performance indicators relating to procurement, which are reported to Scrutiny.
- 14.** The Council has strengthened risk management arrangements at both a corporate and service level and has improved the format of the risk register. The CMT reviews the corporate risk register every month and it is being used to trigger discussion on how to address key risks. The Council has aligned the formats of the corporate and directorate risk registers and there is more frequent review of directorate risk registers at directorate and senior management team meetings.
- 15.** The Council has addressed the majority of the actions arising from the two Reports in the Public Interest and there are clear action plans and timetables to address the small number of outstanding actions. However, the Council has not yet taken a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances. We advise the Council to address this as soon as possible.
- 16.** The Council updated and approved its revised Constitution in January 2014. The Constitution now includes a Members' Training and Development Protocol. The need for both members and officers to declare interests is included on all Council, Cabinet and scrutiny committee agendas. It is also read out at the beginning of each meeting. The forward work programme for Cabinet is now published on the Council's website.

Completion of some outstanding areas is due in the next few months

17. Work is underway to address the outstanding recommendations. Many of these outstanding recommendations are due to be implemented in the next three to four months.
18. Roles and responsibilities for whistle-blowing procedures are now clearer and the Council is due to adopt a new whistle-blowing policy adapted from Public Concern at Work (PCAW)⁵ in the next two months. The Council then needs to devise a programme to raise awareness of this new policy.
19. Electronic voting and webcasting of Council meetings is due to be implemented in January 2015. The Council intends to undertake a review of the quality of reports in January 2015.
20. Further work is needed to refine the HR balanced scorecard, which is used to monitor the performance of the service. A balanced scorecard has been developed and is recorded on the Council's performance management system, Ffynnon. However, the service recognises that the scorecard includes too many indicators and needs to be reviewed to provide a more meaningful suite of measures. To date, the emphasis has been on gathering, rather than evaluating, the data available. The HR service plans to undertake a customer survey to provide more qualitative data. The HR service would benefit from consulting key portfolio and scrutiny members as well as CMT on the composition of the scorecard. There has been limited consultation to date outside the HR service.

⁵ Public Concern at Work is a charity that advises individuals, supports organisations and informs public policy on whistle-blowing arrangements.

More work is required to improve scrutiny, internal audit, and self-evaluation; and to develop a human resources strategy and workforce planning

The effectiveness and impact of scrutiny are mixed and its role needs to be clarified

- 21.** The majority of actions contained within the Council's Scrutiny Improvement action plan have been fully or partly completed. It is evident that procedural changes to the way scrutiny meetings are conducted have now been fully implemented. Further training has also been provided to members. The level and quality of challenge posed by members have improved since last year. Short pre-meetings have now been arranged to enable the scrutiny members to discuss agenda items and the questions to be asked although opinions about the benefits of these pre-meetings amongst the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs are mixed. Scrutiny members are still keen to develop their roles. The Council is participating in the Gwent Scrutiny Challenge programme facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.
- 22.** However, many of the officers we interviewed told us that the effectiveness of scrutiny is limited and its role has become confused. Our observation of two scrutiny committees supported these views. Meetings are very long and the agendas lack focus. It is not always clear why items are being considered or how these topics relate specifically to the role of scrutiny. There are a number of items for information which could be handled in a more efficient way outside of the formal scrutiny process. The remit of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee in particular is very wide. This limits the scrutiny committee's effectiveness, as the time dedicated to agenda items is more restricted.
- 23.** The Council needs to improve the prioritisation of agenda items so that members are able to focus on the Council's priorities and areas where they will have the greatest impact. This issue has been discussed by the Scrutiny Leadership Group and a prioritisation matrix has been drafted to help better manage the Scrutiny Committees' work programmes. A range of criteria will be used to determine the appropriateness of an item. It is important that this matrix is used consistently across all Scrutiny Committees.
- 24.** On the whole, members feel that the standard of officer reports is good. Performance information is discussed and challenged regularly at Scrutiny Committees. The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs have suggested how reports could be improved further. This includes greater use of qualitative, historical and comparative information. We understand the Council is currently reviewing what performance information should be considered by Scrutiny Committees.

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25. There have been special scrutiny committees to consider the savings needed to meet the budget shortfall. Task and finish groups have also been used in the past. The Council would benefit from using task and finish groups more frequently to review specific issues in more depth.
 26. The Council has provided further training on risk management to members of the Audit Committee. This essentially repeated the introductory training session undertaken last year. It has not been 'enhanced' training as our recommendation advised. The Council considers that the Audit Committee now needs to put this training into practice. Further training needs will then be determined after the next member training needs analysis is undertaken. There is no ongoing programme of training and the Council needs to ensure that such a programme is put in place and implemented. The Council has indicated its intention to widen the training to scrutiny members too as part of its wider improving governance programme.

The Council is beginning to address aspects of our recommendations to improve Internal Audit but it lacks a robust action plan to ensure it can keep track of progress

27. An updated Internal Audit Charter and Internal Audit Strategy are now in place following discussion with the Audit Committee. The key challenge facing the Council is to ensure that these are now translated into practice.
28. Internal Audit is clearer about the improvements that are needed. The shape of the Internal Audit Plan is evolving. The plan includes reviews on more strategic and broader operational risks, such as the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, but its predominant focus remains on financial areas.
29. The Council has not yet assessed itself against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards that came into effect in April 2013. However, we were advised that there are plans to do this as part of an exercise with neighbouring councils in 2015.
30. A review of Internal Audit working papers found that there is continued scope for improvement in terms of the level of review and the quality of documentation.
31. There needs to be a more robust action plan in place to drive the improvements suggested in our Special Inspection report. This should be regularly monitored by officers and members. There is a risk that the Council may lose sight of the need to continue to improve Internal Audit.

The Council is not yet realising the benefits of the strategic aspects of human resources and workforce planning although significant progress has been made in developing human resources-related policies to facilitate the implementation of the Council's medium-term financial plan

32. In terms of HR, the Council's focus over the past 12 months has been on developing and agreeing a range of workforce tools and policies that will help the Council to achieve the level of savings needed in line with its Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). These include policies on voluntary severance, compulsory redundancy and early retirement.
33. However, the Council still does not have an agreed HR strategy and implementation plan or an integrated workforce plan, despite our recommendation to do this three years ago, which was reinforced in the Special Inspection report last year. Senior officers need to agree on the purpose and benefits of an HR strategy and workforce plan, particularly given the uncertainty of the future shape of the organisation. There has been a lack of corporate drive to ensure these are developed.
34. Workforce planning pilots have been undertaken although two out of four of these pilots required significant work to update the workforce data on the Council's HR/payroll system, iTrent. Workforce planning issues have been considered by individual services as part of the process to identify potential savings. It is recognised that the workforce needs may be different for each service. A workforce planning toolkit has also been developed to be used in conjunction with HR for those areas with the most pressing workforce issues. Some workforce planning questions have now been included in the Service Delivery Plan format, which will help to provide consistency and facilitate the monitoring of implementation.
35. The CMT monitors HR information such as: staff numbers; sickness absence; vacancy management; and use of agency staff. The CMT also oversees recruitment issues and the operation of HR policies to facilitate the implementation of the Council's MTFP. As such, workforce planning is considered at both senior and operational levels to help meet the challenges facing the Council as a result of budget reductions. However, this workforce planning information has not been analysed or consolidated into a corporate document which the Council could use to inform its strategic planning.
36. Although officers feel that the lack of an HR strategy and workforce plan has not hindered planning, the pressures facing the Council are such that it is now more important than ever to have a robust HR strategy and action plan to ensure that resources are planned and utilised effectively.
37. An HR strategy would set out how the Council would deploy its staff to meet its corporate priorities. It would establish a set of guidelines or principles by which decisions about recruitment and retention would follow. It would also set out the expectations of employees and what employees can expect from the Council; its employment values. The action plan would set out the milestones to deliver this and the role and shape of the HR service to facilitate this.

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38. Workforce planning should be an integral part of the strategic management process. It would enable the Council to identify its organisational demands and supply of suitably skilled human resources to help meet its organisational objectives. Effective workforce planning will determine what the Council can do now to be best prepared for the future.
39. To date, the Council has managed to avoid significant compulsory redundancies through vacancy management, natural wastage and redeployment. Nevertheless, the Council recognises that workforce transformation is needed to achieve the estimated £39 million of savings over the next three years. To achieve this, strategic workforce planning will need to go hand in hand with reviewing service delivery. Effective workforce planning can result in substantial savings and can also bring other gains: a more agile workforce that is focused on delivering the best services for citizens and is in the best position to take advantage of the eventual economic upturn.

