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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Sharon Hughes
(Tel: 01443 864281 Email: hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 12th July 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Tuesday, 18th July, 2023 at 5.30 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: <https://civico.net/caerphilly>

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the recording on the Council's website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy Harrhy', enclosed in a large, loopy oval shape.

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.

Pages

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2 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: -

- 3 Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee held on 27th February 2023. 1 - 6
- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to this Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.
- 5 Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme. 7 - 18
- 6 To receive and consider the following Cabinet reports*: -
1. National Empty Home Grant – 22nd February 2023;
 2. Budget Proposals for 2023/3024 (Joint Scrutiny Committee) – 22nd February 2023;
 3. Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy 2023-2028 – 8th March 2023;
 4. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2023/24 – 8th March 2023;
 5. Future of Caerphilly Homes Task Group – 8th March 2023;
 6. Caerphilly Town 2035 – Park Lane Market Development (EXEMPT ITEM) – 8th March 2023;
 7. Continued Suspension of Non-Priority Home Repair Grants – 19th April 2023;
 8. Caerphilly Town 2035 – Pentrebane Street Redevelopment Scheme – 28th June 2023;
 9. Regeneration Project Board – Non-Community Council Infrastructure Levy Allocation: Pontllanfraith Ward – 28th June 2023.

**If a member of the Scrutiny Committee wishes for any of the above Cabinet reports to be brought forward for review at the meeting please contact Emma Sullivan, 01443 864420, by 10.00 am on Monday, 17th July 2023.*

To receive and consider the following Scrutiny reports: -

- 7 Covid 19, Economic Recovery Framework - Monitoring Report. 19 - 58
- 8 Draft Development and Governance Strategy 'Building Together'. 59 - 88

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs P. Cook (Vice Chair), D. Cushing, G. Ead, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, C.P. Mann, A. McConnell, B. Owen, L. Phipps, Mrs D. Price, J.A. Pritchard, A. Whitcombe (Chair), S. Williams, W. Williams and J. Winslade

And Appropriate Officers

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HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY 2023 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor P. Cook – Vice Chair (Presiding)

Councillors:

G. Ead, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, C. Mann, A. McConnell, B. Owen, L. Phipps, J. A. Pritchard, S. Williams and W. Williams.

Cabinet Members:

Councillor S. Cook (Housing), Councillor P. Leonard (Planning and Public Protection) and Councillor J. Pritchard (Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change).

Together with:

N. Taylor-Williams (Head of Housing), L. Allen (Principal Group Accountant - Housing), M. Betts (Tenant and Community Involvement Manager), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Manager) and S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer).

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting would be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items - [Click here to view](#). The Committee was advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Cushing, C. Forehead, D. Price, A. Whitcombe (Chair) and J. Winslade.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES – 31ST JANUARY 2023

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2023 be approved as a correct record. By way of Microsoft Forms voting (and in noting there were 10 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 31st January 2023 (minute nos. 1 - 8) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

5. HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Manager presented the report which outlined details of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the period February 2023 to March 2023 and included all reports that were identified at the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Tuesday 31st January 2023.

Members were asked to consider the Forward Work Programme, alongside the Cabinet Forward Work Programme, prior to publication on the Council's website.

It was proposed that the final reports for the Oakdale and Ty-Darren re-developments be scheduled for the meeting to be held on 12th September 2023.

Following consideration of the report, and subject to the additional reports proposed, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms voting (and in noting there were 10 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme be published on the Councils' website.

6. CABINET REPORTS

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report for Members to consider and take a view on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2023/24 prior to approval at Cabinet on 8th March 2023, and to also recommend that Cabinet submit this report to Council to request an extension to the borrowing cap, which forms part of the

recommendations on the report. The HRA Business Plan is an annual requirement from Welsh Government (WG) as part of the annual submission of the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) grant application.

The Scrutiny Committee sought clarification and further information on the Major Repairs Allowance, particularly in relation as to what it can be used for. The Head of Housing advised Members that the Major Repairs Allowance is given to all stock owning local authorities, on an annual basis, which can be used on a number of areas for general repairs and is allocated accordingly. The Principal Group Accountant for Housing highlighted that the Major Repairs Allowance cannot be used for anything other than HRA assets and is essentially to maintain the WHQS programme.

A query was raised as to what controls have been put in place following the completion of the WHQS Programme. In response, the Scrutiny Committee was advised of the Planned Asset Management Programme which looks at the life expectancy of a number of areas of work, including roofs, doors and windows and a planned programme of works that is developed to address each area. The Committee was assured that an area will be reviewed where there is a significant issue. Reference was made to the new WHQS 2023 which will dictate the Planned Asset Management Strategy going forward, with a focus on decarbonisation and affordable warmth. In response to a further query, Members were assured that the WHQS works were subject to a programme of checks. All works were signed off throughout the programme, and in addition a percentage of works received a post completion inspection. It was highlighted that all properties are part of the long-term maintenance programme.

Reference was made to the report detailing the level of bad debts and voids and a concern was raised regarding properties that are empty for long periods of time without any ongoing works taking place. The Head of Housing acknowledged that this is a core issue in terms of the level of properties that need to be brought back into circulation as quickly as possible. It was highlighted that Officers are keen to improve the standard of works carried out, so this is taking longer to complete. Members were informed that there are around 100 void properties out of nearly 10,700, so the number is reasonable but is under review with the aim to improve the turnaround. In response to the Members request for information on the average length of voids, the Principal Group Accountant for Housing advised that it would depend on the type of void, however a breakdown could be provided subsequent to the meeting. Information was sought on the length of time to buyback properties and if they have to be brought up to WHQS standards before they can be used as part of housing stock. In response, the Scrutiny Committee was advised that these properties have to go through the conveyancing process and then there are varying amounts of works required, so it is difficult to provide a timescale. However, Members were assured that resources are being redirected from other areas to ensure they are brought into supply as soon as possible.

Reference was made to the assumptions in the report, particularly in relation to rent increases, and a question was raised regarding the forecast to increase at CPI plus 1% for the next 5 years. The Head of Housing informed the Scrutiny Committee that the HRA Business Plan is produced on an annual basis and the rent increase is governed by Welsh Government, who are currently reviewing their five-year strategy. Members were advised that a forecast has been undertaken with the information currently held as it is prudent to have a sustainable business plan. It was explained that any future changes will need to be addressed in future iterations of the business plan. The plan seeks to predict CPI plus 1% which is technically the maximum allowed for a rent increase, although there is an allowance for an extra £2.00 if trying to merge or converge rents – which is not happening at the moment. In conclusion it was confirmed that there is a 30-year plan, however it is updated every year as and when new information is available.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms voting (and in noting there were 9 for, 0 against and 2 abstentions) this was agreed by the majority present.

Members of the Committee acknowledged and considered the 2023/24 Housing Business Plan prior to its approval by Cabinet on the 8th March 2023, and its submission to WG by the 31st March 2023.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: -

1. Approve the submission of the report to Council to request an extension of the HRA borrowing cap to £100m as a result of higher than anticipated inflation to maintain services and to progress with the new build programme. A provisional date for Council has been set for 23rd May 2023.

8. FUTURE OF CAERPHILLY HOMES TASK GROUP

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented the report for Members to consider and agree the future of Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) due to the completion of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Programme and future work of Caerphilly Homes, prior to presentation at Cabinet on the 8th March 2023 and thereafter Council on the 23rd May 2023. The Cabinet Member for Housing placed on record his thanks to the Caerphilly Homes Task Group who have contributed to the success and completion of the WHQS programme.

A Member of the Scrutiny Committee noted the ways of engaging with tenants/contract holders which are currently in place or will be in the next financial year and a question was raised as to how Councillors will be involved. Members were advised that although the report focusses on tenant/contract holder engagement there will be significant consultation taking place, for example WHQS 2023, where Councillors will be involved. The Committee was further advised of an area of involvement with the Head of Housing and Cabinet Member for Housing in the tenant information exchange groups, where tenants will have a direct link which can then be reported back to the Scrutiny Committee. In response to the Members query regarding a co-opted position on the Scrutiny Committee for a tenant or contract holder representative, Members were advised that this is not something proposed.

Assurance was sought that the Communication Strategy will allow for consultation with tenants who do not have access to the internet or social media. The Head of Housing advised Members that the Council will use a variety of communication methods including newsletters, surveys and day surgeries. It was highlighted that communication is not just reliant on e-mail, although this method is the most efficient.

Further details were requested in relation to various existing and potential new methods to be explored by Caerphilly Homes for engagement with tenant/contract holders now and in the future. The Housing Officer referred the Committee to the section of the report which detailed ways of engaging with tenants /contract holders which are currently in place or will be in the next financial year and shows a significant level of involvement with more to come as plans for WHQS 2023 are developed. The Committee was advised that a special meeting of Caerphilly Homes Task Group was held in July 2022 following the completion of the WHQS programme to review the achievements and challenges, whilst also celebrating its successful conclusion. The Cabinet Member for Housing stated that all Councillors regularly speak to tenants and the housing issues reported are fed back to the Housing Department.

A Member commented on the ongoing WHQS works for a sheltered accommodation complex in his ward and asked if there are any other complexes in the borough where WHQS works have not been completed. The Head of Housing advised the Scrutiny Committee that there were exclusions for works that were over and above the WHQS criteria, and this applied to five sheltered housing complexes which required longer term programmes of work. Reference was made to a previous question and Members were asked to note that they do have an impact on void figures and have to be excluded from true voids to get an accurate figure.

In response to a Members query, the Head of Housing advised the Committee that there are no plans to have a Task Group for WHQS 2023 and that the consultation process will be outlined and specified by Welsh Government. Tenant representation will be sought in any discussion on the new consultation framework that will need to be developed for WHQS 2023. This will start later in the next financial year as Welsh Government announce plans.

Clarification was sought regarding the timescale for WHQS 2023, and the Head of Housing advised the Scrutiny Committee that as the original timeline from Welsh Government indicated that WHQS 2023 would have been launched last month, which was not the case, it is understood Welsh Government will announce their plans imminently.

Following consideration of the report it was moved and seconded that the recommendations be approved. By way of Microsoft Forms voting (and in noting there were 10 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: -

1. Approve the discontinuation of CHTG, for the reasons stated within the report. A special meeting was held in July 22 with the Repairs and Improvement Group and tenant members of CHTG following the completion of the WHQS programme to review the achievements and challenges, whilst also celebrating its successful conclusion.
2. Commend the CHTG for the contribution it has made towards achieving the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.
3. Acknowledge and approve the various existing and potential new methods to be explored by Caerphilly Homes for engagement with tenant/contract holders now and in the future. The proposals for effective and meaningful engagement will enable more tenants/contract holders to have an opportunity to express views and be consulted on the future direction of Caerphilly Homes.

The meeting closed at 6.20 pm.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2023, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR

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HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18TH JULY 2023

**SUBJECT: HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that Scrutiny Committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholder.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on Monday 27th February 2023. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period July 2023 to March 2024.
- 5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the

cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

5.3 The Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 26th June 2023. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the scrutiny committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not necessary.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

9. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

11. **STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer jacqu@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Dave Street, Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer

Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,
Legal Services
Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair of Housing and Regeneration
Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Patricia Cook, Vice Chair of Housing and Regeneration
Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart

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Forward Work Programme - Housing and Regeneration

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
18/07/2023 17:30	Regeneration Strategy Annual Report	To provide Cabinet with an update on progress in respect of the Council's economic recovery framework.	Kyte, Rhian;	Cllr. Pritchard, James;
18/07/2023 17:30	Governance and Development Report	Relating to the governance arrangements that need to underpin the delivery of the 400 homes, the development process, programme and strategy.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
19/09/2023 17:30	Oakdale (September 2023)	To seek approval for the signing of a delivery agreement (DA) via SCAPE with Willmott Dixon to deliver an 85 new home mixed tenure scheme together with approval of the cost plan, sales and marketing strategy (for market sale homes) and social value plan.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
19/09/2023 17:30	LHMA (Local Housing Market Assessment) and the Welsh Government Prospectus	To discuss and approve the LHMA and the Prospectus. Welsh Government requires all Local Authorities to undertake a Local Housing Market Assessment and a Prospectus. The documents set out the requirement for housing within the county borough and is utilised to inform the LDP, the allocation of Social Housing Grant and the Council's own Caerphilly Homes development programme.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
19/09/2023 17:30	Ty Darren (September 2023)	To seek approval for the signing of a delivery agreement (DA) via SCAPE with Willmott Dixon to deliver a 46 new, affordable home later living scheme which will set the ambition for the future of later living accommodation in the county borough together with approval of the cost plan and social value plan.	Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
31/10/2023 17:30	Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy (Oct 23)		Roberts-Waite, Jane;	Cllr. Cook, Shayne;
12/12/2023 17:30				
13/02/2024 17:30				
26/03/2024 17:30				

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Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 11th July 2023

APPENDIX 2

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
12/07/2023 13:00	Court House Car Park, Blackwood – variation of parking charges	To seek Cabinet approval to vary the parking charges in Courthouse Car Park, Blackwood to allow up to 1 hour parking free of charge for all users.	Dean Smith/Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Nigel George
12/07/2023	Collaboration and Members Agreement (the CAMA)	To seek Cabinet approval to revise the South-East Wales Education Achievement Service Collaboration and Members Agreement (the CAMA)	Keri Cole	Cllr. Carol Andrews
12/07/2023	Caerphilly Interchange Proposal – Funding Requirements	For Cabinet to approve the request for CCBC funding contribution.	Clive Campbell	Cllr. Nigel George
12/07/2023	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report plus the Annual Safeguarding Management Information Report.	To seek approval of the Annual Safeguarding reports.	Gareth Jenkins	Cllr. Elaine Forehead
12/07/2023	Mobilising Team Caerphilly	To seek Cabinet support to access additional external capability to ensure the successful delivery of the Council's Team Caerphilly Transformation Programme.	Richard (Ed) Edmunds	Cllr. Eluned Stenner
12/07/2023	Free School Meals funding for summer holidays 2023	To propose the continuation of Free School Meals support during the summer holidays 2023.	Sue Richards	Cllr. Carol Andrews
12/07/2023	Exempt item - George Street Rear Walls, Cwmcarn	Exempt item subject to Public Interest Test	Claire Davies/Fiona Wilkins/Nick Taylor-Williams	Cllr. Shayne Cook
12/07/2023	Exempt item - Proposed Mineral Working and Restoration of Bedwas Tips -	Exempt item subject to Public Interest Test.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Nigel George

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 11th July 2023

APPENDIX 2

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
	extension of exclusivity agreement.			
26/07/2023 13:00	Covid 19 - Economic Recovery Framework, Monitoring report	To provide Cabinet with an update on progress in respect of the Council's economic recovery framework.	Rhian Kyte/Allan Dallimore	Cllr. James Pritchard
26/07/2023	Default speed limit consultation on restricted roads across the county borough from 30mph to 20mph	To review proposed 30mph exemptions within the County Borough as a result of the change in the default restricted road speed limit to 20mph.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Nigel George
26/07/2023	Day Services	For Cabinet to consider the new proposed Day Services Model.	Jo Williams	Cllr. Elaine Forehead
26/07/2023	Review of Licensing fees for Dog Breeders, Scrap Metal Dealers and Activities involving Animals (Pet sales) 2023.	To seek approval of licensing fees following the funding review.	Lee Morgan/Rob Hartshorn	Cllr. Philippa Leonard
26/07/2023	Provisional Revenue and Capital Budget Outturn for 2022/23	To provide Cabinet with details of the provisional revenue and capital budget outturns for the 2022/23 financial year prior to the completion of the external audit by Audit Wales.	Stephen Harris	Cllr. Eluned Stenner
26/07/2023	Waste Route Map	To agree the waste route map which will inform the development of the Council's Waste Strategy.	Marcus Lloyd	Cllr. Chris Morgan
20/09/2023 13:00	Natural Resources Wales (NRW) CCBC Collaboration Agreement - Cwmcarn Forest Drive	To allow Cabinet to review the outcome of the 2-year pilot in respect of the CCBC management of the Cwmcarn Forest Drive and consider whether or not to extend the collaboration agreement for the continued management of the drive	Antony Bolter/Allan Dallimore	Cllr. James Pritchard

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 11th July 2023

APPENDIX 2

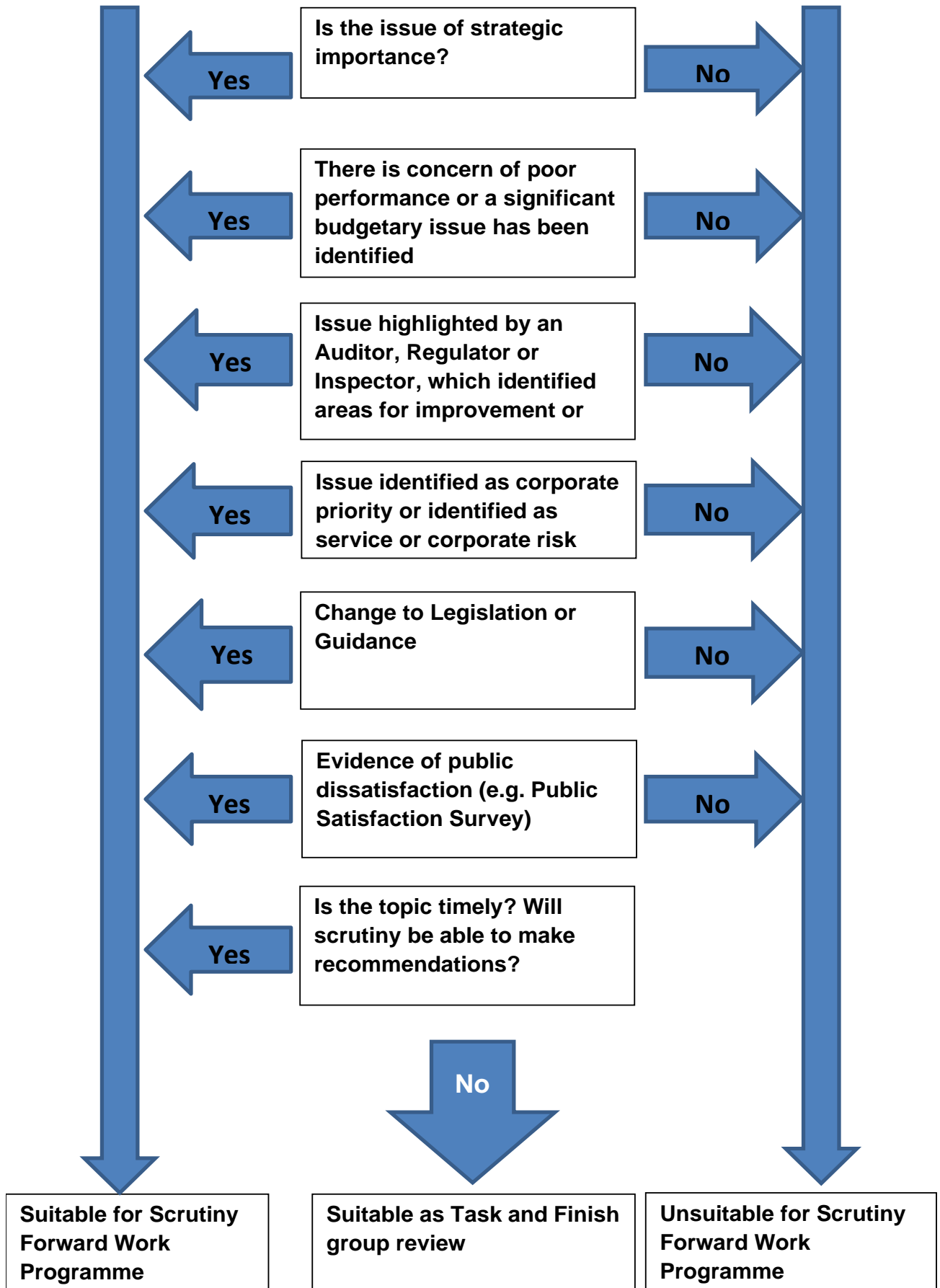
Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
		with Natural Resources Wales for a further 5 year period.		
20/09/2023	Development and Governance Strategy - Housing	For Cabinet to consider the establishment of the development strategy which details the principles, practices and governance arrangements which are needed to facilitate enable and support the new build objectives of Caerphilly Homes now and in the future.	Nick Taylor-Williams/ Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
20/09/2023	Corporate Performance Assessment	To provide Cabinet with an update with the Corporate Performance Assessment.	Sue Richards/Ros Roberts	Cllr. Eluned Stenner
20/09/2023	Public Protection Enforcement Annual report for 2022/23	For Cabinet to agree progress and performance.	Rob Hartshorn	Cllr. Philippa Leonard
20/09/2023	Proposal for the closure of Cwm Glas Infants School	For Cabinet to give approval to consult following the Statutory process as prescribed by the 'School Organisation Code 2018'.	Sue Richards, Andrea West	Cllr. C. Andrews
20/09/2023	Proposal for the Federation of Cwmaber Infants School and Cwmaber Junior School	For Cabinet to give approval to consult following the process as prescribed by the 'Federation process of maintained schools' in Wales guidance.	Sue Richards, Andrea West	Cllr. C. Andrews
04/10/2023 13:00	Caerphilly Homes – Re-development of the Former Oakdale Comprehensive School	To seek Cabinet approval for the signing of a delivery agreement (DA) via SCAPE with Willmott Dixon to deliver an 85 new home mixed tenure scheme.	Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook
04/10/2023	Caerphilly Homes – Re-development of the Former Ty Darran Care Home, Risca	To seek Cabinet approval for the signing of a delivery agreement (DA) via SCAPE with Willmott Dixon to deliver a 46 new, affordable home later living scheme which will set the ambition for the future of later	Jane Roberts-Waite	Cllr. Shayne Cook

Cabinet Forward Work Programme – 11th July 2023

APPENDIX 2

Meeting date:	Report title:	Key issue:	Report author:	Cabinet Member:
		living accommodation in the county borough.		
04/10/2023	Corporate Plan (including Well-Being Objectives) 2023 to 2028	To consider the Council’s Corporate Plan and Well-being Objectives 2023 to 2028	Christina Harray/Sue Richards/Jo Pearce	Leader/Cllr. Eluned Stenner
18/10/2023 13:00	Support for pupils unable to attend school (formerly “Tuition” report).	To seek Cabinet approval for proposals for revising the model of support for pupils accessing tuition.	Keri Cole	Cllr. C. Andrews
18/10/2023	Exempt item - Ness Tar	Exempt item subject to Public Interest Test	Rhian Kyte	Cllr. James Pritchard

Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation



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HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18TH JULY 2023

**SUBJECT: COVID 19, ECONOMIC RECOVERY FRAMEWORK -
MONITORING REPORT**

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides the Scrutiny Committee with an update on our economic recovery framework prior to consideration by Cabinet. The recovery framework comprises three distinct phases as follows:

- The Restart phase.
- The Revive phase.
- The Renew phase.

The focus of this report is the Revive and Renew Phases which follow on from an initial 'Government led' response (the Restart Phase) that delivered financial and employer support at pace in response to the pandemic.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit caused unprecedented disruption to our communities and the local economy which has been further compounded by the inflationary pressures in the economy as a consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine which has increased the cost of energy and contributed to the cost-of-living crisis.

2.2 'Delivering Prosperity after Covid' was prepared in 2021 in response to the pandemic and Brexit and this set out the key actions to progress over the first 12 months i.e. 2021/2022 and then the actions for the following 3 to 5 years in order to deliver the strategic objective of Supporting Business as a key driver for the Council's Economic Recovery Framework.

2.3 Welsh Government emergency financial support effectively ended during August 2021 and their response moved to a growth phase which the economic recovery framework sought to complement based on the following key objectives:

- To build a more resilient and diversified economy for the county borough.

- To support economic growth, innovation and enterprise.
- To create an environment that nurtures business.
- To enhance the competitiveness of the county borough.
- To boost business support.
- To identify key business investment sites.
- To improve the links between business, schools and training providers.

2.4 As evidenced in Appendix 1, the Council's localised actions have clearly served to sustain our businesses through a period of unprecedented turmoil. The current regeneration strategy A Foundation for Success 2018-2023 has made a positive impact, however much of its focus was predominantly on physical regeneration. In order to further grow our economy and maximize job sustainability and creation, there is now a need to develop a new economic regeneration strategy that aligns with the Cardiff Capital Region's growth agenda. The new strategy will create and further develop skills in the local workforce, which align with the buoyant job market in the County Borough and in the CCR, in order to improve the prosperity of our communities in the longer term.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to acknowledge the progress made against the agreed action plan for economic recovery as set out at Appendix 1 and to provide any comments on the report and action plan prior to the matter being considered by Cabinet.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To provide an update on progress in the implementation of the Council's action plan for economic recovery.

5. THE REPORT

Background

5.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented disruption to our communities and the local economy that has been exacerbated by the transition from being a part of the European Union and the Russian invasion of Ukraine combined have created logistical challenges and supply chain disruption for local businesses and has increased the cost of energy and contributed to the cost-of-living crisis. This Monitoring Report has been prepared to report to Cabinet progress made against the approved economic recovery framework, 'Delivering Prosperity after Covid' (December 2022).

5.2 The Covid crisis has reinforced the fundamental role of the foundational economy to the well-being of our citizens as it provides the infrastructure of everyday life, serving our essential daily household needs, and keeping us all safe and civilised, providing jobs at the heart of our communities in healthcare, childcare, food, housing, energy, construction, waste and recycling. Looking forward innovation will be of key importance to the foundational economy and will be critical to the levelling up agenda.

5.3 The impact of the combination of Coronavirus, Brexit, the war inflation and thus rising energy costs on the local economy is becoming clearer, with industries that rely on

personal interactions suffering more than others, such as the hospitality and leisure industries. The longer-term impacts on structural changes to industry and the service economy are still to be understood but it is evident that we will be living with the effects of these combined world events for some considerable time.

- 5.4 Research conducted during the height of the pandemic confirmed that the majority of businesses in the county borough were negatively impacted by coronavirus and also Brexit through operational limitations to their business, loss of staff and reductions in turnover. 31% of businesses surveyed felt their staffing requirements would decrease in the long term but on a more positive note, 12% of businesses surveyed had been able to diversify their offer bringing new services or products to the market and to communities in the county borough.
- 5.5 The research identified that 42% of firms felt they needed specific business support to help with the challenges presented by Brexit. In response to this research, the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund was reconfigured to provide targeted support to business to help them innovate and grow, and where appropriate to help businesses to understand and meet new requirements as a consequence of Brexit. The International Trade Support Officer has been fundamental in helping businesses across the county borough to support their overseas trading requirements and aspirations.
- 5.6 A number of geo-political tensions have emerged in the period post-pandemic: Inflation is at a forty-year high; interest rates are increasing; energy, food and cyber security are pronounced risks. These macro-economic changes are temporary, but reinforce the commitment and focus to the 'levelling-up' agenda. Against this context, the Cardiff Capital Region has revised the CCR Regional Economic and Industrial Plan. This sets out the region's response to these challenges, and provides a roadmap to becoming a proud, connected, and resilient region. The revised plan outlines how as an integral part of the CCR, Caerphilly CBC together with its partners will:
- Tackle the specific challenges associated with those areas experiencing potentially declining populations, which the Census seems to indicate is the case in Caerphilly if left unaddressed.
 - Stimulate the economy and encourage more people of working age to stay and return to the region and indeed in Caerphilly.
 - Attract a range of companies and increase productive capacity by growing the employment base in key competitive clusters.
 - Reinforce the important partnerships forged across local political and business leadership.
 - Focus on liveability and inclusivity, as well as productivity.

Overview of progress against actions

- 5.7 This section of the report provides an overview of the progress made in meeting the actions outlined in the economic recovery framework, 'Delivering Prosperity after Covid' in the first 18 months of its implementation. It focuses on the Renew Phase which includes policy interventions, financial support and the delivery of major construction projects, to create opportunities to provide a diverse range of employment and training opportunities and opportunities for local business supply chains as follows:
- Renewing policy interventions through the preparation of the Second Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) – working from home, reducing the need to travel, provision of suitable land for development, town centre first

principles, diversification of town centres, facilitating Active Travel and modal shift.

- Understanding future industrial growth as influenced by Brexit and the pandemic, and ongoing work with business to strengthen Caerphilly's place in the CCR regional economy.
- Expediting delivery of major construction projects through the Council's PlaceShaping Programme as a catalyst for growth.
- Accelerating Caerphilly Town 2035 projects.
- Ensuring maximum social impact and social value from public sector investment.

5.8 Critical to the delivery of the objectives of the Renew and Restart Phases of the economic recovery framework are the following areas identified in the regeneration strategy: Implementation of strategic masterplans, innovation, cluster networks and skills that will be addressed through the following priority areas with each priority having a series of actions identified in the framework:

- Development of the Foundational Economy.
- Homes for the Future.
- Development of cluster and innovation opportunities.
- Improving resilience through education training and careers advice.
- Transport Infrastructure and connectivity.
- Town Centre Regeneration & Diversification.
- Tourism Recovery.
- Reconfiguration of existing employment sites and identifying new sites.