The Council has taken a measured approach to implementing self-evaluation but it has yet to agree the purpose of self-evaluation, and how it will be used to inform corporate, service and financial planning remain unclear

40. The Council does not have a corporate approach to self-evaluation. Following the evaluation of a number of pilots, it was considered that a corporate template would not be appropriate. With assistance from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Council developed a set of key principles and five questions, which each service used to provide a self-evaluation. The quality and detail of the completed self-evaluations were variable. Despite the provision of guidance and workshops, many of the self-evaluations were also descriptive rather than evaluative. There has been no involvement of members in completing the self-evaluations.
41. Officers have been unclear about the purpose of doing the self-evaluations. They are not being used to inform the Council's MTFP, for example. Self-evaluations have also been undertaken separately to the service planning process. Whilst it was intended to hold challenge sessions, whereby services would be challenged on the content of their self-evaluations, these have been put on hold.
42. Whilst there was a lack of clarity about the way forward, we understand that a new revised self-evaluation template has recently been agreed, which will be integrated into the annual service improvement planning cycle. This template places greater emphasis on how services compare with others on quality, outcomes, outputs and cost. The Interim Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Performance Management will also meet each Director and Head of Service to challenge the self-evaluations. The Council needs to agree the purpose of self-evaluation, its approach and how self-evaluations will be used to inform its planning before the service planning process commences. We would expect the self-evaluations to influence its MTFP and workforce plan.

Recommendations

43. To assist the Council in making the required improvement, we have set out a recommendation in the table below. The Council is required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to prepare a statement of any action that it proposes to take as a result of this report, and its proposed timetable for taking that action. This must be prepared within 30 days of receipt of this report.
44. We recommend that:

R1	The Council should take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances.
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Proposals for improvement

45. We have identified the following proposals for improvement:

P1	The Council should review the role and effectiveness of its scrutiny committees. There needs to be better prioritisation of agenda items and alternative mechanisms explored for information-only items to enable Scrutiny to focus on those areas where it may have the greatest impact.
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P2	The Council could consider including a summary table of all decisions taken at the end of CMT minutes setting out who made the decision and who is responsible for logging it on the decision log. Where CMT considers that a decision is 'administrative' and does not require logging, this should also be noted.
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P3	The Council should consider how it can best raise awareness of its whistle-blowing policy amongst staff and put in place an awareness and training programme to do this.
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P4	The Council should revise the HR balanced scorecard. Members and CMT should be consulted on the content of the scorecard.
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P5	The Council should develop a programme of ongoing risk management training for members taking into account the outcome of its member training needs analysis.
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P6	The Council should develop a robust action plan for improving Internal Audit. This should take account of the outcome of the self-assessment against the Public Internal Audit Standards. Reporting and monitoring mechanisms need to be agreed to maintain momentum.
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P7 The Council should prioritise the development of an HR strategy and workforce plan. These should form key elements of the Council's strategic planning framework.

P8 The Council needs to agree the purpose of self-evaluation and how this will be used to inform corporate, service and financial planning and to ensure that the process it adopts enables it to do this effectively.

Appendix 1

Recommendations made in the Special Inspection report

The Auditor General made the following eight recommendations in the Special Inspection report issued on 22 January 2014:

- | | |
|----|--|
| R1 | Clarifies, in an easily understandable format, governance and decision making roles, specifically of the Cabinet; Chief Executive; Corporate Management Team; corporate directors; scrutiny committees; and Audit Committee. |
| R2 | Ensures that appropriate documentation is maintained of all decisions made, and by whom, to provide further assurance that decision making is undertaken appropriately and transparently. |
| R3 | Continues to implement the Improving Governance Programme Board action plan to enhance governance arrangements for the future. |
| R4 | Strengthen its risk management processes further to embed risk management across the Council. Specifically there should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• more frequent review of the corporate risk register by Corporate Management Team;• explicit action planning for the key risks identified;• more oversight of, and consistency in, the approach to directorate risk registers;• clarification of the role and remit of the Risk Management Group; and• enhanced training for Audit Committee members. |
| R5 | Clarifies roles and responsibilities for whistle-blowing procedures and ensures that the new policy is updated to reflect recent legislative changes. |
| R6 | Reassesses its expectations of the Internal Audit service and puts in place a programme for its Internal Audit service to address the findings of this inspection. |
| R7 | Ensures that the actions identified to improve the HR function and workforce planning are implemented. |
| R8 | Emphasises the importance of following appropriate procurement procedures and ensures that relevant key performance indicators are set for the procurement function. |

Appendix 2

Recommendations made in the two Reports in the Public Interest

The Appointed Auditor made the following recommendations in his Report in the Public Interest dated March 2013:

Advertisement of meetings

R1 The Council should review its procedures for the advertisement of meetings. Controls should be introduced to mitigate against the risk of omissions. As an example, adverts could be reviewed by an officer independent of the officer preparing them in order that any omissions can be identified.

Conflicts of Interest

R2 Clear guidelines should be produced and incorporated into the terms of reference of all decision-making forums in the Council in respect of the procedures to be followed when members, or those in attendance at such forums, may be influenced by a pecuniary or personal interest in the outcome of any decision to be taken. In particular, they should emphasise that such individuals are disqualified from participation in that process and that:

- they should declare an interest in the matter;
- they should leave the meeting during any discussion of the matter; and
- they should not have sole responsibility for making recommendations in relation to the matter, whether present or not.

Procedures for new committees

R3 Where new committees or other decision-making bodies are set up by the Council, there should be clear terms of reference setting out the powers, responsibilities and procedures of the body. These should be formally adopted by the committee at its first meeting. Training should also be provided to members in respect of the requirements of the committee prior to its inaugural meeting to ensure that the terms of reference are understood.

Records of meetings

R4 Records of meetings should be sufficiently detailed to provide information on the matters discussed. Any redactions should be the minimum necessary to address any exempt items. For sensitive matters, the record of a meeting should include a summary of any vote taken or state whether or not the vote was unanimous, so that members can agree with the accuracy of the minutes prior to their approval.

Clarity and comprehensiveness of reports to committees

R5 Where review work is undertaken, either by an external body or internally, to support a report to a committee or other decision-making body, then the covering report should explicitly address the matters raised as part of the review work.

The Appointed Auditor made the following recommendations in his Report in the Public Interest on the Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances published in December 2013:

Records of decisions

- R1 Clear records of all decisions should be retained, identifying the decision made, who made the decision and when the decision was made. Furthermore, as decisions are taken there should be proper consideration of whether these decisions should be recorded in the Council's decision log. This consideration should be documented.

Implementing decisions

- R2 Officers should not proceed to implement decisions unless they are clear as to who has made the decision. Officers should retain evidence of this consideration.

Statutory officer advice

- R3 When making decisions, decision-makers should consider whether a formal view is required from the S151 Officer or Monitoring Officer and whether this view has been given. Where a formal view is required, there should be a process in place to ensure that the statutory officer is provided with all of the relevant information required to take that view. Officers should also record how this advice was followed.

Reports

- R4 Reports which are produced to support decision-making processes should follow a standardised format, in particular noting the author of the report and who has been consulted. Reports should contain a comprehensive list of available options.
-

Appendix 3

Follow-up detailed findings – evidence grid

Special Inspection recommendations' follow-up

The table below details our findings from the follow-up of the recommendations made in the January 2014 Special Inspection report:

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R1</p> <p>Clarifies, in an easily understandable format, governance and decision making roles, specifically of the Cabinet; Chief Executive; Corporate Management Team; corporate directors; scrutiny committees; and Audit Committee.</p>	<p>The Council has a dedicated page on its intranet for Corporate Governance. This sets out in one place key documentation with respect to the Code of Conduct which governs the way in which the Council operates.</p> <p>The document <i>An Introduction to Decision Making</i> sets out in a clear, summarised manner the responsibilities of the different decision-making bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full council • Cabinet • Officers • Planning and licensing committees • Audit Committee • Scrutiny committees <p>Page 7 of the document <i>Call in Guidance</i> provides a useful diagram showing the relationships between key decision-making bodies and scrutiny arrangements.</p> <p>Interviewees agreed that officers and members are clearer about the process for decision making. In particular, that CMT does not make decisions but that decisions by officers are made under delegated authority by individual officers.</p>	<p>Recommendation addressed, with the exception of scrutiny on which a new proposal for improvement has been made.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R1</p> <p>Clarifies, in an easily understandable format, governance and decision making roles, specifically of the Cabinet; Chief Executive; Corporate Management Team; corporate directors; scrutiny committees; and Audit Committee.</p>	<p>Members and officers stated that the roles of the different bodies were now much clearer. The exception being scrutiny where some officers were concerned about the role, impact and effectiveness of scrutiny.</p> <p>Observations of two scrutiny committees supported this concern.</p> <p>Agendas are too long and lack focus. It is not clear why certain items are being discussed and what impact scrutiny can have in relation to these.</p> <p>Officers commented that the number of reports for information being requested from members has increased significantly.</p> <p>We observed Scrutiny Committees where reports requested by individual members were on the agenda, but the member who had requested the report was not actually present at the meeting.</p> <p>Whilst the level and quality of questions posed by members were good and had improved since last year, it was evident that local and parochial issues are also being raised.</p> <p>The Council needs to consider how these additional requests for information can be handled in a different way thus freeing capacity for Scrutiny to focus on priority areas. The Council would benefit from using task and finish groups to review specific issues in more depth.</p> <p>Prioritisation of agenda items needs to be reviewed. Meetings were very long, limiting the time that could be dedicated to items. Key items which were clearly within the remit of the scrutiny committee were often towards the end of the agenda eg, telecare charges and to discuss the leisure strategy. A prioritisation matrix has been drafted and is due to be considered by CMT. Items will be considered and scored against a set of criteria to determine their relevance.</p> <p>The Council is participating in the Gwent Scrutiny Challenge programme facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, which involves peer challenge and observation. The findings from this will be used to inform the areas for improvement to be captured in the Scrutiny Improvement action plan.</p>	<p>Recommendation addressed, with the exception of scrutiny on which a new proposal for improvement has been made.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R2</p> <p>Ensures that appropriate documentation is maintained of all decisions made, and by whom to provide further assurance that decision making is undertaken appropriately and transparently.</p>	<p>The documentation reviewed indicates that there is clear guidance regarding what documentation needs to be produced in order to record decisions made in CMT meetings or by officers under the scheme of delegated powers. Our review of minutes demonstrated clearer adherence to guidance and improvement over the prior year.</p> <p>However, a review of CMT minutes identified some inconsistencies in the way that decisions are documented. Some decisions clearly state that they are taken by a specific officer under their delegated powers, or state that the report/decision has been endorsed by CMT for the final decision to be referred to Cabinet. However, there were a small number of decisions where it was not clear who made the decision, and the minutes imply that the decision was taken by CMT collectively.</p> <p>The Council could consider including a simple summary table of all decisions at the end of CMT minutes setting out who made the decision and who is responsible for logging it on the decision log. Where CMT considers that a decision is ‘administrative’ and does not require logging, this should also be noted. A sample of decisions minuted as taken by individuals has been agreed to decision notices.</p> <p>Both members and officers interviewed stated there was a greater awareness of rules relating to decision making and greater willingness to seek advice if in doubt. This was reinforced by the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer who highlighted that there has been an increase in queries received.</p>	<p>Recommendation addressed, although a new proposal for improvement has been raised suggesting a table be included in the CMT minutes summarising the decisions taken and by whom.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R3</p> <p>Continues to implement the Improving Governance Programme Board (IGPB) action plan to enhance governance arrangements for the future.</p>	<p>The IGPB has continued to meet regularly and an action plan has been used to monitor progress.</p> <p>An end-of-year progress report was provided to Cabinet on 2 October. It was agreed at this Cabinet meeting that the IGPB should continue in order to monitor the remaining actions. The IGPB originally recommended to Cabinet that outstanding recommendations be monitored by alternative arrangements. This was refused by Cabinet which wanted to maintain the IGPB until all actions had been sufficiently addressed and the findings from the Special Inspection follow-up had been shared with the Council.</p> <p>Both members and officers agreed that IGPB had been effective in raising the profile of governance and to respond promptly to governance concerns.</p> <p>The IGPB has an appropriate level of membership including member representation.</p> <p>Reporting and monitoring mechanisms established through regular reporting to Cabinet, Council, CMT and Audit Committee.</p> <p>Feedback cascaded through CMT and senior management teams.</p>	<p>Recommendation addressed.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
SI – R4 Strengthen its risk management processes further to embed risk management across the Council. Specifically there should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more frequent review of the corporate risk register by Corporate Management Team; • explicit action planning for the key risks identified; • more oversight of, and consistency in, approach to directorate risk registers; • clarification of the role and remit of the Risk Management Group; and • enhanced training for Audit Committee members. 	<p>Evidence from the review of the CMT meeting minutes demonstrated that the corporate risk register is considered on a monthly basis. The minutes document that CMT considers the risk rating of existing identified risks and whether actions taken have changed the risk rating.</p> <p>The minutes also demonstrate CMT requesting consideration of any newly identified risks to add to the register.</p> <p>Interviews with CMT concurred there was robust discussion of risks and that reviewing the risk register did trigger detailed discussions about key risks such as WHQS and waste, and the actions to be taken to address these.</p>	Recommendation addressed.
	<p>The format of the risk register has been strengthened.</p>	Recommendation addressed.
	<p>The same format has been applied to the directorate risk registers and risk elements within the service delivery plan format.</p> <p>Interviews and evidence demonstrated that directorates now review risk registers regularly at senior management teams. Risks are also monitored at Scrutiny through the monitoring of service plans.</p>	Recommendation addressed.
	<p>Two training sessions have been provided to Audit Committee members – this training appears to be a basic ‘introductory’ session. A recommendation was raised in the Special Inspection that further training should be provided for Audit Committee members at a more advanced level.</p> <p>We understand that the Audit Committee requested general overview and introductory rather than enhanced training. Internal Audit also provided risk management training for Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Audit Committee did discuss its role in detail over and above the information contained in the presentation slides. It is considered that the Audit Committee now needs to put this training into practice. The impact will then be monitored and future training needs taken into account in the next member training needs analysis. There is no ongoing programme of training.</p>	Recommendation not fully addressed. New proposal for improvement raised: develop a programme of ongoing risk-related training for members taking into account the outcome of the member training needs analysis.

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion	
SI – R4	Strengthen its risk management processes further to embed risk management across the Council. (Continued)	The establishment of a Risk Management Group was identified in the Council’s Risk Management Strategy. Following a report by the Head of Performance and Property, it was discussed at CMT and agreed at Audit Committee on 10 September that the Risk Management Group was no longer required as there were sufficient arrangements already in place and monitoring arrangements were deemed to be sufficient. This is considered reasonable.	Recommendation not fully addressed. New proposal for improvement raised: develop a programme of ongoing risk-related training for members taking into account the outcome of the member training needs analysis.
SI-R5	Clarifies roles and responsibilities for whistle-blowing procedures and ensures that the new policy is updated to reflect recent legislative changes.	The Council has tailored a model policy from charity PCAW. The draft policy is clearer and simpler. It is due to be adopted in November or December this year. The new policy would be launched in the New Year and consideration is being given to how best to publicise it and provide training. However, no programme is in place to do this. The first point of contact for whistle-blowing will be the Head of HR or if preferred the S151 or Monitoring Officer. Other designated persons include PCAW and the Auditor General. Reporting of whistle-blowing activity has yet to be decided.	In progress but due to be completed in the next two to three months. Proposal for improvement raised: the Council should consider how it can best raise awareness of its whistle-blowing policy and put in place an awareness and training programme around this.