5.9 Long-term investments in infrastructure such as that proposed within the Council's Approved Well Being and PlaceShaping Framework, hold the potential to rebalance the local economy, enhance productivity and create jobs and opportunities across Caerphilly County Borough, which is of great importance as we support our communities to rebuild a sustainable and resilient future post Covid. The opportunity exists to work together to create a better and more prosperous Caerphilly for everyone, further embedding the Council's TeamCaerphilly collective community and civic leadership model of delivery.

5.10 Strategic improvements that are necessary to further drive local economic growth in the Renew Phase for example are:

- Improving access to the digital front door and addressing digital poverty as a barrier to employment.
- Influencing regional and Welsh policy and programme development as a member of CCR Regeneration Group, WG regional town centre group etc. through a continued dialogue with the WLGA.
- Building on developing relationship with WG Business Wales, WG Regeneration Team and WG Task & Finish Groups so we can dovetail support packages.
- Developing a coherent marketing strategy for the county borough to attract in new investment.
- Preparing and finalising the 5th Masterplan for the Greater Blackwood (Mid Valleys East) Area.

5.11 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK and within Caerphilly County Borough.

- 5.12 Underneath the overarching aim of building pride in place and increasing life chances, there are three UKSPF investment priorities: communities and place; supporting local business; and people and skills. The SPF aligns and compliments the Levelling Up Fund and in this respect, Caerphilly County Borough has a SPF allocation of £28,272,298, and an allocation of £5,901,499 for *Multiply (*UK Gov Adult numeracy programme) up to March 2025. Further the Council has been successful in securing £20m Levelling Up Funding for one of its key Placeshaping Projects, namely the proposed Caerphilly Leisure and Well Being Hub.
- 5.13 The UKSPF Caerphilly Local Investment Plan comprises an overview of the Caerphilly specific proposed interventions via the SPF which seek to build pride in place and increase life chances across the whole county borough. Underneath these overarching aims there are three UKSPF investment priorities: communities and place; supporting local business; and people and skills, all of which are priority themes for the Council's Economic Recovery.

Conclusion

- 5.14 The Council, in partnership with the Welsh Government, was at the forefront of responding to the immediate and short-term needs of local businesses as both coronavirus and Brexit unfolded. As we emerge from the challenges faced as a consequence of world events the Council continues to provide appropriate support to help businesses thrive, grow, modernise and innovate within the county borough.
- 5.15 This report gives an overview of the progress made to drive economic recovery and provides a summary of the work that has been undertaken over the last 18 months. The detailed actions are included in Appendix 1.
- 5.16 As evidenced in Appendix 1, the Council's localised actions have clearly served to sustain our businesses through a period of unprecedented turmoil. The current regeneration strategy A Foundation for Success 2018-2023 has made a positive impact, however much of its focus was predominantly on physical regeneration. In order to further grow our economy and maximize job sustainability and creation, there is now a need to develop a new economic regeneration strategy that aligns with the Cardiff Capital Region's growth agenda. The new strategy will create and further develop skills in the local workforce, which align with the buoyant job market in the County Borough and in the CCR, in order to improve the prosperity of our communities in the longer term.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 At the time of writing it is assumed that there will be no further emergency government support through both UK and Welsh Government in response to Brexit and the pandemic, whilst limited support may be given in response to the Cost-of-Living Crises.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment and Post consultation Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) for this proposal was undertaken alongside the original report entitled 'Delivering Prosperity after Covid' which is published on the Council's website. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on its implementation in

the first year.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All consultation responses are reflected in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Local Government Acts 1998 and 2003.

Appendix 1: FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS: DELIVERING PROSPERITY after COVID
(Approved 8 December 2021) - First Annual Monitoring Report

Author: Rhian Kyte, Head of Regeneration and Planning

Consultees: Cllr James Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Prosperity, Regeneration and Climate Change.
Christina Harray, Chief Executive.
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment.
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive.
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services.
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and Section 151 Officer.
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services.
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer.
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure.
Nick Taylor-Williams, Head of Housing.
Liz Lucas, Head of Customer and Digital Services.
Sue Richards, Head of Transformation and Education Planning and Strategy.
Allan Dallimore, Regeneration Services Manager.

Appendix 1

FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS: DELIVERING PROSPERITY after COVID (Approved 8 December 2021)

Monitoring Report – 31 March 2023

The Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit caused unprecedented disruption to our communities and the local economy, which has been further compounded by the inflationary pressures in the economy as a consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.


'Delivering Prosperity after Covid' was formally approved by Cabinet on 8 December 2021 in response to the pandemic and this Annual Monitoring Report sets out what progress has been made over the first 18 months against each Priority Theme to deliver on the strategic objective of Supporting Business.

The progress in the first 18 months of the plan against each of the theme has been afforded a **RAG** status as follows:

	Very Good or Excellent progress
	Good Progress but more to be done
	Very Little or No progress

The AMR provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the Economic Recovery Framework over the monitoring period which clearly illustrates that considerable progress has been made during its implementation in the first 18 months.

PRIORITY THEME: IMPROVE RESILIENCE THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>Strengthening local supply chains through cultivational procurement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Business Support to help local SMEs register with procurement. • Map supply chain voids to ensure that local companies are used where practicable. • Develop the capabilities of indigenous business to compete for contracts and fill supply chain voids. • Work with partners to support local jobs through the use of procurement measures that support local supply chains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplier Relationship Officer has supported 48 contractors/suppliers via weekly Procurement Clinic appointments providing information, advice and guidance on registering on the Council's e-Sourcing platform to access procurement opportunities. • Supply chain mapping and void identification is progressing, an interactive interface using PowerBI is being developed which will facilitate the interrogation of data and ensure long term value. • Working in conjunction with Simply Do to leverage their expertise and to enrich the background data and widen the scope of the interrogable data. The aim of this is to increase the scope of capturing local micro-businesses within the database to glean a more holistic view of potential local supply chains. • To identify the challenges we are facing in relation to Covid Recovery, and embedding decarbonisation initiatives, we have adopted a challenge-based procurement approach. • Working with SimplyDo, we are undertaking a series of Challenge Hacks to identify problems that could be resolved through supply chain innovation or reengineering. • Working with WLGA and WG with the development of a forward work programme of collaborative procurement opportunities on an all Wales National and Southeast Wales delivery group basis. This information is available on the Sell2wales website. • Representation at Centre for Local Economies Strategies (CLES) Gwent Cluster working groups for Construction & retrofit, Simplifying and sharing best practice; and Food 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		<p>procurement. Key focus areas include Increasing knowledge of the potential local supplier base, standardisation of documentation and processes and developing better relationships between procurement and business support functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement team continue to work in-conjunction the Business Enterprise & Renewal team to support local supply chains in delivering social value commitments including creation and retention of jobs. 	
<p>Improve support for business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider bespoke support for services targeted at micro and small businesses, business start-up and self-employment within the County Borough by reinvigorating and resourcing local business support to coordinate and maximise the opportunities arising at the regional level through City Deal. Work with partners to provide training and support for citizens to become self-employed. Re-configure grant spend to ensure that it is more effective and targeted more closely at supporting economic outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Enterprise & Renewal Team have supported 12 new start-ups thereby assisting the creation of 23 Jobs. Business Support Clinics held bimonthly to offer 30-minute sessions of face to face (via Teams at present) support to businesses and their specific requirements, held with Business Wales and Development Bank Wales. Revived the Account Manager's Meeting bringing together representatives from WG, Development Bank of Wales, Business Wales, Business in Focus, Business Associates, DWP, Careers Wales, Princes Trust and others to share knowledge and intel for business around the borough. Meetings with other support agencies re: support and grants funding available e.g. Welsh Government COVID and other grant support. International Trade Officer supporting with new export import requirements post Brexit -over 100+ SMEs contacted to date provide support. Caerphilly Enterprise Fund Grants reconfigured. 89 (23 CEF and 66 CEF UKSPF) business Supported – creating 269 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		jobs, safeguarding 640 Jobs with a Capital Investment by businesses supported of £2,360,609.76	
Exploit funding opportunities to ensure premises are available for business development and growth for SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target key premises within the strategic hubs of Caerphilly and Ystrad Mynach in addition to Principal Town Centres throughout the County Borough in order to ensure that there are suitable premises available to facilitate commercial growth (retail & business). Work with the ICE Regional Enterprise Hub to identify new opportunities for business hubs in other parts of the County Borough. Exploit opportunities to bring employment back to the centre of our towns as part of a wider offer of activities and uses and re-purpose buildings to create co-working spaces and encouraging new green skills and opportunities such as repair cafes, reuse and refill retail and remanufacturing innovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1m WG Transforming Towns fund targeting businesses / premises in Caerphilly in 2021/22 has been approved (schemes need to be supported by placemaking plans). 114 businesses supported with £1,130,094.76 investment via the Caerphilly Enterprise Fund, Caerphilly Start Up Fund and Caerphilly Development Fund. Opportunity for redevelopment of Pentrebane Street through Caerphilly Town 2035 plan to provide commercial space. Support for 2 businesses equating to £30,000 each relocating from the Caerphilly Indoor Market provided through CEF SPF (£25,000 each) and SPF start up (£5,000 each) to enable redevelopment of Pentrebane Street. CCBC business team meet regularly with the Welsh Ice Community manager to support their outreach service to the wider Caerphilly borough business community. WG currently fund the Enterprise Hub and we have suggested further growth through a review of the offer they provide. Satellite hubs has been suggested and Officers are working with Welsh Ice to identify key locations around the Caerphilly County borough. Levelling Up Fund bid prepared, submitted and £20m awarded by UK Government to support the development of a new Well Being Centre in Caerphilly Town adjacent to the proposed new transport Interchange. 	
Work with local Businesses to progress innovation in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with the private sector to develop foundational economy challenge bid schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiff Capital Region, with support from economic development consultancy Steer Economic Development, are developing a forward-looking Challenge Strategy for the region. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
the Foundational Economy.			

PRIORITY THEME: ZERO CARBON HOMES FOR THE FUTURE

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Welsh Housing Quality Standard Investment to upgrade 10,822 homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently 10448 properties out of our total stock of 10654 have been upgraded and are fully compliant with WHQS standard. It is anticipated that the majority of those remaining will be upgraded within the next 12 months with many only awaiting external works. Target to complete all internal and external works by December 2021. ▪ Explore opportunities to work with other housing partners on a Challenge Fund to retrofit existing dwellings to facilitate decarbonisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the current housing stock of 10,672 properties are fully compliant with WHQS standard as of 31st December 2021. • Working to explore the opportunities by following the Pathways Ratings System to discover the full costs of bringing policy voids up to Standard Assessment Procedure rating of "A" whilst helping to facilitate decarbonisation moving forward. 	
Unlocking public sector land for self-build development,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify plots of land in Council ownership that are suitable for self-build development; apply for outline planning permission and ensure infrastructure is in place (where appropriate) to ensure sites are 'oven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several sites in Council ownership were initially identified as being potentially suitable for inclusion in the Self Build Wales scheme. However, upon undertaking further investigation it was determined that the costs of bringing plots forward on single plot or very small sites would exceed any likely capital receipt. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
through a 'Plot Shop' initiative	ready.' Facilitate the sale of plots to eligible applicants.		
Construction of new council housing stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore and develop energy efficient housing that reduces energy costs significantly and / or generates energy that can be supplied into the grid. ▪ Secure planning permission on Council owned sites identified within the Council's Programme Development Plan (PDP). ▪ Seek opportunities to secure additional Council stock through Section 106 agreements. ▪ Set up partnership agreements with developer partners including where appropriate RSLs for the delivery of Council units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caerphilly Homes have commenced work on the Council's development programme. 18 new energy efficient homes have been delivered and certified to Passivhaus Standard using the Calendan steel primaframe solution which is manufactured locally on Penallta Industrial Estate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llanfabon Drive Trethomas, 12 homes complete. • Former 49 Club, Trecenydd, 6 homes complete. • Outline consent secured for Oakdale Comprehensive and Ty Darren, Risca (126 new homes likely to be delivered) • S106: A number of S106 homes have been secured via local developer, Llanmoor Homes. 6 in the first phase (including 2 LCHO homes) and 7 will be secured in the 2nd phase of their development. • A report seeking approval that a PCSA (Pre-Construction services Agreement) be signed with Construction Partners Willmott Dixon to begin the enabling and demolition works on Ty Darran is scheduled to be considered by Cabinet shortly. A PCSA has already been signed in relation to the development of the former Oakdale School Site. • The Council signed an MOU with partner HA's in October 2021 which promotes collaboration between the organisations in relation to all housing services. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress being made towards delivering the 400 new home ambition that was agreed by Cabinet in January 202. Cabinet agreement to move to the next stage of the development process thereby undertaking detailed site investigation work to determine whether 5 identified sites are deliverable and viable. 	
<p>Examine the potential to pilot initiatives through the Housing Investment Fund as part of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal workstream.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure funding to unlock 2 problematic stalled sites at Maesycwmmmer and Abertridwr through the City Deal Housing Investment Fund. ▪ Secure funding to unlock 1 problematic site in the Heads of the Valleys through the City Deal Housing Investment Fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Bids Submitted to Cardiff Capital Region City Deal for Housing Investment Fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Windsor Colliery, Abertridwr – Funding Secured, planning permission secured, scheme progressing with RSL partner for 109 homes. ○ Gellideg Heights, Maesycwmmmer – Funding approved but not being taken up by the RSL partner, who is funding the site through an alternative mechanism, scheme to progress; and ○ Land at Heol Ddu Grove, Bargoed - Reserve site. 	
<p>Utilise Welsh Government loans / funding to bring vacant properties and sites back into beneficial use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Facilitate and assist owner occupiers and landlords to access Welsh Government loans to upgrade and bring properties back into beneficial use. ▪ Secure Welsh Government Land to bring 1 brownfield site back into beneficial use for a mixed-use development including mixed tenure housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1m Transforming Towns allocation – pipeline of projects awaiting funding. • Due Diligence proceeding to determine the risks associated with progressing a significant brownfield site in Caerphilly Basin for development. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Secure money to deliver innovative homes suitable for the future (i.e., carbon neutral, zero carbon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pentrebane Street Caerphilly, funding secured for the development of a mixed-use scheme on this site. ▪ Ty Pontllanfraith, funding secured from the Innovative Housing Fund for the redevelopment of this site and the creation of a 'Garden Village'. ▪ Ty Du, funding secured from the Innovative Housing Fund for the development of this site. ▪ Work with our RSL partners to deliver new carbon neutral homes to meet housing need across the county borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pentrebane Street, Funding secured, site assembly progressing. • Land at Former Pontllanfraith House, Pontllanfraith being developed by Pobl, 123 homes under construction. • Ty Du, site acquired by United Welsh Housing. Layout and design being progressed. • Work with RSL Partners to deliver new carbon neutral homes is ongoing through the Development Management Process. 	
Set up empty homes team to target empty town centre properties and empty residential properties to bring them back in to beneficial use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare an Enforcement Action Plan for Vacant Town Centre Properties and act using relevant statutory powers to bring premises back into beneficial use. ▪ Provide grant support via the Transforming Towns Initiative to bring town centre properties back into beneficial use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty Property Action Plan prepared with a list of targeted properties supported to be brought back into beneficial use. • £1m WG Transforming Towns allocation obtained – good pipeline of projects awaiting funding which seek to bring a number of prominent empty buildings back into beneficial use. 	

PRIORITY THEME: DEVELOP CLUSTER AND INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>Develop cluster opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with City Deal/Welsh Government to deliver key sites including Capital Valley, Rhymney, Ty Du Nelson, Caerphilly Business Park and Oakdale Business Park (plateau 1,2 and 4). • Work with WG to secure £3m investment for the provision of infrastructure at Oakdale Business Park. • Work with the private sector to facilitate their growth plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whitebeam Court, Ty Du Nelson - comprises 11 new high quality business units ranging from 105 sq m (1,130 sq ft) to 338 sq m (3,637 sq ft). Complete and near to being fully let. • Silverbirch Court - this is a new development comprising 15 high quality business units in Rhymney ranging from 50m2 to 98m2, all have WC, IT outlet (fibre broadband accessible) associated parking and easy access. Complete and near to being fully let. • Caerphilly Business Park – Levelling Up Fund Bid Submitted to UK Government for the provision of a new Well-being Centre. • Oakdale Business Park Plateau 1 – Cabinet approval obtained to sell residual land to Welsh Government. Ongoing dialogue with Welsh Government and the solicitors acting for IG Doors to resolve various legal issues. • Oakdale Plateau 2 – Working with CCR and WG to prepare relevant site investigation reports to facilitate development of the residual land. RIBA Stage 2. Discussion underway with prospective developers. • Oakdale Plateau 4 - Relevant site investigation reports prepared to facilitate development of the residual land. Discussion ongoing with WG and prospective developer. 	




Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Create and strengthen official lines of communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Caerphilly Business Club to programme business networking opportunities at a local level and make connections to enhance local supply chain activity. Continue to work closely with businesses in the county borough to address their training needs in association with Further and higher Education partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Networking events being held by Caerphilly Business Club supported by BERT staff. Officers work continuously with the local colleges through the Caerphilly Business Club and link businesses with the CCBC employability teams to provide training, work trials and upskilling opportunities for the unemployed and employed members of staff across the borough. Each business is made aware of the full range of training services made available through CCBC and further and higher education partners. 	
Target innovation and business set up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain a better understanding of the skills requirements in respect of the compound semiconductor, life sciences sectors and electric automotive sectors. Continue to roll out the Caerphilly Business Productivity Enhancement Programme to encourage SMEs with more than 10 employees to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future proof business through becoming more efficient, Introduce new technology, Diversify and broaden the customer base, Develop new products. Following a productivity diagnostic of the company, a comprehensive support package will provide implementation support, skills development, research & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caerphilly Business and Productivity Enhancement Programme. This provides a free productivity diagnostic for companies with a support package which ranges from hands on implementation support, skills development, research & development, export and GRANT SUPPORT for capital expenditure and any other specialist interventions that are required. 11 companies supported to date through the programme. Cardiff Capital Region, with support from economic development consultancy Steer Economic Development, are developing a forward-looking Challenge Strategy for the region. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
	<p>development, export, GRANT SUPPORT for capital expenditure and any other specialist interventions that are required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring together public, private and third sector organisations in the County Borough to respond to societal challenges and drive positive change through innovation via the CCR Challenge Fund Programme and Innovate UK. 		

PRIORITY THEME: DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Work with Partners to Increase broadband speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote initiatives to increase the availability of SFBB (Super-Fast Broad Band) and UFBB (Ultra-Fast Broadband). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progressing work with a number of Broadband providers. 	
Provide digital support and advice to business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with WG to offer digital infrastructure support services to local businesses / enhance digital connectivity / promote the role of artificial intelligence in business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers are working alongside WG and Ogi Pro Services to offer businesses in historically poor broadband areas of the borough the chance to connect to high-speed broadband - Hengoed & Blackwood exchanges scheduled for upgrades. Officers also regularly work with WG to promote their BPEP offer delivering new technologies to SME businesses and will continue to support them going forward. 	
Promote the concept of Regional /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out Free Wi Fi in all Principal Towns and Rhymney and Newbridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risca, Ystrad Mynach, Bargoed and Rhymney Free Wi Fi implemented and available. Caerphilly, Blackwood and Newbridge pending. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Community Wi-Fi as the potential for enabling a functional and connected future.			
Explore the opportunity to roll-out a 5G Network across the CCR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the work of the CCR Digital Strategy. • Continue to work with private sector providers engaged in rolling out their 5G network across the CCR and County Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCR have released a digital series magazine, an apprentice scheme and an appointment has been made to the Digital Lead. • Ongoing. 	
Ensure innovative technologies through the use of broadband are incorporated within new housing developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with developers to ensure the incorporation of innovative technologies within new housing developments in line with national planning policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A condition is now attached to all planning consents for major housing development requiring provision of 1gigabyte of broadband connectivity for each dwelling. 	
Improve Broadband Speeds in Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of SuperFast Broadband Installations in Schools in line with the Learning in Digital Wales Programme • Seek funding opportunities through WG and work with schools to improve network infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the Edtech project, an independent review and health check of the school's network has taken place. The findings of the independent review are being discussed and an action plan will follow • Funding secured and procurement underway for review of corporate infrastructure in preparedness for analogue switch off. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Coding for Younger People to enable young people to have the relevant skills for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners in WG & Consortia to promote the use of coding in line with the Digital Competence Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coding sessions are currently run at the following public libraries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Caerphilly Library</u> Code Club every Wednesday during term-time Advanced Code Club every Friday during term-time Library staff teach/facilitate all sessions <u>Risca Library</u> Weekly sessions will resume after October 2022 Half-Term Library staff teach/facilitate all sessions <u>Bargoed Library</u> Weekly sessions for 8-14 year old. Library staff teach/facilitate all sessions 	
Assess the potential development of Wi-Fi analytics and digital towns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise Wi Fi analytics to inform Town Centre Strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risca, Ystrad Mynach, Bargoed and Rhymney Free Wi Fi available, Caerphilly, Blackwood and Newbridge pending. The new wi fi will provide the data for the analytics to inform Town Centre Strategies in future. 	
Assess the ability of town centre traders to offer increasingly popular digital services such as click and collect and look to share best	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with 'NearMeNow' to pilot a new digital platform for use by business in Principal Towns throughout the County Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NearMeNow with the support of Welsh Government, Caerphilly, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Carmarthenshire Local Authorities and the Treorchy town and business community have played an active part over the last two years in helping to build this software. The new digital platform VZTA launched in October 2022 and gives high streets and the organisations that support them the tools they need to help them in the fight-back against high street chains and 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
practice where this has worked well.		online giants, by bringing them together as one community of small businesses.	

PRIORITY THEME: IMPROVING RESILIENCE THROUGH EDUCATION, TRAINING & CAREERS ADVICE

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Develop a skilled workforce and tackle unemployment to respond to the needs of business both locally and regionally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver the Caerphilly Academy - training, work placement and apprenticeship programme to support the needs of business. Assist the CCR project team in the delivery of its "graduate" programme by working with the Caerphilly Business Club to identify opportunities for business to take part and benefit. Engage with the DWP Kickstart scheme and Restart Scheme at an authority-wide level, with a commitment to host 10 Kickstart work placements across various service areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the support of the Caerphilly Academy, the Kickstart scheme supported 8 (out of possible 10 placements). Intensive support at all stages was provided, including liaison with managers to identify suitable placements and recruit, supporting individuals to complete new starter process, liaising with DWP, working with individuals and managers to resolve any issues once in employment. Out of these 8, 5 are likely to progress into employment with CCBC; 3 are being supported to find employment elsewhere. Academy mentor provides support to individuals at all stages of these paid placements within the Council 11 staff supported. 	
Work with partners, in the private, public and third sector, utilising labour market intelligence to identify future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align skills and employment support provision to meet the needs of future employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and employability survey has been sent to local businesses via CCBC business team and CBC Links with local JCPs to access skills shortages data for county borough. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
growth demand and skill requirements.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers liaise with WG key account managers and CBC to promote cluster groups and industry specific recruitment drives through employability teams. Continuation of our employability programmes covering all age ranges with unlimited access and support Skills and Employability group to be formed with JCP, colleges, CCBC employability programmes to identify employment issues specific to the county borough. Regular case studies are undertaken and submitted to WG to showcase their successes and provide evidence for project continuation. 	
Explore opportunities for targeted career advice aligned to current and future job opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Welsh Government and CCR to pilot career advice initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Manager attends monthly CCR Regional Skills Partnership to discuss regional approach to priority areas (green energy, FinTech etc) Acted on national understaffing of HGV drivers. Insights into sector provided, including driving a HGV vehicle. Linked with local employers providing targeted recruitment. 10 individuals have attended sessions. 1 has completed the process and gained employment. Remaining participants still undertaking training owing to national delay with DVLA and testing centres. Focussed recruitment supporting Caerphilly CBC priority recruitment, including sector specific recruitment days collaboratively working with the local Job Centres. Insight/recruitment sessions provided in cleaning and 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		<p>catering. 11 individuals engaged with 7 receiving direct support into these roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways delivered included training, work placements and employment. Construction event supported 12 individuals - 11 so far have found. Senior Business Liaison Officer attends regular regional meetings with counterparts. Best practice and targeted regional recruitment initiatives identified 	Yellow
Formalise links between businesses, schools, FE and HE establishments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding opportunities through WG and work with schools to improve network infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners from each sector attend twice yearly live vacancy events. Schools are supported to attend via Welsh Government grant funding for transport. The sectors all also attend schools regularly via formal links with the Careers Wales business engagement team. Funding is also being used to provide work experience opportunities for year 11 pupils. 	Green
Ensure training and skills provision enables those currently in employment to upskill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local business and training providers to support those in employment to have access to in work training and progression opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers work continuously with the local colleges through the Caerphilly Business Club and link businesses with the CCBC employability teams to provide training, work trials and upskilling opportunities for the unemployed and employed members of staff across the borough. Each business is made aware of the full range of training services made available through CCBC and further and higher education partners. Through the Shared Prosperity Fund the Council is using the Regional Employment Programme to jointly commission FE, ACL and locally procured bespoke courses which address skills gaps, address recruitment issues linked to skills gaps, and focus on growth areas in the local labour market for those in employment to develop 	Yellow

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>Work with partners to upskill the workforce and expand the workforce in green sectors. Investment in low carbon housing at scale and upgrading housing stock particularly Council housing, is likely to be a central plank of recovery to increase energy efficiency of Council homes, reduce fuel poverty and create jobs in the green economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local business and training providers and developers to support those in the construction sector to have the necessary training and skills to meet the decarbonisation ambitions of the Council and Welsh Government. 	<p>and progress in their careers. Digital, creative, manufacturing sector skills targeted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers work continuously with the local colleges through the Caerphilly Business Club and link businesses with the CCBC employability teams to provide training, work trials and upskilling opportunities for the unemployed and employed members of staff across the borough. Each business is made aware of the full range of training services made available through CCBC and further and higher education partners. Through the Shared Prosperity Fund the Council is using the Regional Employment Programme to jointly commission FE, ACL and locally procured bespoke courses which address skills gaps and recruitment needs in relation to 'green' skills and green industries. Supporting those who are both unemployed and employed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caerphilly Homes have commenced work on their own zero net carbon housebuilding programme as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llanfabon Drive Trethomas, 12 homes complete. Former 49 Club, Trecenydd, 6 homes complete. Outline consent secured for Oakdale Comprehensive and Ty Darren Risca, potential for 145 homes. Working with RSLs on multiple zero carbon homes developments at Pentrebanne Street Caerphilly, Windsor 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		<p>Colliery Abertridwr, Former Police Station Caerphilly, Gellideg Heights, Maesycwmmmer, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links formed with Nearly Zero Centres of Excellence in Ireland alongside Coleg Y Cymoedd in order to share best practice in order to facilitate the development of a centre which can be utilised by establishments delivering construction skills training in South East Wales. 	
<p>Continue to provide crucial assistance to people who might have lost their job or training opportunity because of the pandemic or Brexit, and help people develop new skills fit for the future and to find new employment opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with individuals to provide appropriate employment support through the existing employment support programmes including CfW, CfW+, CfW++, Inspire 2 Work, Inspire 2 achieve, Bridges into Work and Nurture Equip and Thrive to ensure participants are given the support that is required to support them into employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CfW, CfW+, CfW++ have undertaken 379 engagements which have resulted in 142 job outcomes for participants. Inspire 2 Work, Inspire 2 achieve, Bridges into Work and Nurture Equip and supported 218 participants, 77 of which gained a qualification as a result, 38 participants have been supported into work, and a further 33 participants have been supported to improve their employment situation. 	
<p>Upskilling residents' Essential Skills (Literacy Numeracy,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver Essential Skills courses through Caerphilly Adult Community Learning (through Coleg Gwent Franchise) 	<p>Courses delivered Pan-Caerphilly including Oxford House AEC (Risca), Libraries (Abercarn, Bargoed, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Nelson, New Tredegar, Newbridge, Rhymney, Risca), Schools (Graig-Y-Rhacca/Markham), Blackwood Job Centre, Blackwood</p>	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>Digital Skills, ESOL)</p> <p><i>'(Essential Skills) support the development of skills needed for education, work and life...'</i></p>		<p>Miners' Institute, Cefn Fforest Community Centre, Caerphilly Miners (The Beeches), White Rose Resource Centre, St. Teilo's (high dependency inpatient rehabilitation centre for women).</p> <p>Total courses: Literacy (24), Numeracy (8), Digital Skills (30), ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages (21)</p>	
<p>Continue to deliver Adult Community Learning provision (Employability, ILS, Hobby & Interests)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure opportunities are available for resident to take part in Adult Community Learning provision (mainly funded through Welsh Government Community Learning Grant) 	<p>Courses delivered:</p> <p>ICDL x 4 (International Computer Driving Licence)</p> <p>20+ courses for ESF Employability team (including Customer Service, Food Safety, Health and Safety, Emergency First Aid at Work, Basic Life Saving/AED, Teamwork, Customer Service, Confidence Building)</p> <p>30+ courses for other groups such as Youth Service, Early Years, Penallta RFC, New Tredegar Rugby Club, POBL, Parent Network (including Food Safety, Basic Safeguarding, Emergency First Aid at Work, Basic Life Support/AED, Paediatric First Aid, Confidence Building,</p> <p>Other courses (open to the general public) include: Safeguarding Children & Young People, Award in Education & Training, Managing Conflict, Introduction to Classroom Assistant x 1</p> <p>Engagement/Hobby activities include – Pottery, Cake Decorating, Music Therapy, Junk to Joy, Art, Print Making, Spanish, Willow</p>	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		<p>craft, Seasonal Wreath Making (some sessions funded by Welsh Government Engagement Grant)</p> <p>ILS provision (Courses for adults with additional learning needs funded by Coleg Y Cymoedd) includes – Pottery, Art & Craft, Cooking, Drama, Singing, Employability, Gardening, Sewing, Relationships, Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Clubs (run independently of Caerphilly ACL) include Crochet, Wood carving and Patchwork.</p>	
<p>Develop and Deliver Multiply Programme</p> <p>(Initial funding £5.9 million)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up an appropriate Multiply numeracy programme to ensure the hardest-to-reach resident have access to numeracy learning opportunities. 	<p>Staff recruitment to date x 2 project officers, 1 x communications</p> <p>Ongoing staff recruitment (tutors, admin & accreditation officer, monitoring and compliance officer, engagement officers)</p> <p>Various groups/projects attended e.g. schools, Parent Network groups, Employability teams, Careers Wales, Job Centre Plus.</p> <p>Various events attended and marketing materials purchased.</p> <p>1 course started – Cooking on a Budget (as a follow on from CCBCs Cooking Champion programme)</p>	