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R6</p> <p>Reassesses its expectations of the Internal Audit service and puts in place a programme for its Internal Audit service to address the findings of this inspection.</p>	<p>Internal Audit Charter and Strategy are in place and have been discussed and agreed by the Audit Committee.</p> <p>Internal Audit is clearer about the improvements needed and is piloting some of the changes needed. Changes being made slowly.</p> <p>However, the action plan to address the recommendations/improvements made in the Special Inspection report is not very detailed. There is a danger the Council could lose sight of the actions required and the progress against these.</p> <p>Internal Audit Plan does contain some broader reviews such as WHQS but focus remains on financial areas.</p> <p>Consultation/discussion about the role of Internal Audit has been limited, primarily with the Section 151 Officer. Director of Social Services, for example, stated he had not been engaged in any discussion on this.</p> <p>A review of Internal Audit working papers found that there was scope for further improvement. The level of detail and review was insufficient.</p> <p>The CMT agreed that improvement would take time.</p>	<p>In progress. Changes are being made incrementally. Timescales for completion unclear. Lack of robust action plan. Proposal for improvement raised.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R7</p> <p>Ensures that the actions identified to improve the HR function and workforce planning are implemented.</p>	<p>An HR balanced scorecard has been developed and is recorded on Ffynnon. The scorecard includes a large number of indicators. HR managers were involved in the development of the scorecard but wider consultation was very limited. HR recognises that the scorecard needs to be reviewed as it covers too many areas, some of which are not helpful to the service. The focus is on gathering data rather than evaluating it. The intention is to review the scorecard at the next HR team meeting.</p> <p>Performance against the scorecard is reported to the Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>HR also reports to CMT on particular HR issues and the HR service would like to cascade this type of information to directorates eg, sickness absence, redeployment and vacancy management information.</p> <p>HR plans to undertake a customer survey before the end of the financial year to get some qualitative data to improve the review of the service's performance.</p> <p>HR participated in the benchmarking exercise with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) for both HR and Payroll. This will be used to inform the service's self-evaluation next year.</p> <p>The outstanding posts in Education have now been evaluated. There was a delay with one post not being evaluated until September 2014 due to the long-term sickness absence of the post holder.</p>	<p>In progress. Likely completion within the next two months.</p> <p>New proposal for improvement raised to revise the HR balanced scorecard and to consult members and CMT on the content of the scorecard.</p> <p>Recommendation addressed.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R7</p> <p>Ensures that the actions identified to improve the HR function and workforce planning are implemented.</p>	<p>Interviews with officers and members suggested an HR strategy is not considered to be a priority. There has been a lack of corporate drive to ensure this is developed. Senior officers need to agree on the purpose and benefits of an HR strategy particularly given the uncertainty of the future shape of the organisation. Currently on version nine of the draft HR strategy. Its production was delayed whilst HR focused on developing workforce flexibility policies to facilitate the implementation of the Medium Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>The HR Strategy has been consulted upon internally within the HR service and consultation with the HR Strategy group is underway. The intention is to take the draft strategy to CMT once all comments from the HR group have been received. The effectiveness of the HR strategy group is mixed. A review of minutes suggests significant consideration of operational issues.</p> <p>Management competency is a key gap. The Head of HR has raised the need to invest in management development with CMT.</p>	<p>In progress. Possible completion within six months but this is dependent upon there being sufficient corporate commitment and drive to do this. New proposal for improvement raised.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R7</p> <p>Ensures that the actions identified to improve the HR function and workforce planning are implemented.</p>	<p>The CMT receives a range of HR-related information including staff numbers, sickness absence, vacancy management, and the use of agency staff. The CMT oversees recruitment and the operation of HR policies to facilitate the implementation of the Council’s MTFP.</p> <p>HR has worked with the Performance Management Unit to develop four key workforce planning questions to include within the service planning template. Workforce planning pilots completed in two out of four areas.</p> <p>Pilots revealed a lack of accurate data on iTrent and required significant work to resolve this first. Evaluations of pilots have been undertaken and presented to CMT.</p> <p>Workforce toolkit developed for those areas of the greatest need. HR providing support to those areas to use the toolkit.</p> <p>Many heads of service of the view that they are doing workforce planning anyway but this is not being formally articulated. Those that participated in the pilot found it useful, but were not sure if this information could be distilled into a meaningful corporate workforce plan.</p> <p>The lack of an HR strategy and corporate workforce plan is not considered to have hindered planning by officers.</p> <p>Individual workforce planning issues are being considered as part of the MTFP process for each service. However, the Council would still benefit from a corporate workforce plan.</p> <p>There has been a lack of corporate drive within the organisation to develop a corporate workforce plan. Not considered to be a priority or needed due to uncertainty of services to be delivered.</p>	<p>In progress but due to insufficient progress, new proposal for improvement has been raised.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
<p>SI – R8</p> <p>Emphasises the importance of following appropriate procurement procedures and ensures that relevant key performance indicators are set for the procurement function.</p>	<p>Written definition of a strategic enabling Procurement Service has been documented. It sets out procurement’s contribution in four areas relating to purchasing activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility • Compliance • Contribution to bottom line • Alignment and collaboration <p>To support each of these areas, evidence reviewed of analysis of spend and contract numbers by directorate; training on procurement requirements including standing orders; liaison meetings with directorates including discussions on compliance and savings and contributions to national procurement services and use of key performance indicators (KPIs) on collaboration for the Procurement Department.</p> <p>Action plan developed to support each of the recommendations raised in the report and incorporated into annual service plan. Due dates for implementation all within one year with many actions already completed.</p> <p>Progress formally assessed as part of quarterly monitoring of service plan.</p> <p>Suite of new key performance indicators reported to scrutiny committee in June 2014. Taken from Welsh Government list of indicators as appropriate to a local government body.</p> <p>The performance indicators have been linked to the Council’s procurement strategy.</p> <p>A CIPFA benchmarking club review was undertaken and reported in the summer of 2014.</p>	<p>Recommendation addressed.</p>

Recommendation	Summary of findings	Assessment of completion
SI – R8 Emphasises the importance of following appropriate procurement procedures and ensures that relevant key performance indicators are set for the procurement function.	Procurement training been has provided to officers throughout the year. Training materials, attendance lists have been reviewed. Standing orders have been amended and agreed at Council in November 2013. The structure of the Procurement Team has now been consolidated.	Recommendation addressed.

Report in the Public Interest recommendation follow-up

The table below details our findings from the follow-up of the actions which were outstanding at the time of the Special Inspection in respect of the Senior Officer Pay PIR. It also details follow-up of each of the Car/Annual Leave Allowances PIR recommendations:

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Senior Officers Pay R2(b)	To write into constitution requirement for members to complete Code of Conduct training within three months of an election.	<p>The Council now has a Members' Training and Development Protocol as part of the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>This details that induction training in the Code of Conduct is mandatory and should take place within the first month of a new council.</p> <p>The need for both members and officers to declare interests is included on all Council, Cabinet and scrutiny committee agendas. It is also read out at the beginning of each meeting. Observed members seeking advice from Democratic Services about the nature of an interest and whether it is necessary to declare it during scrutiny meetings.</p> <p>Monitoring Officer also explained that both officers and members are contacting her more readily for advice on declarations of interest.</p> <p>Observed at Health, Social Care and Well-Being (HSCWB) scrutiny on 21 October, members declaring prejudicial interests and leaving when the item was discussed. However, Council has identified the need to consider governance in relation to co-opted members. Observed at HSCWB scrutiny – co-opted member, who had declared an interest, left the room and then returned and was present for the item.</p>	Recommendation addressed. (But the Council recognises that it needs to consider the governance and role in relation to co-opted members, and will be offering refresher Code of Conduct training for co-opted members in early 2015.)

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Senior Officers Pay R2(b) (Continued)	To write into constitution requirement for members to complete Code of Conduct training within three months of an election.	The Democratic Services Officer did speak to the co-opted member to remind her that she had declared an interest and brought this to the attention of the Chair. When the co-opted member spoke on the item, the Chair quickly reminded her that she had to be careful as she had declared an interest. The comment made by the co-opted member was light-hearted and did not impact upon the nature of the discussion or the decision taken.	Recommendation addressed. (But the Council recognises that it needs to consider the governance and role in relation to co-opted members, and will be offering refresher Code of Conduct training for co-opted members in early 2015.)
Senior Officers Pay R2(d)	Review induction process for new starters.	Viewed induction checklist introduced from 1 March 2014. This includes reference to the provision of Code of Conduct documents and receipt of Code of Conduct acknowledgement form signed by employee and forwarded to HR.	Recommendation addressed.
Senior Officers Pay R2(g)	All completed but were to be re-reviewed in light of All-Wales Code of Conduct.	All-Wales Code of Conduct was not adopted as there were issues with it.	Recommendation addressed.
Senior Officers Pay R2(h)	Register of gifts and hospitality to be reported quarterly to the Audit Committee.	Agreed – observed through attendance at Audit Committee.	Recommendation addressed.