PRIORITY THEME: TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Improve the resilience of the strategic highway network of the A469 to Rhymney.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Design and Feasibility stage in preparedness for Levelling Up Fund Submission in 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No LUF bid submitted. Awaiting the outcome of Welsh Governments Roads Funding Review (expected Autumn 2022) for CCBC's Resilient Roads Fund bid. WeITAG Stage 1 report being finalised. Leader intends to issue a position statement and arrange a site meeting with the WG Minister, MP, MS & Cabinet Member(s). 	
Improvement to the strategic highway network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake initial feasibility and design for Bedwas Bridge Highway Improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WeITAG Stage 1 study undertaken. Draft report to be reviewed. 	
Implementation of METRO proposals in relation to Capital Valley, the wider Rhymney area and the A465.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Options appraisal and feasibility work to establish the optimum location for a new A465 interchange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Central Rhymney WeITAG Stage 2 study looked at this and ruled this out (i.e., no strong business case). Awaiting progress on the TfW led commission for the mid valleys Metro Study. 	
Implement further key transport improvements including park and ride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and prepare a business case for a park and ride in Twyn Carno ward for 100 spaces. Design and prepare a business case for a new park and ride in Llanbradach ward for 250/500 spaces (Phase 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Progress to date. The Central Rhymney Strategic P&R WeITAG Stage 2 study completed. Final report awaited. No funding awarded to progress this in 2022/23. 	

Improve connectivity along the A472 Corridor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding for a feasibility study to identify how connectivity can be enhanced along the A472 Corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being undertaken by Transport for Wales as part of the ongoing work on Metro. 	
Caerphilly Metro Transport and Investment Hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the Caerphilly Interchange to Weltag stage 2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed and Levelling Up Bid submitted to UK Government. Awaiting funding announcement. Stakeholder engagement in respect of the WelTAG2 Study and emerging designs prepared by Grimshaws Architects has started with meetings held with various groups. Digital Stakeholder Engagement on the design of the Interchange has started which has provided support to the LUF application. 	
Electric hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out Electric Vehicle Charge Points at key locations across the County Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Twin 7kW chargers at Tir y Berth old Meals on Wheels site; 15 Twin 7kW Chargers at Ty Penallta; 2 Twin 7kW chargers and 2 x 50kW chargers at Tir y Berth Housing Offices. On Street Charging facilities being rolled out when funding allows. 	
Implementation of key infrastructure projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of cycle facilities at all transport hubs together with key employment and retail destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing as part of Metro improvements. 	

PRIORITY THEME: TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND DIVERSIFICATION

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Assess the suitability of Local Development Orders / Town Centre Enterprise zones in South East area towns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake initial Assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial assessment of the suitability undertaken for pilot initiative in Risca. Needs updating post Covid. 	
Consider the Strategic Acquisition of key sites and premises in our prioritised town centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Funding to acquire key sites and premises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition Fund agreed for Caerphilly Town. 	
Prepare an enforcement action plan for town centres - targeting statutory action on target properties where necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target problematic premises with statutory action to encourage property owners to invest in their premises. Take action in default if necessary. Initial focus on Bargoed Town Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforced first enforced sale of a significant listed property (Tabor Chapel) utilising the Council Approved Enforced Sale Policy. Working with new owner to bring premises back into beneficial use. 	
Investigate and encourage all opportunities to locate public sector/ third sector commercial occupation in town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Health Board to establish their requirements for facilities in town centres. Work with other public sector and third sector bodies to locate in town centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing as part of the preparation of the 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan. A new Health and Well Being centre is proposed for Caerphilly Town Centre. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
centres. To include service hubs, health and well-being provision etc.			
Undertake a review of the current town centre offer for incubation space, start up space, managed space, live workspace and graded office space and an assessment of future demand in light of changing ways of working accelerated by the Covid pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility Assessment for offices for Park & Ride Site in Caerphilly Town prepared. • Assessment of future demand underway as part of the preparation of the 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan. 	
Assess need and potential for housing provision in town centres, to include standards, tenure mix, access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress the Acquisition of Pentrebane Street, Caerphilly for mixed use development including mixed tenure housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pentrebane Street, Funding secured, site assembly progressing. • Transforming Towns funding grant criteria supports mixed schemes that include residential development above ground floor commercial space. An example of support under this scheme includes the former 'Store 21' outlet in Blackwood where grant support enabled 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
arrangements, client groups etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the private sector to secure new residential accommodation above retail units in town centres. 	the development of an empty building to accommodate 5 retail units on the ground floor below 9 residential flats on the upper floors. A pipeline of similar scheme is being promoted for further funds to support similar development in Bargoed Town Centre.	
Establish a meanwhile use programme to encourage community use and pop-up provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify town centre premises suitable for meanwhile uses and pop-up provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPF allocation to progress meanwhile use opportunities established. 	

PRIORITY THEME: TOURISM RECOVERY

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Develop a positive narrative/reputation for tourism in Caerphilly County Borough as a go to destination for Activity and Heritage holidays focusing on those areas of competitive advantage such as mountain biking,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with virtual and digital travel trade to identify opportunities for Activity and Heritage trips/holidays in Caerphilly with UK and international tour operators. Develop a marketing plan to reinvigorate and reinforce the attractiveness of the county borough to domestic tourism and increase awareness of what is on offer in the county 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity and heritage promotions are ongoing, using social media, printed word and attendance at national events. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles included in The Voice magazine periodically. Attendance at national tourism shows, such as the Birmingham event in autumn 2021 and Twickenham in January 2022. Inclusion in regional promotions organised by the Southern Wales group and by Visit Wales. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>cycling, walking, heritage and activity tourism all of which are particular strengths in Caerphilly.</p>	<p>borough to encourage visitors to Visit Caerphilly when they are visiting other attractions in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update the Visit Caerphilly Webpage and utilise social media platforms to ensure that the Visit Caerphilly Brand is effective and recognised by prospective visitors to the region. ▪ Promote the Valleys Regional Park Discovery Gateways at Caerphilly Castle, Cwmcarn Forest and Penallta Parc in partnership with the VRP/WG and CCR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social media coverage, including the incredibly successful visit from Youtubers Sam and Colby, which has achieved 4 million hits to date. • A marketing plan will be developed by the Marketing Officer, early in 2023. • The Marketing Officer is working with destination managers to update the websites regularly and ensure consistent and regular social media content. • The VRP initiative is now being reinvigorated by the project leads and the first meeting in several years will take place on 27th October 2022. 	
<p>Work with partners to develop new high-quality attractions and activity products, particularly those providing distinctive and unique experiences that can</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage – Work with Cadw on proposals to elevate Caerphilly Castle from a Tier 1 tourism attraction to a Tier 2 tourism attraction. • Heritage – Expand the events and tourism offer at Llancaiach Fawr Manor and explore the feasibility of developing accommodation at the site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work has commenced on Cadw's £5million project to transform Caerphilly Castle. The plans include improved visitor facilities in a new reception building at the entrance, refurbishment of the current shop, and access improvements to paths throughout the castle to ensure visitors of all abilities can enjoy the site. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>attract visitors all year round.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage – Expand the cultural events on offer at the New Tredegar Winding House. • Activity – Work with NRW to promote and develop Cwmcarn Forest Drive as a destination activity and explore opportunities to expand the network of legal bike trails within the Forest. • Activity – Work with Tomorrow Tourism to prepare a long-term plan to develop Cwmcarn as a national visitor attraction through the provision of new activities and attractions to complement the existing offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central to the project is a £1million overhaul of site interpretation including new state-of-the-art digital techniques, presenting the stories of the men and women who built and lived in Caerphilly Castle. The plans also include proposals to re-dress the Great Hall, the largest of its period in the country, to recreate the ambience and grandeur of its medieval heyday. ▪ Llancaiach Fawr Manor Accommodation Feasibility Study prepared by PSL 2022 which concluded that the site is suitable for accommodation and provided a recommended way forward on the scale and type of accommodation which should be sought. Funding has not been secured to date for this £0.5m project. ▪ The installation of the park at Llancaiach Fawr Manor has increased the number of families onsite and also increased the duration of their visit. • Work is ongoing to develop the offer at the Winding House, including regular exhibitions in the gallery and an art competition involving local schools in autumn and winter 2022-23. • The Winding House has put on a range of themed children’s craft activities throughout the last twelve months. Art photographic exhibitions have run throughout the year with the gallery space booked up until the end of 2023 • Cwmcarn Forest Masterplan has been prepared and was approved by Cabinet in June 2022. The long-term plan for the 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
		<p>destination has therefore been developed and is now being progressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MACE – chosen consultant have developed the scheme for Cwmcarn and the Council have submitted a bid for £12 million to the UK Government levelling up fund. This is supported by over £1 million match fund from CCBC. The scheme includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree top coaster • Raised walkways • Wrap around extension • Art trail • Bungee jump • The announcement on funding is imminent. • An ongoing working relationship is in place with NRW at both operational and strategic levels to ensure that visitors continue to receive an enjoyable, high quality and safe experience. 	
<p>Work with accommodation providers to diversify the range and type of accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the Council's preferred developer partner to develop proposals for a new boutique hotel in Park Lane, Caerphilly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work is progressing to secure Planning Permission for a new hotel in Caerphilly as part of the Leisure Quarter Proposal. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>provided in the county borough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a feasibility study to ascertain what type of accommodation should be provided at Llancaiach Fawr Manor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Llancaiach Fawr Manor Accommodation Feasibility Study prepared by PSL 2022 which concluded that the site is suitable for accommodation and provided a recommended way forward on the scale and type of accommodation which should be sought. Funding has not been secured to date for this £0.5m project. 	
<p>Work with partners to maximise existing assets and further develop new leisure establishments to drive the night-time economy and increase dwell time in the Principal Town Centres to encourage visitors to take weekend breaks in the county borough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blackwood Miners' Institute and the Caerphilly Workmen's Hall are both important historic assets in their respective town centres. Vibrant and successful theatres play an important role as an economic driver for developing employment and for the night-time economy. Officers will work with the management of both venues to build on their existing offer and encourage both venues to harness opportunities for greater networking with, and involvement of local businesses in their activities particularly those that operate in the 'experience' and evening and night-time economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackwood Town Council meetings with BMI team have resumed. • Blackwood Miners' Institute is working with the Town Council to rethink the 'History of Blackwood' event that was postponed due to the pandemic this is now scheduled to be delivered in 2023. • Theatre and Arts Service Manager and Marketing Officer have been meeting with local businesses to discuss opportunities for collaboration. • The BMI Advisory Group, comprised of people from a diverse range of backgrounds, including the private sector, has been established and held its first meeting on 6th October 2022. This group will provide advice and guidance to the management team on key operational and strategic issues. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>Ensure that there is a sufficient variety of quality food and drink, leisure, entertainment, cultural activities and accommodation in our Principal Towns to attract and hold visitor/customers in town centres to develop their Night-time economy and make them more successful.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the Council's preferred developer partner to develop proposals for a new boutique hotel in Park Lane, Caerphilly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Caerphilly Town 2035, funding has been secured from WG to acquire properties along Pentrebanne Street, including the current Indoor Market, to facilitate development of up to 64 new Net Zero Carbon apartments by Linc Cymru, 50% of which will be affordable. To mitigate the loss of the current Indoor Market, plans have been prepared for the creation of a new Market on land owned by the Council on Park Lane, which means in the short to medium term this site could not accommodate a hotel. ▪ In parallel with this work CBRE have been looking at the options for a hotel in the Town Centre and they have concluded that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The town should and would support a 60-80 Bed 3-4* Hotel with associated function space (weddings, Business etc) and F&B provision. ○ The Castle is key and provides the USP for the proposal. ○ It is essential that the Hotel has to be close and have good views of the Castle. ▪ CBRE considered 8 Town Centre sites with the two best sites being Cardiff Road (LQ Devt) and Park Lane. Their recommended site for the hotel is now Cardiff Road as they consider Park Lane is too constrained as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial plans for the Park Lane site (prepared by Strides) indicates the site cannot accommodate the scale of development required 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide financial support (Transforming Towns Grant) to businesses looking to locate in Caerphilly and Blackwood Town Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It has poor access and wouldn't provide adequate on-site parking ○ Half the Hotel rooms would have views (albeit limited) of the Castle, with the remainder having views of Park Lane & the rear of Peacocks ▪ Cardiff Road (LQ site) could accommodate the scale and quality of development required and would provide the best view of the Castle. Work is progressing to secure Planning Permission for a new hotel in Caerphilly as part of the Leisure Quarter Proposal. ▪ Transforming Towns Secured for Caerphilly for 2021/22 equates to £166,507. A further £550,000 for 2023/24 and £200,000 for 2024/25 has been offered that can include projects in Blackwood and Bargoed upon the development of specific placemaking plans in relation to the additional towns. 	
<p>Reintroduce local and major events when restrictions permit to encourage people to visit town centres and to showcase and encourage the development of the towns' night-time economy and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare and agree a programme of Covid safe events for the Autumn of 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The events staff work extremely hard to deliver on the current programme, which includes 2 major events which are deemed to be of regional significance in terms of attracting tourism to the County Borough (The Big/Little Cheese Summer event and the Caerphilly Food Festival). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Big Cheese usually attracts between 50,000 and 100,000 visitors from a wider catchment area and has a social media reach of circa 500,000. In 2022 the scaled down Little Cheese attracted approximately 44,000 visitors. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
<p>encourage visitors to experience the towns' food, drink, entertainment and accommodation businesses alongside each event.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Caerphilly Food Festival which is held in the Spring attracts between 8,000 and 12,000 visitors to the town. <p>In addition to these regionally significant events, the Council's events staff organise and help to support many other town centre events. In summary for 22/23 these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bargoed Winter Food and Craft Fair • Bargoed Roller Skating Rink • Blackwood Winter Food and Craft Fair • Blackwood Spring Fair (TBC) • *Caerphilly Big/Little Cheese • *Caerphilly Food Festival • Caerphilly 10k • Lantern Parade and associated workshops • Ystrad Mynach Spring Fair • Ystrad Mynach Food and Craft Fair • Risca Beach Party (TBC) 	
<p>Develop the leisure offer in Town Centres to bridge the transition from the day into the evening economy and help retain daytime visitors, shop workers and employees in town into the evening.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of new sites for development through the 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan preparation process. ▪ Work progressing to develop the leisure offer in Caerphilly Town as part of Caerphilly Town 2035. ▪ Good progress being made in Blackwood via Programme of diverse events planned for Autumn in BMI. 	