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Senior Officers Pay R3(a)	Council's Constitution to be reviewed on an annual basis. To be updated, expanded and revised as necessary to include an up-to-date list of all council committees, terms of reference, any delegated decision-making ability, political balance requirement, size of committee membership and any co-opted membership.	Constitution reviewed and updated and presented and approved at Council on 28 January 2014. Agreed revisions to update information relating to committees present in document.	Recommendation addressed.
Senior Officers Pay R3(e)	Training and development needs must be identified for the membership of each council committee/panel/group on an annual basis. The training offered should be published on the Council's website.	Action outstanding was in relation to provision of training and publication on website. This has now been confirmed by review of a selection of councillors' annual reports published on the Council's website.	Recommendation addressed.
Senior Officers Pay R4(a)	Quarterly publication of Cabinet forward work programme.	Agreed to Cabinet papers that a three-month forward work programme is published eg, 2 April and 22 January 2014 Cabinets. Also, the forward work programme is available on a separate page on the Council's website.	Recommendation addressed.

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Senior Officers Pay R4(d)	Work programmes for scrutiny committees will be further improved by introducing a consistent procedure for their development.	Processes were completed at the time of our previous review but production of forward work programmes was not yet evidenced. Now produced and seen for meetings of P&R (5/8), HSCWB (11/2) and Education for Life (23/9) scrutiny committees. In addition, forward work programmes are published separately on the internet for each committee.	Recommendation addressed.
Senior Officers Pay R4(e)	In line with the Local Government Measure 2011, scrutiny committee forward work programmes should be subject to consultation with stakeholders and local residents (using electronic means), subject to approval by each committee and published on a regular basis (observing the frequency included in expected Welsh Government statutory guidance).	Process in place at time of last Special Inspection but not yet evidenced. Agreed that there is a forward work programme page on the internet which invites comments from members of the public and includes a facility to submit comments electronically (online or by e-mail) or by post on a PDF form provided.	Recommendation addressed.
Senior Officers Pay R4(g)	The electronic voting system available in the Council Chamber must be used for all council meetings held in the Council Chamber.	Expected live at the same time as implementation of webcasting in January 2015.	Outstanding. Due to be completed January 2015.

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Senior Officers Pay R5(a)	Review the reporting template and consistency of reporting and format to include an executive summary and key decisions.	None	N/A
Senior Officers Pay R5(e)	Training for officers and members to ensure consistency on the level of detail required in reports being considered at meetings and the timescales for the democratic process.	Reviewed training materials and guidance issued by the Council. The documents went to IGPB, followed up by a discussion at CMT with a presentation to heads of service at the Leadership meeting on 26 September. Sessions are planned for the larger Network Management Group on 12 December and for members in the new year.	Mostly complete, completion date January 2015.
Senior Officers Pay R5(g)	Scrutiny members be encouraged to ask questions of both the Cabinet members and officers.	Interviews and observations of scrutiny meetings have confirmed that the level of questioning by members has improved.	Recommendation addressed.

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Allowances R1	<p>Clear records of decisions should be retained, identifying the decision made, who made the decision and when the decision was made.</p> <p>Furthermore, as decisions are taken, there should be proper consideration of whether these decisions should be recorded in the Council's decision log. This consideration should be documented.</p>	<p>Our prior-year work looking at a sample of decisions found no significant exceptions. As part of the follow-up, we reviewed decisions taken during CMT (see above). These were recorded in CMT minutes identifying who was taking the decision and explicitly stating that individual officers were responsible for ensuring the decision log was updated.</p> <p>We traced a number of decisions to the decision log.</p>	Recommendation addressed.
Allowances R2	<p>Officers should not proceed to implement decisions unless they are clear as to who has made the decision. Officers should retain evidence of this consideration.</p>	<p>Our prior-year work looking at a sample of decisions found no significant exceptions. We have seen training materials and guidance produced by the Council on decision making (see above).</p> <p>For the decisions made in the course of a sample of CMT meetings, there is a clear record of decision making. For one of these decisions, there is a clear e-mail trail to more junior officers setting out who has made the decision.</p>	Recommendation addressed.

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Allowances R3	When making decisions, decision makers should consider whether a formal view is required from the S151 Officer or Monitoring Officer and whether this view has been given. Where a formal view is required, there should be a process in place to ensure that the statutory officer is provided with all the relevant information required to take that view. Officers should also record how this advice was followed.	Addressed in relation to formal reports to committees on which decisions are made (see above). In particular, the Monitoring Officer reviews all reports and provides commentary on these and CMT (including the S151 Officer) will review all reports going to Cabinet for decisions and will pull those which are not up to standard. For officers, we have seen training material and guidance produced by the Council (see above).	Recommendation addressed.

Recommendation	Actions	Summary of findings/assessment	Assessment of completion
Allowances R4	<p>Reports which are produced to support decision making should follow a standard format, in particular noting the author of the report and who has been consulted. Reports should contain a comprehensive list of available options.</p>	<p>Reports follow a standard format as originally used by the Council. There had been discussion about the structure of reports – it was agreed to maintain the existing structure. Training and guidance have been produced as reported above. Interviews support that comprehensive lists of options are now included.</p> <p>The CMT reviews and discusses all reports which are going to scrutiny and Cabinet to check that the quality of reports is sufficient. Examples cited where CMT had delayed reports until the level of information and quality was sufficient.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Leadership group had had detailed discussion about the quality of reports at its meeting in September. Whilst overall it felt the standard was good, it did provide the following feedback to improve the quality further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some MTFP reports lacked detail with some incorrect information; • more detail around financial information, in particular costings attached to the options put forward in a report; • the inclusion of comparison data, members would like data to be put into context, including for example, the Welsh average; • some information can be buried in appendices; • there should be sufficient information to allow effective scrutiny; and • important information should be in the main body of the report and not in the appendices. 	Recommendation addressed.



WALES AUDIT OFFICE

SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru
24 Heol y Gadeirlan
Caerdydd CF11 9LJ

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Ffôn: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Ffacs: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

Ffôn Testun: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: info@wao.gov.uk

E-bost: info@wao.gov.uk

Website: www.wao.gov.uk

Gwefan: www.wao.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS REQUIRED FOR RECOMMENDATION R1 AND THE EIGHT PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT P1 TO P8

1. RECOMMENDATION (R1)

- ***The Council should take a lawful decision on the annual leave and essential car user allowances.***

ACTION: Prepare and present a report to Full Council on 27th January 2015 to ensure a lawful decision is made.

RESPONSIBILITY: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive

2. PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P1)

- ***The Council should review the role and effectiveness of its Scrutiny Committees. There needs to be better prioritisation of Agenda Items and alternative mechanisms explored for information-only items to enable Scrutiny to focus on those areas where it may have the greatest impact.***

ACTION: Review of Scrutiny arrangements to conclude with a report to full Council by October 2015.

RESPONSIBILITY: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive

3. PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P2)

- ***The Council could consider including a summary table of all decisions taken at the end of CMT minutes setting out who made the decision and who is responsible for logging it on the decision log. Where CMT considers that a decision is “administrative” and does not require logging, this should also be noted.***

ACTION: Include Summary Table of all decisions in CMT Minutes. This action has been undertaken and the arrangements will be implemented from 22nd January 2015.

RESPONSIBILITY: Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.

4. PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P3)

- ***The Council should consider how it can best raise awareness of its Whistleblowing Policy amongst staff and put in place an awareness and training programme to do this.***

Action already undertaken since the External Audit work was concluded, which has seen the adoption of a new Whistleblowing Policy developed in conjunction with Public Concern at Work (PCaW), the UK’s leading Whistleblowing Charity. A Training and Communication Plan is currently underway (presentations to Leadership Team, and Management Network have been completed), and will be rolled out before the end of the financial year. The Council has also been accepted to the “First 100 Campaign” run by PCaW, which is a commitment to work towards the principles of the Whistleblowing Commission’s Code of Practice.

RESPONSIBILITY: Gareth Hardacre, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development

5. **PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P4)**

- ***The Council should revise the HR balanced scorecard. Members and CMT should be consulted on the content of the scorecard.***

ACTION: A revised scorecard is being developed in conjunction with researching practice in other areas. This should be completed by May 2015.

RESPONSIBILITY: Gareth Hardacre, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development

6. **PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P5)**

- ***The Council should develop a programme of ongoing risk management training for Members taking into account the outcome of its Member training needs analysis***

ACTION: Initial Risk Management training has been provided to Cabinet and Audit Committee Members on a mandatory basis. Training for other Members will be discretionary if identified via the Member training needs analysis. A refresh programme on risk management will be developed for Members for ongoing development.