RE-CONFIGURATION OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT SITES & IDENTIFICATION OF NEW EMPLOYMENT SITES

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Establish sites with scope for redevelopment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a key list of sites that offer an opportunity for redevelopment / reconfiguration, having regard to vacancy rate trends, quality/type of existing premises, size and location e.g. Capital Valley, Rhymney. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Land Review completed October 2021. 	
Establish more robust links with industrial property agents, landowners and existing occupiers to ensure redevelopment meets the needs of business and other stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify willing partners and funding opportunities to take forward sites for redevelopment e.g., Capital Valley, Rhymney. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited progress made with WG and Private sector in respect of the Heads of the Valleys Industrial Estate residual land. The owner of Capital Valley has his own plans for Capital Valley. 	
Prioritise the redevelopment of sites that would be beneficial in terms of promoting the growth of key sectors within the County Borough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CCR on a pipeline of strategic sites and premises to attract funding to facilitate employment growth. Work with WG to unlock employment land at Oakdale Business Park through the provision on the necessary infrastructure to access the land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A465 sites and premises group established chaired by CCR and including WG to build on CCR market assessment reports to establish funding for strategic site development. Work has been focussed on the heads of the valleys and proximity to the A465. Initial work of the group includes developing a masterplan for the undeveloped land on plateau 2 at the business park in anticipation of leveraging funding from WG and the region. 	

Project	18 Months	Progress (Up to April 2023)	RAG
Oakdale Plateaus' 2 and 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oakdale Plateaus' 2 and 4 – secure a private sector partner to redevelop vacant land for private sector-led employment use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oakdale Plateau 2 – Working with CCR and WG to prepare relevant site investigation reports to facilitate development of the residual land. RIBA Stage 2. Discussion underway with prospective developers. Oakdale Plateau 4 - Relevant site investigation reports prepared to facilitate development of the residual land. Discussion ongoing with WG and prospective developer. 	
Identify new sites for Business and Employment use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a robust assessment of land availability to inform the type and location of employment land and premises to be provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Land Review completed October 2021. 	
Invest in new Council owned start up units.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify willing partners and funding opportunities to take forward sites for redevelopment for start-units. Prepare up to date Masterplan to guide the provision of new units at Caerphilly Business Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with prospective partners to deliver new starter units at Oakdale. Residual land at Caerphilly Business Park – is now proposed for the new Well-Being Centre. 	



HOUSING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18TH JULY 2023

**SUBJECT: DRAFT DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRATEGY
'BUILDING TOGETHER'**

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details the content of the first Development and Governance Strategy for Caerphilly Homes. The Strategy sets out the governance arrangements that are required by Caerphilly Homes to underpin the development of new build homes, the core objectives, the development process, and overall Strategy to increase delivery.
- 1.2 The report proposes the creation of a Development and Governance Project Board (DGPB) that will oversee the delivery of the development programme and will have delegated responsibility for agreeing a range of decisions that are necessary to underpin the creation of an agile, fleet of foot, development programme similar to the TACP programme Board. The TACP Programme Board will be assumed within the DGPB.
- 1.3 To agree that Caerphilly Homes will deliver 100 low carbon affordable homes per annum.
- 1.4 To agree that Caerphilly Homes adopts the Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter, which sets out high level quality and design standards that will inform and underpin each Caerphilly Homes development.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 There are currently 6,300 people on the Council's Common Housing Register awaiting homes. Of these, 360 people are in temporary accommodation and are awaiting homes that better suit their needs and requirements. Further demand for homes is likely to result from the ongoing cost of living crisis, humanitarian crises, asylum dispersal and demographics of overall population.
- 2.2 The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) in 2018 suggested that Caerphilly Homes and its partners would need to build 282 homes per annum, to keep up with the demand for affordable homes in the county borough. The latest LHMA data is currently being collated and will inform the programme moving forward. However, the demand for homes is likely to increase and the only solution to find a way out of the housing crisis is to build.

- 2.3 In January 2019 Cabinet approved the commencement of the Council's development programme which initially focused on the delivery of the two Innovative Housing Programme funded sites in Trethomas and Trecenydd. Having completed the sites in June 2022 following a partnership arrangement with Willmott Dixon via the SCAPE public sector compliant framework, the Council is progressing the development of two further sites in Oakdale and Risca. Reserved matters applications for each site are scheduled to be submitted in Autumn 2023 hence attention will now concentrate on developing a sustainable pipeline of sites that can be included in a cohesive development Strategy and delivery programme.
- 2.4 The Draft Caerphilly Homes Development Strategy entitled, 'Building Together' (Appendix A) sets out a high level framework that will underpin and guide the delivery of 100 low carbon Caerphilly Homes per annum. The Strategy is supported by the recommendation to create a Development and Governance Project Board (DGPB) that will oversee and monitor delivery whilst facilitating agile and responsive decision making. The report outlines the creation of the Board and recommends that the current TACP Board is assumed within the new DGPB.
- 2.5 The report recommends that Cabinet become a signatory to the Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter thereby ensuring that Caerphilly Homes is recognised as a quality developer and placing it in the same category as its social housing peers including Wrexham Council, Swansea City Council, Pobl and United Welsh Housing Association who are also signatories to the Charter.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet approve of the establishment of the Development and Governance Project Board (DGPB).
- 3.2 The responsibilities of the Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP) Board are assumed by the Development and Governance Project Board.
- 3.3 That Cabinet approve the delivery of 100 low carbon affordable homes per annum.
- 3.4 The Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter is adopted by the Council as it underpins the design quality for all Caerphilly Homes Developments, and the Council becomes a signatory to the Charter.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The report seeks approval to establish a Development and Governance Project Board to initially expedite the delivery ambition of 400 affordable homes by 2025 and to ensure there is robust governance and monitoring of the development programme over the coming 10 years.
- 4.2 The creation of a Caerphilly Homes Development and Governance Strategy aims to set out a high-level framework which details the vision, objectives, quality standards and new build development delivery outcomes of Caerphilly Homes, to better meet the ever increasing demand nationally and locally for affordable homes.
- 4.3 The Strategy sets out a sustainable programme of development over a 10-year period and commits Caerphilly Homes to a delivery programme which aims to deliver 100 new, low carbon, affordable homes per annum.

- 4.4 The creation of the Development and Governance Project Board will ensure that Caerphilly Council is seen as being 'Open for Business' and that opportunities to work with the private sector are maximised whilst appropriate due diligence and project management is undertaken thereby enabling Caerphilly Homes to be agile and responsive to working with the private sector.
- 4.5 To bring the Council in line with other quality social housing developers by signing up and agreeing to the key principles outlined in the Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1.1 There are currently over 6,300 households people on the Council's Common Housing Register seeking housing, including 320 in temporary accommodation. The demand for housing in Wales and in Caerphilly is increasing and is unlikely to ever reduce. The cost of privately renting or buying a home together with the costs associated with running a home are higher than ever and resulting in a cost-of-living crisis.
- 5.1.2 Over 70 parcels of land (general fund and HRA) have been examined by the team to assess their development potential. Of these, 27 have been submitted to the LDP Planning Policy Team for consideration as part of the first call for candidate sites.
- 5.1.3 A Land Prospectus detailing the sites within the Council's land portfolio that are considered developable and offer the best chance of development is currently being prepared. A further addition to the Land Prospectus detailing windfall sites including those that may be released as a result of the Council's 21st Century Schools programme is under preparation and a third addition will be prepared to detail those sites that will be included the new LDP. The Prospectus will be an evolving document to which sites are added and omitted as the programme progresses and as development opportunities are realised.
- 5.1.4 The Prospectus will inform Caerphilly Homes' development Strategy for the next 10 years and set out the sites that are likely to come forward during this period. However, to maximise opportunities to increase the Caerphilly Homes stock portfolio, a range of complementary tools / interventions are required. These include potential joint ventures with partner housing associations, package deals, strategic partnerships and acquisitions (both land and property). In this context, it is essential for Caerphilly Homes to be able to make decisions quickly and to be agile when it comes to decisions regarding package deals, land and property acquisitions, joint ventures, external funding opportunities, housing led estate reconfiguration and town centre opportunities etc.

Development and Governance Project Board

- 5.1.5 Caerphilly Homes recognises that development is a multi-layered process with many moving parts and to give as much assurance that objectives can be met on time and on budget, there needs to be an agile approach to delivery.
- 5.1.6 Currently all projects and spend related to the Council's development programme are taken through a decision process that can, in some cases, last 12 weeks. This is before the usual planning, SAB and Welsh Government Technical Scrutiny process. When dealing with land or property owners who are looking to work with the Council

to facilitate affordable developments, the process is deemed too long and it would be beneficial if decisions could be made more quickly in order to take advantage of commercial / private sector opportunities.

- 5.1.7 The efficiency of decision making is vitally important so each area can be moved on independently so that other areas of the process aren't left waiting and can be progressed as swiftly as possible.
- 5.1.8 This has already been recognised within the decision-making procedures of the Council within the Development and Strategy team when the decision to create a stand-alone Project Board was taken to deliver and manage the Welsh Government backed Transitional Accommodation Capital programme (TACP).
- 5.1.9 To act quickly in the market and make property acquisition decisions as and when the opportunities were presented, a delegation was afforded to a separate Board to make these decisions. This has resulted in Caerphilly Homes being able to make swift decisions to acquire several properties to bolster the stock in a short period of time to address the transitional accommodation pressures across the county borough for those in unsuitable temporary accommodation in fear or at risk of homelessness.
- 5.1.10 This has worked well joining up the associated disciplines across the Council using colleagues from Caerphilly Homes, Land and Property and finance to ensure our defined processes are adhered within agreed parameters and tight timelines are met.
- 5.1.11 It is therefore proposed that a Development and Governance Project Board (DGPPB) be created to oversee the Council's development programme and consider and determine those decisions that can, within the framework of Council Standing Orders and Standing Orders for Contracts, be delegated to the Board, thereby ensuring that decisions can still be thoroughly considered and discussed but also expedited.
- 5.1.12 The Board will comprise the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cabinet Member for Planning, and Chair of Housing & Environment Scrutiny Committee, The Director of Social Services and Housing, Section 151 Officer, Head of Legal Services, Head of Housing, Head of Development & Strategy, Housing Services Manager and other officers by invitation. (for example, Head of Customer and Digital Services, Head of Housing Solutions etc).
- 5.1.13 Key financial decisions that need to be made outside of the aforementioned RIBA stage such as entering into a large contract with a procured development partner will need to go to Cabinet under the usual governance and decision-making protocols. Decisions within such a contract that may have otherwise required additional scrutiny will be dealt with by the Board, such as variation agreements and signing off additional costs.
- 5.1.14 There will be pre-contract service agreements, appointment of consultants, demolition contracts, pre-planning and potential outline permissions and reserved matters applications that will all be covered under the delegation to the Board, in line with Standing Orders and financial regulations.
- 5.1.15 The Board will consider and approve which sites will be included in the programme, the commencement of site investigation work and initial development appraisals up to and including RIBA 2 stage. It will oversee the progression of Caerphilly Homes schemes through the RIBA Plan of Work process (high level development process diagram – Appendix B). It will manage by exception in accordance with the high-level principles of PRINCE 2, monitor the financial forecast of each development and

make decisions to amend delivery trajectory of each scheme accordingly.

- 5.1.16 Following these principles there will be officer led Sub-Boards created to manage the day to day development issues concerning sites, and specific management meetings with developers and associated partners to ensure each individual scheme meets its delivery objectives.
- 5.1.17 The Board will provide assurance in relation to package deal opportunities, joint ventures, acquisitions (land and property) up to a prescribed value to be agreed with the S151 Officer following detailed analysis of the coming years development pipeline. It will be evaluated on a regular basis following future delivery opportunities. It will consider thoroughly the advantages of such opportunities in relation to housing need, housing management, availability of land, challenges and risk. It will look at funding applications, housing-led town centre and estate regeneration opportunities linked to the delivery of a customer orientated housing service.
- 5.1.18 The premise and background to development by Caerphilly Homes will always be housing need. This will be demonstrated and presented to the Board by the Principal Housing Strategy Officer who will draw on the evidence from the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) and current waiting list.
- 5.1.19 The Board will meet monthly and report annually against the core areas of the development programme to the relevant scrutiny committee. An annual report will then be presented to Cabinet. There may be other decisions throughout the course of any financial year that may be contentious, repercussive, or reputationally damaging that may need to go before Cabinet earlier and these will be agreed as and when they arise by the Board.
- 5.1.20 The DGPB will also assume responsibility for the TACP programme thereby replacing the TACP Board.