RESPONSIBILITY: Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property

7. **PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P6)**

- ***The Council should develop a robust action plan for improving Internal Audit. This should take account of the outcome of the self-assessment against the Public Internal Audit Standards. Reporting and monitoring mechanisms need to be agreed to maintain momentum.***

ACTION: A robust Action Plan will be developed and presented to Audit Committee in March 2015. The delivery of the Action Plan will be monitored by the IGPB.

RESPONSIBILITY: Stephen Harris, Acting Head of Corporate Finance.

8. **PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P7)**

- ***The Council should prioritise the development of a HR Strategy and Workforce Plan. These should form key elements of the Council's strategic planning framework.***

ACTION: A revised H R Strategy has been developed with the support of the H R Strategy Group, and is currently being reviewed by CMT. This would then be the subject of wider consultation, with a view that this could be concluded by May 2015. Workforce Planning has been integrated into the new Service Delivery Process underway for the next Financial Year.

RESPONSIBILITY: Gareth Hardacre, Head of Workforce and Organisational Development

9. **PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVEMENT (P8)**

- ***The Council needs to agree the purpose of self-evaluation and how this will be used to inform corporate, service and financial planning and to ensure that the process it adopts enables it to do this effectively.***

ACTION: A self-evaluation template has been developed, following piloting in Summer 2014, and is being completed as part of the Council's service planning process. Service plans will be completed by the end of March 2015 for further consideration by Corporate Management Team.

RESPONSIBILITY: Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property

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COUNCIL – 27TH JANUARY 2015

SUBJECT: BUY-OUT OF ESSENTIAL CAR USER AND ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

REPORT BY: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To allow Members to make a formal decision regarding changes to annual leave and essential user allowances in accordance with the recommendation of the Wales Audit Office in their most recent Follow-up Special Inspection Report On Corporate Governance.
- 1.2 In December 2013 the Wales Audit Office published a Report in the Public Interest regarding the way in which decisions had been made to harmonise annual leave and essential user payments for senior officers with other staff. The Wales Audit Office had concluded that the decision was unlawful on the basis of the procedure which had been followed.
- 1.3 Members considered this report on the 29th January 2014 and agreed that “upon receipt of external legal advice a further report is submitted to a future meeting of the Council on the specific issue of the buy-out so that members can consider the options available regarding the unlawful payments and determine the appropriate course of action”.
- 1.4 It had been hoped that this matter would have been reported sooner, but as Members are aware there was a police investigation of the issue and it was not possible to report until that investigation was concluded, as to do so may have conflicted with any action taken. However, the Police and Crown Prosecution Service have recently determined that there are no grounds for criminal proceedings and the authority is now free to finalise the matter.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In March 2012, the majority of council staff who had previously received essential user payments (a monthly payment in return for the authority requiring that they provide a car for use on council business) lost those payments. This had followed from an agreement in 2009 as part of the authority’s implementation of the single status agreement and job evaluation, and the officers concerned received three years protection from that agreement in 2009 to the eventual withdrawal of the allowances in 2012.
- 2.2 Single status applied to every employee across the Council who is employed under the terms and conditions set by the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services. The Single Status Agreement did not apply to groups of employees who had their own separate agreements, for example Soulbury staff, Teachers, Directors, Heads of Service and some senior managers (who were paid HAY Grade Salaries and in receipt of the terms and conditions set by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers. This is normal within local government and is not peculiar to Caerphilly CBC. The staff who did not fall within the Single Status Agreement therefore retained these allowances, and this created an imbalance in the treatment of the staff employed under NJC for Local Government Services terms and those employed under JNC terms for Chief Officers.

- 2.3 In order to harmonise terms and conditions for the majority of staff, the removal of essential user payments was extended in 2012 to senior staff covered by JNC terms and conditions for Chief Officers. A decision was made that, instead of offering three years protection as had been offered to other staff who had been subject to single status, a one-off payment (equivalent to the same three years protection principle that was given to other staff) would be offered to 'buy-out' the allowance instead.
- 2.4 The principle of buy out was accepted by the unions and staff under the Single Status Agreement as a means of compensating staff for the withdrawal of certain pay enhancements from the Council's pay and grading structure such as bonus and shift allowance. The principle of a 3 year buy out was applied to staff who were placed at detriment under Single Status.
- 2.5 Some 40 officers were affected by the withdrawal of essential user payments. This represented an annual average loss to each of those officers of £1,057.68. By way of protection, which had been for three years for all other staff, these officers received an average one-off compensation payment of £2,567.72. The total one-off cost to the authority of these payments was £102,709. The annual saving to the authority, in perpetuity, is estimated at £45,800.
- 2.6 Obviously, another alternative would have been not to compensate or protect the affected staff at all and to simply withdraw the allowance following notice. However this would have involved treating these staff very differently to the majority of the workforce.
- 2.7 The principle of buy out was also applied to the annual leave entitlements of this group. National Terms and Conditions for these staff confer 33 days annual leave but the authority sought to reduce this to 28 days, in line with the majority of other staff. Again, a payment was made by way of a 'buy-out' compensation for those staff whose annual leave entitlement was reduced from 33 days to 28 days. This "buy-out" did not apply to the Chief Executive or the three Corporate Directors, who form the Corporate Management Team (CMT). They are not on the flexitime system, with the additional potential leave entitlement of 24 days which it confers, and so remained on 33 days leave. Those officers employed on CMT at the time obviously did not receive compensation payments as a result as their leave remained unchanged.
- 2.8 43 officers were affected by the reduction in annual leave entitlements from 33 days per annum to 28. By way of compensation, these officers received an average one-off compensation payment of £2,694.28. There is no direct financial 'saving' to the authority, but from the date of the agreement in 2012 the authority has received 5 additional working days from each employee. The exercise therefore provided additional resources for the Council.
- 2.9 The Wales Audit office view was that these decisions were unlawful on several procedural grounds and these are set out in full in their report which went before Members at the time. I have not repeated the reasons in full here because they are not in dispute and have been accepted by Council on the 28th January 2014 when the report was presented to Council. Matters relating to weaknesses in governance and decision-making have been the subject of extensive review and the follow-up report from the Wales Audit Office deals in detail with those matters.
- 2.10 The issue before Members today is that because the original decision on essential user allowances and annual leave entitlement was potentially unlawful, Members need to make a formal, lawful decision to put the matter in order. That said it must be recognised that a Wales Audit Office decision does not have force of law. Hence caution must be exercised when considering how best to give effect to views expressed by Wales Audit Office and to their recommendations, particularly when this involves contracts of employment with Council staff.
- 2.11 Because there was a Police investigation of these matters underway at the time, this issue has been delayed in coming before Council so as not to potentially compromise any investigation. However, the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service have now confirmed

that they do not intend to pursue any action on these matters, and the council is therefore now in a position to consider the matter.

- 2.12 Members should be mindful, however, that criminal proceedings **are** underway on other matters. Moreover, once those proceedings are concluded the Council will also need to consider pursuing disciplinary investigations in accordance with the authority's agreed procedures on the issues concerning the 'buy-out' payments. The authority should, in considering this issue, not stray into those other matters relating to any impending court case **nor** issues of individual accountability concerning these buy-out payments which might form part of a future disciplinary investigation. To do so might compromise the court proceedings, any forthcoming disciplinary investigations and might even be deemed to be contempt of court.
- 2.13 The decision required at present is merely one of **either** ratifying the previous decision to harmonise terms and conditions and the use of the 'buy-out' payment as an alternative to the three year protection which had been offered to other staff who surrendered essential car user allowances **or** to agree some other way forward.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 This report seeks to formalise an outstanding decision deemed unlawful by the Wales Audit Office and recommends a process whereby Members can comply with the recommendation of the Wales Audit Office, in their recent follow-up report on governance, that a lawful decision be made.