Development and Governance Strategy

- 5.1.21 A draft development Strategy entitled 'Building Together' has been prepared by Caerphilly Homes and is contained in Appendix A. The Strategy is complemented by the Land Prospectus which details the sites that will be considered in the next phase of delivery. The Strategy and Prospectus is complemented by the Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter, the RIBA Plan of Work (high level Caerphilly Homes development process diagram contained in Appendix B), Supplementary Planning Guidance LDP1 and the Caerphilly Homes Design Guide which is currently under preparation.
- 5.1.22 The core objectives of the Strategy are to ensure there is sufficient land in the development pipeline to deliver the much-needed homes for the communities of Caerphilly. It details how there will be enough and appropriate capacity within the team to deliver on these ambitions. It therefore details how the homes will be delivered looking at different delivery routes, products, design and quality standards and performance monitoring to ensure learning is embedded through the development process.
- 5.1.23 The delivery ambition set out in the Strategy is that Caerphilly Homes will deliver 100 low carbon affordable homes per annum for the lifetime of this ten-year Strategy. As mentioned, the Strategy will be reviewed to ensure these parameters are reflective of the current macro-economic situation and remain achievable.

5.1.24 In order to cement the Council and Caerphilly Homes as a quality developer, it is recommended that the Council become a signatory to the Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter. The Charter sets out six principles that must be considered when establishing and maintaining good places. Principles include; People and Community, Location, Movement, Mix of Uses, Public Realm and Identity. These principles lie at the heart of good placemaking and are already considered by the Council and Caerphilly Homes to be good practice considerations when creating great places. Signing the Charter will place the Council and Caerphilly Homes as a local authority developer on a par with other recognised social landlords including Pobl, United Welsh Housing Association, Swansea City Council, Carmarthenshire Council and Wrexham County Borough Council.

5.2 **Conclusion**

5.2.1 There is an ever increasing need for all types of housing nationally and within the locality. The number of households and individuals that are on the Council's Common Housing Register and in temporary accommodation are rising exponentially and are not expected to reduce any time soon. This is a fact that has been acknowledged by Welsh Government who are committed to building 20,000 low carbon, new affordable homes by 2025. The Welsh Government's Head of Land and Property has acknowledged that the only way out of the housing crisis is to build.

5.2.2 As one of 11 Councils across Wales who have retained their housing stock, Caerphilly Homes is in the advantageous position of having the ability to build new, low carbon affordable homes in response to this ever pressing need.

5.2.3 Caerphilly Homes' Development Strategy entitled, 'Building Together' provides an initial framework within which Caerphilly Homes will deliver 100 new, low carbon, affordable homes per annum. It sets out the governance arrangements that underpin the development process through the creation of the DGPB and highlights the quality and standards that will be achieved using the Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter as a framework for creating great places. Furthermore, the Strategy sets out the added value that will be delivered as a result of the Council's sizable investment in new homes through working in partnership with the private sector and creating an open for business environment where the creation of new employment and training opportunities together with activities designed to support the local supply chain and circular economy are just as important as the delivery of new homes.

5.2.4 The delivery of the Strategy and the progress made by the Board will be reviewed and reported annually to Cabinet.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 Sufficient financing and borrowing capability will support the delivery of a sustainable development programme that aims to deliver 100 low carbon, affordable homes per annum.

6.2 There is an ever-increasing need for all types of accommodation within the county borough and nationally and that a safe and secure home is a fundamental right.

6.3 Sufficient land is available to feed a sustainable development programme.

- 6.4 An open for business culture can be created across all disciplines with Caerphilly Council and Caerphilly Homes embodying a true Team Caerphilly approach and is sustained thereby encouraging the private sector to work collaboratively with Caerphilly Homes to deliver at scale and with pace.
- 6.5 Development is viewed as an economic and social catalyst thus using direct investment to transform homes, lives and communities within the county borough.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Integrated Impact Assessment suggests that the Development and Governance Strategy will have a positive impact upon the residents of the county borough.
- 7.2 By establishing the governance arrangements necessary to increase the delivery of affordable homes, to meet the diverse range of housing needs throughout the county borough, the Development and Governance Strategy will have a positive impact on equality, diversity and inclusion, on tackling social disadvantage and on promoting the wellbeing of existing and future generations. The actions that will arise from the Strategy are expected to contribute, both directly and indirectly, to several of the Council's wellbeing objectives and will not have an adverse impact on the promotion of the Welsh language.
- 7.3 [Link to Integrated Impact Assessment](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct personnel implications arising from the report or the establishment of a governance structure that underpins the Council's development programme.
- 9.2 The secretariat for the Board will be provided by the Caerphilly Homes Strategy, Development and Performance Team.
- 9.3 The team is evolving and expanding to reflect the increasing focus on the development programme and the scale and pace of delivery.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 All comments received from the consultees listed below have been noted and, where appropriate, incorporated within the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 1972 and Housing Act 2014.

Author: Jane Roberts-Waite, Head of Development and Strategy
(roberj2@caerphilly.gov.uk) and Nick Taylor-Williams, Head of Housing
(taylon1@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Consultees: Councillor Andrew Whitcombe, Chair Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny
Committee (whitca@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Councillor Patricia Cook, Vice Chair Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny
Committee (cookp1@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Councillor Shayne Cooke, Cabinet Member for Housing
(cooks3@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive (harrhyc@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive (streed@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
(willims@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Richard (Ed) Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate
Services (edmunre@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Chief Monitoring Officer
(trantrj@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services / Section 151 Officer
(harrisr@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services (donov1@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Elizabeth Lucas, Head of Customer and Digital Services
(lucasej@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Fiona Wilkins, Housing Services Manager (wilkife@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Catherine Edwards, Head of Asset Maintenance and Repair
(edwarc9@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Kerry Denman, Housing Solutions Manager (denmak@caerphilly.gov.uk)
Lesley Allen, Principal Group Accountant – Housing
(allenl@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Appendices:
Appendix A Development and Governance Strategy
Appendix B Caerphilly Homes Development Process

Caerphilly Homes Development & Governance Strategy – Building Together

2023-2033

Cllr Cook Foreword

We are in a housing crisis. There is shortage of affordable homes. More supply of all homes is required across Caerphilly County Borough. The global financial situation impacts local communities and the cost of living crisis means there is now a greater need for housing assistance at all levels; be that existing homeowners, private renters, Council contract holders or homeless families/people.

Caerphilly Homes now embark on an ambitious Strategy of new build housing development over the coming years, to work in partnership with developers and housing associations who are also tackling the crisis by increasing the opportunity and capacity to provide more housing for all.

The principal rationale to development by Caerphilly Homes will always be to tackle local housing need and deliver the optimum amount of affordable housing. By building again for the first time in 20 years and starting to increase Council owned housing stock again which has significantly reduced over the years due to the Right to Buy, gives greater capacity to grow our development team and programme to ensure more opportunities come forward year on year.

The Caerphilly Homes vision, that drives everything that is delivered, including our new build programme is;

‘To deliver an outstanding high-quality service for all customers of Caerphilly Homes’

With the customer at the heart of everything that Caerphilly Homes delivers and with a person centric ethos to development, homes delivered will meet need and strengthen communities, whilst growing the capacity of the team to build more, sustaining the business model into the future.

This 10 year Development and Governance Strategy for Caerphilly Homes sets out, how, and why this will be achieved and ultimately who will benefit, which is simply, those in housing need across Caerphilly County Borough.

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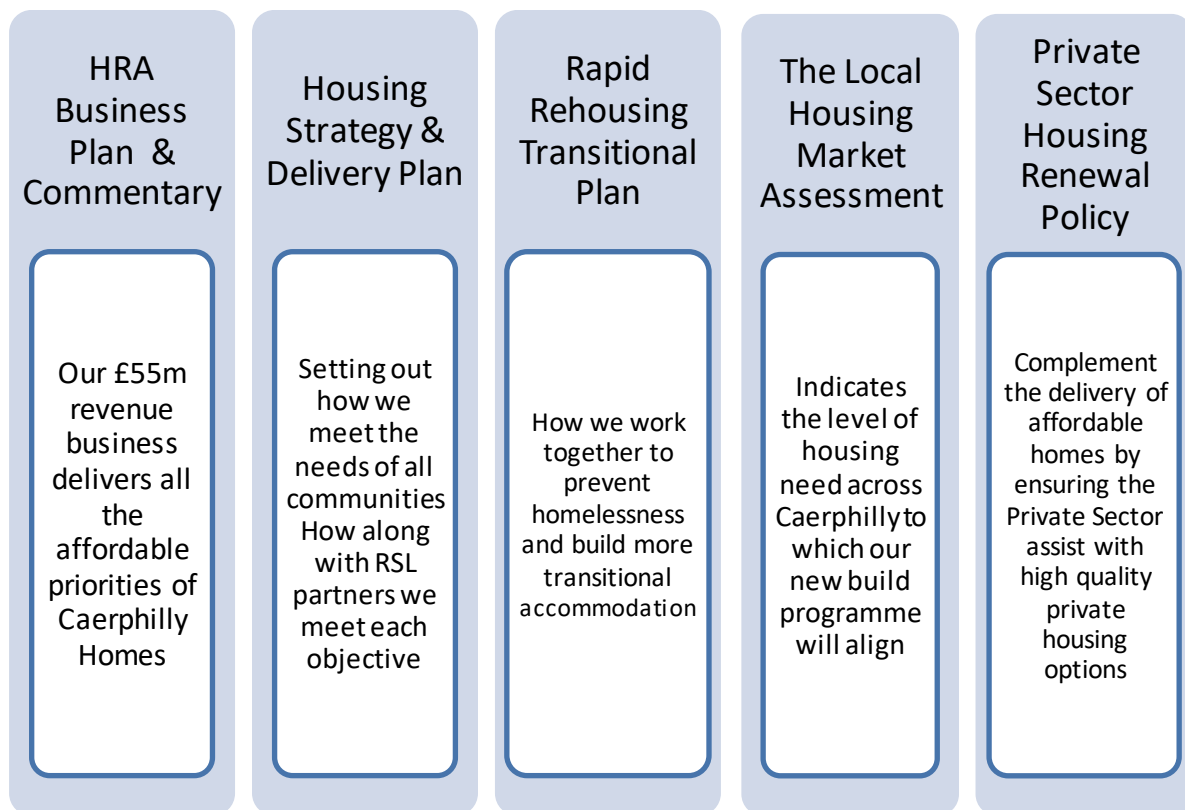
INTRODUCTION AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES

The Caerphilly Homes Development and Governance Strategy sets out how housing need will be met across the county borough directly by Caerphilly Homes. Providing high quality low carbon housing, ultimately increasing the number of affordable homes owned and managed by Caerphilly Homes. To use the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and increased borrowing to drive more appropriate development solutions in all areas of Caerphilly, considering all viable delivery routes.

The annual HRA Business Plan and newly published associated commentary sets out the financial position of Caerphilly Homes and the investment commitment and debt management to sustain a new build development programme. It included the short-term borrowing requirement and illustrates how it will be managed to ensure there is capacity to deliver more. This Strategy provides clarity on the future ambition and development potential.

Whilst this Strategy sets out clearly how the Council and Caerphilly Homes intend to deliver 400 new homes by 2025 and provide a sustainable pipeline of development sites thereafter driving delivery every year; it is not only about the delivery of new affordable homes. It is much more than that, it is about how the Council and Caerphilly Homes uses its investment in new homes as a catalyst to drive growth, regeneration and opportunity throughout the borough.

It considers how the highest quality affordable homes are delivered in the most cost-effective way. The Strategy will form the framework within which Caerphilly Homes will evaluate development opportunities. Over time it will inevitably evolve and it will be formally reviewed on a regular basis. The Strategy is intended to be clear and easy to understand.



National and Local Delivery Context

Caerphilly Homes' development programme is coterminous with the Welsh Government's ambition to create 20,000 low carbon, affordable homes by 2026.

As one of 11 stock owning local authorities in Wales, Caerphilly County Borough Council owns approximately 10,600 homes and is the fourth largest stock retaining authority. Caerphilly Homes is the name of the housing services department and manages all the homes.

The Council and Caerphilly Homes takes the management, repair and maintenance of its homes seriously, but more importantly is the delivery of high-quality services to its customers and communities.

The rationale for building more affordable appropriate accommodation in all forms, is to assist those most vulnerable in our communities and ultimately experiencing homelessness and therefore links to our Rapid Rehousing Transitional Action Plan.

This Strategy also complements the Caerphilly Homes Empty Homes Strategy and soon to be published Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy.

Housing Need

There are currently over 6,300 people on the Council's Common Housing Register seeking housing, including 320 in temporary accommodation. The demand for housing in Wales and in Caerphilly is increasing and is unlikely to reduce anytime soon. The cost of privately renting or buying a home together with the costs associated with running a home are higher than ever and impacting upon the cost-of-living crisis. Furthermore, there are likely to be further Ukrainian guests arriving in the short term and Asylum seeker dispersal across the UK, Wales and into Caerphilly seeking homes and sanctuary. There is a housing crisis across Wales and Caerphilly. The only way out of the crisis is to build.

Development by Caerphilly Homes will always target local housing need. The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2023 and LHMA Prospectus will steer the direction of what is delivered, indicating the level of need and what is ultimately considered on each potential development opportunity.

Customer Engagement

Caerphilly Homes intends to be the landlord of choice in County Borough through adopting a customer centred approach to service delivery throughout the entire department.

A transformation journey has started and we are ensuring that the right structures are in place to deliver new solutions and new meaningful ways of engaging and involving our customers. We recognise that this will take time but are committed to better meeting the needs of our customers, potential customers and residents.

Work has already started on reviewing our customer engagement Strategy to develop a framework for continuous engagement and improvement. It will be based upon the core behaviours of listening, engaging, demonstrating trust, empathy, learning, reflecting, improving and delivering results.

Caerphilly Homes aspiration is to be known for the quality of the service it provides to its customers and communities and for the quality of its homes (existing and new).

GOVERNANCE

Development is a multi-layered process with many moving parts and to give as much assurance that objectives can be met on time and on budget, there needs to be an agile approach to delivery.

The efficiency of decision making is vitally important so each area can be moved on independently so that other areas of the process aren't left waiting and can be progressed as swiftly as possible. If every decision through the development cycle had to be presented it would hinder the efficiency of the development programme.

A Development and Governance Project Board (DGPB) will oversee the Council's development programme and consider and determine those decisions that can, within the framework of Council Standing Orders and Public Sector Procurement Regulations, be delegated thereby ensuring that decisions can still be thoroughly considered and discussed but also expedited. It will oversee the delivery of development related activity including the acquisition of land and property, development agreements for new build schemes, the planning process and conversion of owned assets.