4. THE REPORT

Background

- 4.1 As Members will see from the history of this subject, outlined in the Summary section of this report above, there remains an outstanding requirement for the authority to regularise the situation regarding these two decisions. The authority cannot simply leave a potentially unlawful decision 'on the books' and needs to make a formal decision of some sort to put the matter in order.
- 4.2 This decision needs to cover both elements of the issue:-
- (i) whether or not to endorse the decision to harmonise and reduce the terms and conditions of officers covered by JNC Terms and Conditions to be in line with the majority of council staff with regard to annual leave entitlements and essential user payments.
 - (ii) depending on that decision, whether or not to endorse the use of 'buy-out' compensation payments as an alternative to the three-year protection offered to other staff, or to agree some other arrangements
- 4.3 So far as harmonisation is concerned, I would suggest that this was the right decision to make. Leaving these groups of staff with very different terms and conditions does not seem right from the point of view of treating our employees equally, and it could have opened up the authority to future claims from staff who felt they had been treated differently to others for no justifiable reason.
- 4.4 I would therefore strongly **recommend** to members that they endorse the principle of the original decision to harmonise the terms and conditions of senior managers with those who had previously been subject to the single status agreement.
- 4.5 The second issue is that of the compensatory payments.

- 4.6 In support of the use of a 'buy-out', compensatory payment for **essential users**, the end result for most staff would be largely the same compared to the authority's other staff who had received three years protection, and it could be argued that this one-off payment method was administratively easier and produced a more immediate 'level playing field' than if the staff had been given three years protection, which would have perpetuated different treatment of these two groups for a further three years. It also allowed the authority to meet the costs in one financial year and to begin making the savings immediately. Beyond the protection period (in this case reflected by way of a one-off payment), the staff concerned are only compensated to the principle of 3 years and of course they have lost the allowance forever.
- 4.7 Against this Members may feel that the buy-out option simply did not 'feel' right, given that it is different to the approach applied to the NJC staff. It also has the complication that, while neutral for those who remained with the authority for three years, for anyone who retired or left during that period they would have received a greater sum than they would have received under protection arrangements.
- 4.8 An important point, that does not appear to have been widely acknowledged, is that the buy-out arrangement was not invented for this particular harmonisation. On the contrary it had been used extensively under single status as the means by which NJC employees were compensated for withdrawal of enhancements. In other words, the "buy-out" was a well-established single status arrangement that had been previously utilised by the Council.
- 4.9 However, regardless as to whether we now feel that a one-off payment was the best means of effecting these changes, the fact is that these payments **were** made and were subject to individual legal agreements signed by each member of staff affected, following an extensive process where independent advice was offered to staff via the Arbitration, Conciliation and Advice Service (ACAS). An example of these agreements is attached as an Appendix to this report.
- 4.10 Undoing these agreements, even if deemed unlawful, would not therefore be a straightforward matter. Further, regardless of whether those agreements can be regarded as binding in law, they nevertheless represent what was agreed between the Council and the officers, in circumstances where the officers entered into those agreements in good faith.
- 4.11 Moreover, if council determined not to endorse the use of the buy-out payments then the authority would need to consider seeking reimbursement and asking staff to pay back the sums received. As stated above, given that the payments were the subject of signed, contractual agreements that set out the terms of the "buy-out" very clearly as well as the rates of tax to be deducted, this might prove very difficult to enforce. Also, the council would in all likelihood need to reinstate essential user payments to these staff and to refund payments not made in the three years since the original decision. The result of this would be that broadly the same amount of money would be changing hands, in both directions, with little or no overall net change. More importantly, it would place the authority in a worse position, looking ahead, because we would now be making essential user payments again and would have perpetuated the unequal treatment of these two groups of staff.
- 4.12 For these reasons I would **recommend** that Members agree to endorse the original decision to offer buy-out payments as compensation for the loss of essential user allowances to the staff concerned.
- 4.13 This is not to say that council necessarily agrees that this was the best way to have dealt with it at the time. Nor does it imply that the council would see this as a suitable means of dealing with any similar issue in the future. It simply recognises the realities of the situation where three years have passed and where any other decision would likely cost the council far more than simply endorsing the original decision and moving on. It should also be borne in mind that although the staff concerned received a buy-out payment, the long term effect is that the authority is better off financially; the staff themselves have forgone their essential user entitlement and the compensation payment was, by and large, financially no different to either

party than the three year protection offered to some staff, or the three year buy out offered to other staff, under single status.

- 4.14 The buy out payment in return for the **harmonisation of annual leave** entitlement is similar, except that in this case there is no specific financial allowance that has been lost and so the financial calculation, whereby the council is actually better off financially after the period of the buy out, is less straightforward. Nevertheless, the council has gained by having an additional five days employment from each of the staff concerned, for no increase in their salary, and this obviously has a value.
- 4.15 The impact of not endorsing the original decision would be similar to that involving the essential user payments. If not endorsed the authority will have to reinstate the higher annual leave allowance and 'refund' the affected staff 15 days leave which they have lost over the last three years. As these are key, senior staff we would not necessarily want them having to take an additional three weeks leave this year or over the next few years. We would also face the similar problem of how to legally overturn signed contractual agreements, and lead to the unenviable position of some staff agreeing to maintain the status quo, others wanting to revert to the former more generous holiday arrangements and/or having to dismiss and re-engage staff in order to achieve the harmonised position that currently exists
- 4.16 All things considered, therefore, I would again **recommend** to members that they endorse the buy-out arrangements made in 2012 relating to annual leave entitlements, subject to the same caveat that the authority is not, by so doing, implying that this is any form of precedent or approval for similar arrangements in future, unless specifically endorsed by council.
- 4.17 There are two further matters of which Members need to be aware.
- 4.18 Firstly, at the time of these new arrangements in 2012, five officers refused to sign the agreements on harmonisation of annual leave, (this is perhaps the best illustration that this buy out was not regarded as a benefit but as a detriment.) They did not receive a compensation payment and they remain on 33 days annual leave. This is not considered ideal as it retains separate terms and conditions for this small group of staff. It is **recommended** that members agree that the authority should seek to negotiate with these staff and to harmonise their leave arrangements with the main body of staff, should your decision be to ratify the current position.
- 4.19 Once this is resolved there will remain a small number of staff who continue to have different terms and conditions, including those on 'Soulbury' terms, within the education field. While numbers are relatively low it may be necessary to revisit this issue also in the future.
- 4.20 There is also an outstanding complication which has arisen since the date of the publication of the original Public Interest Report, regarding the rate of tax which was paid by officers in receipt of the compensation payments.
- 4.21 For payments made previously under Single Status and Equal Pay, for the main body of staff, a composite rate of tax and National Insurance (NI) deductions was agreed with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). It was assumed that this composite rate could also be applied to these compensation payments, but this is currently being reviewed. It now appears that these deductions may have been too low and following external specialist advice a payment 'on account' has been made to reflect the potentially higher sum. The legal agreements reached with individual members of staff were inclusive of the composite rate and, given the nature of those legal agreements, it would probably prove difficult to recover any additional costs from the employees themselves as the authority had presented them with the figures on which their decision to accept the changes in their terms and conditions were based.
- 4.22 Depending on the decision of members regarding ratification of the harmonisation process, and the compensation payments, the authority will then need to seek to agree with HMRC as to the exact figure which will need to be paid. To date, the authority has paid 'on account' an

“interim” payment of £150,593.69 in relation to tax liabilities in respect to these payments which is believed to cover the ‘worst case’ anticipated liability. It is hoped that the eventual figure will be lower than this, but this depends on negotiations which have not yet been undertaken.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This whole matter stems, in many ways, from the desire to treat all employees of the authority equally. It was not considered appropriate to offer some staff an essential user allowance because they were on a more senior grade, nor to give them more annual leave.
- 5.2 By finally resolving this matter, with a lawful decision, the authority will be closer to finalising the process of single status and equal treatment for the entire workforce.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If agreed, the recommendations contained in this report will regularise the current status quo. All of the costs, including those relating to the payment to the HMRC in respect of tax liabilities, have been met from the existing provision for single status and equal pay and there are, therefore, no financial implications compared to the authority’s agreed revenue budget. The report outlines also the anticipated tax liability which will arise, but again this has already been paid on account and is reflected in the authority’s existing budget.
- 6.2 If Members decide to take an alternative course of action there will in all likelihood be considerable legal costs in renegotiating contracts with staff affected and the exact cost of any reclaim and reimbursement of buy-out payments made and allowances not paid (and annual leave not taken) over the three years will need to be looked at in detail once those negotiations are complete. The authority may also need to budget for a reinstatement of essential user payments for the staff concerned into the future.
- 6.3 Over time, the authority is better off financially as a result of the changes to which these decisions relate. The authority no longer makes essential user payments to this group of staff, and has secured an additional five working days from the staff concerned, for which no long term increase in remuneration has been made.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 If agreed, the recommendations contained in the report regularise the current arrangements and there are no specific personnel implications. If Members decide not to regularise matters as they currently stand there will then be implications concerning affected staff, depending on what decision is agreed.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The council has sought independent legal advice on this matter, and an independent legal advisor will be present at the meeting to deal with any further queries which may arise.
- 8.2 The council has also consulted the Wales Audit Office on the content of this report and any comments received will be provided at the meeting.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- 9.1 Endorse the original principle of seeking to harmonise terms and conditions over the removal

of essential user allowances and annual leave entitlement for senior staff.

- 9.2 Agree to ratify the use of one-off payments made to staff in 2012 as an alternative to the three year protection afforded to other staff so affected under the single status agreement.
- 9.3 Agree to ratify the use of one-off payments made to staff in 2012 as compensation for the loss of five days annual leave.
- 9.4 Agree that the authority should seek to negotiate harmonisation with the few remaining staff who did not agree to the changes made in 2012.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To comply with the recommendations of the Wales Audit Office that the authority make a lawful decision regarding these issues.
- 10.2 Because the original intention of harmonising terms and conditions was a sound one, even if procedurally flawed in its implementation as stated by the Wales Audit Office. Moreover, long term, the cost to the authority is less than before the decision was made.
- 10.3 Because with the passage of time it is neither financially worthwhile nor practically straightforward to seek to undo contractual agreements made with individual employees in 2012. To do so would potentially prove far more costly to the authority than ratifying the 'status quo' as it stands.

Author: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Consultees: Dave Regan, Finance – Lead Office, Benefits and Finance
Lisa Haile, HR – Personnel Manager

Background Papers:

Wales Audit Office: Report in the Public Interest; Chief Officer Essential Car User and Annual Leave Allowances; Caerphilly County Borough Council. 19 December 2013

Wales Audit Office: Follow Up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest; Caerphilly County Borough Council. January 2015.

Report of the Interim Chief Executive to Council, 28 January 2014: Wales Audit Office Public Interest Report.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Sample of the legal agreement signed by employees and the county council in respect of the 'buy-out' compensation for loss of essential user allowances and annual leave.

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Confidential



COT3 SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT – IMPLEMENTATION COMPENSATION

Employer: Caerphilly County Borough Council

Employee:

Address:

Implementation Compensation Payment: £[]

We the undersigned have agreed the terms contained with the attached Schedule and that the Schedule forms an integral part of this COT3 agreement.

Signed by:

Employee Date

For and on Behalf of the Employer Date

APPENDIX

The claims to be settled by this Agreement include all claims or potential claims (in respect of the Chief Officer post that the Employee currently holds as listed in the attached Appendix and includes, without limitation, the actual claim(s) (if any) listed on the attached cover sheet):-

Post Title

**DOCUMENT A – IMPLEMENTATION COMPENSATION
WITHOUT PREJUDICE**

The parties to this Agreement agree as follows:-

WHEREAS

The Employer has previously successfully implemented, an equality proofed Single Status Structure in relation to our NJC employees (known as the “Green Book”). In addition we have harmonised the Terms and Conditions of our former craft employees (“Red Book”) to achieve consistency with our Single Status arrangements. The Employer is now seeking to achieve consistent arrangements by harmonising the Chief Officer terms and conditions detailed below with those of our employees under single status:

- Essential User Car Allowance and Mileage Rates
- Annual Leave Allowances and Flexi Arrangements

(A) All undertakings and waivers hereunder relate to the Single Status arrangements in relation to all employees.

(B) In order to achieve the Single Status arrangements for Chief Officers the Employer is seeking to harmonise terms and conditions under a localised agreement within the principles of Single Status as negotiated with the recognised trade unions to achieve the Collective Agreement. The Employer has offered to vary the Employee’s contract of employment which the Employee wishes to accept, which will be referred to as the “Single Status Contract of Employment”. The Single Status Contract of Employment will automatically apply to the Employee by reason of the Collective Agreement.

(C) The Employer does not admit any liability in relation to any of the Employee’s actual claims or potential claims in relation to Breach of Contract , but in the interests of good industrial relations and to avoid protracted litigation the Employer has agreed to pay the Employee Implementation Compensation on the terms set out in this Agreement which the Employee wishes to accept on the terms of this Agreement.

(D) The Employee acknowledges and accepts that by virtue of receiving the Implementation Compensation under this Agreement, the employee will not pursue any Breach of

Contract claim in relation to the variation to the JNC Terms for Chief Officers under a localised arrangement.

SETTLEMENT

1. In consideration of the Employee's agreement to give the undertakings set out in this Agreement the Employer agrees, subject to the terms and conditions set out below, to pay to the Employee Implementation Compensation in the sum set out in the attached COT3 cover sheet.
2. The Employee accepts the Implementation Compensation in full and final settlement of the claims set out in paragraphs **3 and 4** that the Employee has or may in the future have against the Employer, any organisation to which the Employee's employment may transfer under TUPE and/or any of its or their present or former employees or officers.
3. The claims to be settled by this Agreement include all claims or potential claims(in respect of the Chief Officer post the Employee currently holds and as listed in the attached Appendix and includes, without limitation, the actual claim(s) (if any) listed on the attached cover sheet):-
 - (a) relating to Issues of Breach of Contract:-
 - (i) in relation to and arising from the variation to the JNC Terms for Chief Officers under a localised arrangement and the Single Status Contract of Employment; and
 - (ii) payment of Implementation Consideration in connection with the variation to the JNC Terms for Chief Officers under a localised arrangement and the Single Status Contract of Employment; and
 - (b) whether such claim is a claim, in relation to Issues of Breach of Contract :-

- (i) under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (including but not limited to a claim for injury to feelings);
 - (ii) under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (including, but not limited to, a claim under section 188 and/or section 188A);
 - (iii) for breach of contract, including any sum alleged to be payable under an equality clause);
 - (iv) for unlawful deduction of wages (including any sum alleged to be payable under an equality clause or by reason of the implementation of the Single Status Contract of Employment);
 - (v) relating to loss of pension and any other benefits; and/or
 - (vi) for any other form or type of claim.
- (c) Further, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Employee understands and accepts that, in signing this Agreement, the Employee shall not at any time institute any Employment Tribunal or Court proceedings for damages or compensation in relation to Pay Protection of former income levels, including without limitation, the payment of Implementation Consideration between the Effective Implementation Date and 1 April 2015.

4. For the avoidance of doubt, paragraphs **3 and 4** and therefore this Agreement compromise all claims arising at common law, statute, European Law and/or otherwise, whether or not such claims fall within the jurisdiction of the Employment Tribunal and/or the civil courts. In addition, by accepting the Settlement the Employee is settling any claim for an adjustment of any award under section 31 Employment Act 2002 (non-completion of statutory dispute resolution procedure: adjustment of

awards). Further, if there are any other ways in which claims relating to Issues of Breach of Contract have been or could be advanced, then it is the intention of the parties that these potential claims should also be treated as having been settled by this Agreement.

5. Payment of the Implementation Compensation shall be made by way of cheque made payable to the Employee. The amount of the Implementation Compensation has been calculated as a net amount less a notional deduction for income tax and National Insurance contributions, as agreed with HMRC, for which the Employer will account to HMRC on behalf of the Employee. The Implementation Compensation is not pensionable pay.
6. In the event that the Employee or anyone on his/her behalf commences or continues any proceedings against the Employer, any organisation to which the Employee's employment may transfer under TUPE and/or any of its or their present or former employees or officers for any of the claims set out in paragraphs 3 and 4, of this Agreement or otherwise then the Employee agrees to repay to the Employer an amount equivalent to the Implementation Compensation paid to the Employee under this Agreement. The Employee agrees that in such circumstances, the said sum is recoverable from him/her as a debt.
7. Payment of the Implementation Compensation by the Employer is made on the understanding that there is no admission of liability by the Employer.
8. For the avoidance of doubt, this Agreement does not affect any rights which the Employee may have in relation to any other claim against the Employer, any organisation to which the Employee's employment may transfer under TUPE and/or any of its or their present or former employees or officers including without limitation, any claim for personal injury or in connection with the Employee's accrued pension rights.

It is agreed that this schedule forms an integral part of the attached COT3 form.

Employee: -----

Date: -----

For and on

Behalf of the Employer: -----

Date: -----

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