The Board comprises the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cabinet Member for Planning; Chair of Housing & Environment Scrutiny Panel, Corporate Director of Social Services and Housing, Section 151 Officer, Head of Legal Services, Head of Housing, Head of Strategy and Development, and other officers by invite (for example, Housing Services Manager, Head of Customer and Digital Services, Head of Housing Solutions etc).

The Board will oversee and direct the progression of sites detailed in the emerging Land Prospectus. The Prospectus will be discussed at every Board meeting to reflect new development opportunities, such as the release of Council land and asset, decommissioned sheltered housing complexes and also land which is bought specifically by Caerphilly Homes for development.

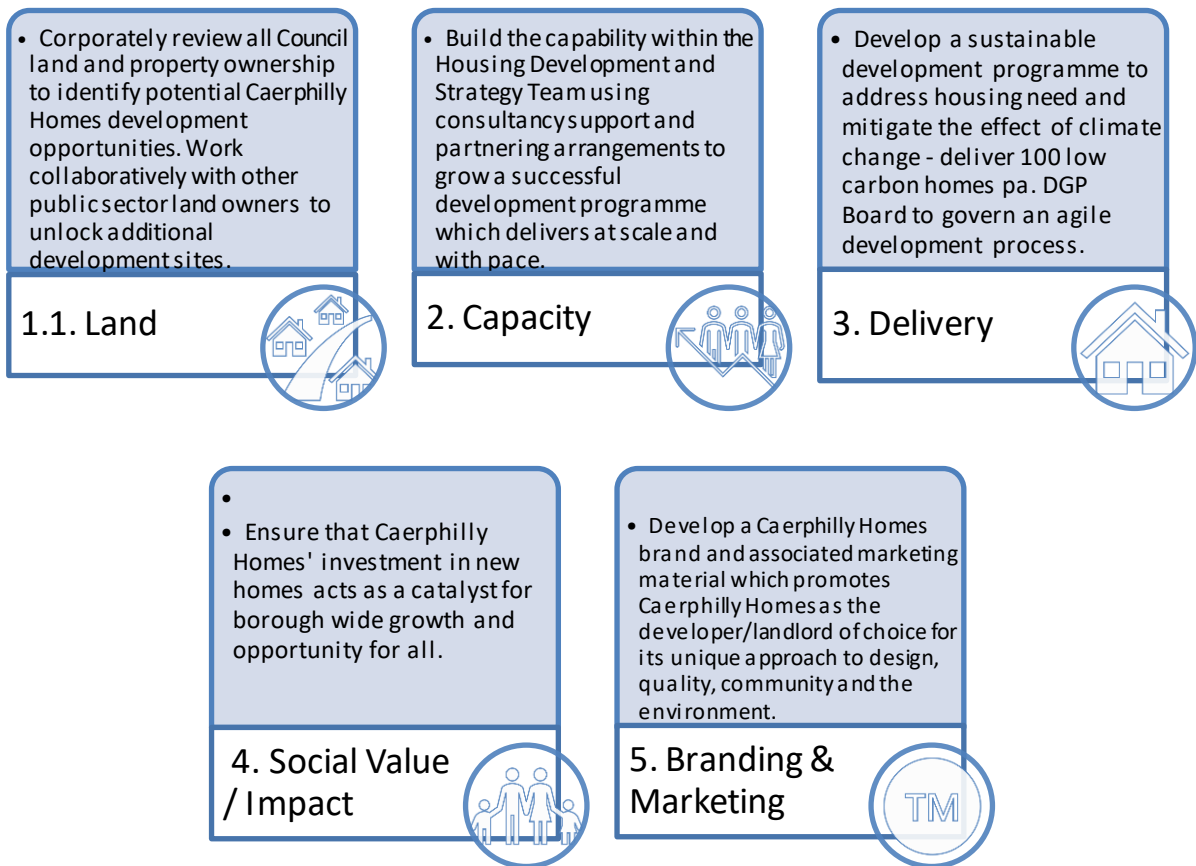
The Board will consider and approve which sites will be included in the development programme, the commencement of site investigation work and initial development appraisals up to and including RIBA 2 stage. It will oversee the progression of Caerphilly Homes schemes through the RIBA Plan of Work process and manage by exception. It will ensure each development site meet financial hurdles, monitor the financial forecast of each development and make decisions to amend delivery trajectory of each scheme accordingly.

The DGPB will meet monthly and report annually against the core areas of the development programme to the relevant scrutiny committee. An annual report will be presented to Cabinet. Key decisions that require a Cabinet approval such as entering into large development contracts will ultimately be presented through the governance process and to Cabinet. There may be other decisions throughout the course of any financial year that may be contentious, repercussive or reputationally damaging that may need to go before Cabinet earlier and these will be agreed as and when they arise by the Board.

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The purpose: To directly provide, facilitate and enable good quality, low carbon affordable homes which meet the current and future needs of customers, residents and local communities throughout Caerphilly County Borough.

The priority will be to deliver a development programme that meets the following key objectives in respect of Land, Capacity, Delivery, Social Value / Impact and Branding & Marketing.



1 LAND

Caerphilly County Borough Council started to develop again in 2019 when the Cabinet set out an ambition to deliver 400 new homes by 2025 via multiple interventions. The focus since this time has been on identifying suitable land within the Council's portfolio (including general fund and the Housing Revenue Account) to deliver this ambition.

Over 70 parcels of land (general fund and HRA) have been examined by the team to assess their development potential. Of these, 27 have been submitted to the LDP Policy Team for consideration as part of the first call for candidate sites.

A prospectus detailing the sites within the Council's land portfolio that are considered developable and offer the best chance of development is currently under preparation. The Prospectus will be an evolving document whereby sites are added and omitted as the programme progresses and as development opportunities are realised.

The Prospectus will inform Caerphilly Homes' development Strategy for the next 10 years and identifies the sites that are likely to come forward for consideration by the Development and Governance Project Board during this period.

This evolving document can equally be utilised to identify and bring forward land not controlled by Caerphilly Council, as a tool to assess the feasibility and capacity of any site.

One of the main challenges relating to the viable delivery of affordable housing is the correlation between availability of developable land and identified need. The allocation and award of the Welsh Government's Social Housing Grant is based on the level of need in an area. Applicants must demonstrate that they are delivering affordable homes that meet the size and tenure need, identified in the Local Housing Market Assessment on a local basis. Often the land available for development is not within the wards or neighbourhoods where there is a specific need identified in the LHMA or there is a concern that there may be an oversupply in a particular area.

Caerphilly Homes may need to consider buying land from the private sector. When the Council owned sites within the live portfolio and land prospectus are exhausted, Caerphilly Homes will need to become active in the land market, making sure to work closely with other developing partners to not compete for land for the same purpose of optimised affordable housing delivery.

Where Caerphilly Homes seeks to appropriate land from the general fund to the HRA or purchase land on the open market, the land will be subject in the first instance to a valuation by the District Valuer.

Property Acquisitions

Caerphilly Homes are acquiring privately owned properties currently on the market as part of the Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP)

The acquisition of properties in locations where the Council already has a significant number of homes is an integral part of the ambition to increase the Council's housing portfolio.

Caerphilly Homes will explore the possibility of creating a ringfenced amount within the HRA to support an ongoing, sustainable programme of acquisitions, supported by additional flexibilities from Welsh Government regarding the use of Social Housing Grant to assist with street property purchases. The vast majority of these are ex Right to Buy properties that can be brought back into Council ownership usually in and around large numbers of existing Caerphilly Homes properties.

Housing Led Regeneration – Town Centres and Neighbourhoods

Over the timeframe of this Strategy, Caerphilly Homes will also explore the opportunity to contribute towards town centre regeneration and estate reconfiguration. Caerphilly Homes have commissioned consultants, to explore development opportunities in Blackwood, Caerphilly, Risca and Bargoed town centres. This information will be utilised to inform the town centre place plans that are being developed by colleagues in the Regeneration and Planning team with a view to submitting funding proposals to Welsh Government.

Caerphilly Homes will also seek to identify opportunities to better meet housing need through estate re-configuration or re-design in areas where there is an oversupply of a particular tenure type or historic management challenges.

Land vs Need Case Study Aberbargoed Plateau

The Aberbargoed Plateau, which is an allocated housing site in the LDP, could accommodate up to 200 new homes of mixed size and tenure. However, in the LHMA, there is no need identified for this quantum of homes. In this instance, there may be a need to consider developing without the use of SHG grant or to make the case to Welsh Government that the need identified in adjacent wards and neighbourhoods could be met by bringing this site forward.

It may also be necessary to consider developing sites in areas of need that may be financially unviable, in order to meet the need identified in the LHMA or to act as a housing led regeneration catalyst in areas where the economy has stalled and growth is limited. The delivery of new homes on this site could stimulate the local economy through direct investment and local supply chains, the employment and training of local people, encouraging people to relocate into the area and increase footfall into Bargoed town centre.



2 CAPACITY

HRA Financing

Every year the HRA business plan is presented as a sustainable plan to Welsh Government. It establishes the capital and revenue limits in which Caerphilly Homes operates and will indicate the headroom and borrowing requirements required to serve the new build programme. This will be linked to the delivery target(s) in place in that year and projecting forwards over the 30-year plan.

To manage the business plan and following the Board's establishment, there will be financial hurdles agreed in conversation with Section 151 Officer to establish the necessary financial controls which will give clearance to proceeding with certain projects and influencing ongoing project management decisions. It will review individual appraisals and the Head of Development and Strategy will ensure sites come forward within these hurdle rates. (See Scheme Viability pg. 12) This will control the impact on the HRA and our borrowing limits and also control land market endeavour, so as to not compete with peers as and when the need arises.

External Funding

Where external funding is secured to deliver new Caerphilly Homes, the scheme will adhere to the conditions enclosed in the relevant Welsh Government (or other body) grant offer letter together with the Council's Standing Orders and Standing Orders for Contracts Regulations.

Spend will be monitored by the Head of Housing in conjunction with the Head of Development and Strategy and Principal Financial Accountant for Caerphilly Homes. Claims will be submitted in accordance with the relevant grant claim procedure.

Development Resources / Delivery Team

The Caerphilly Homes development team is located within the Strategy, Development and Performance team which also includes the Principal Housing Strategy Officer, the Housing Strategy Officer and the Performance and Business improvement Analyst. The Principal Housing Strategy Officer is responsible for coordinating the Programme Delivery Plan which supports the allocation of Social Housing Grant at a local level and for undertaking the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA).

The Development Team are directly responsible for the delivery of the Caerphilly Homes Development programme and ensuring that the Council progresses towards the 400 affordable, low carbon, new home ambition by 2025.

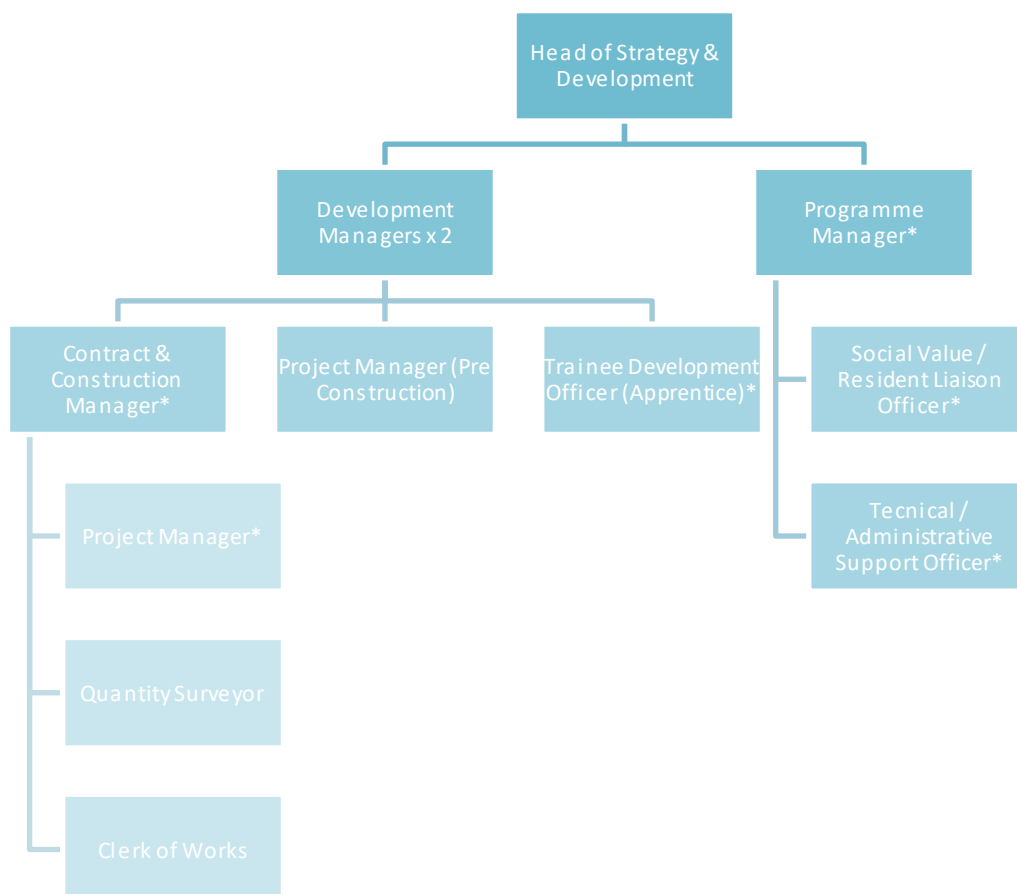
The team was created in 2020 and has evolved since this time in line with the development programme. New resources have been secured as the workload has increased.

The Development Team is split into three parts supporting each other; Pre-Construction, Construction/Delivery and Programme management, thereby covering all 7 stages of the RIBA Plan of Work and the high level development process.

Multi-disciplinary Consultancy Team

The Development Team are also supported by a specialist Development and Land Appraisal multi-disciplinary team which includes property and cost consultants, urban designers, architects, highways and infrastructure advisors, M&E specialists, net zero carbon advisors and legal advisors. The Tier 1 contractor engaged via the SCAPE Framework to deliver a flagship later living scheme at Ty Darran, Risca and an exemplar 85 new home scheme at the former Oakdale Comprehensive School site have also brought a significant degree of expertise in the form of award-winning architects, planning consultants, engineering consultancies and net zero carbon / Passivhaus advisors so there is a wealth of expertise in a range of relevant disciplines for the team to call upon and learn from.

Caerphilly Homes will continue to support the Development Team through ensuring the availability of appropriate training and upskilling opportunities and encouraging continuous professional development.



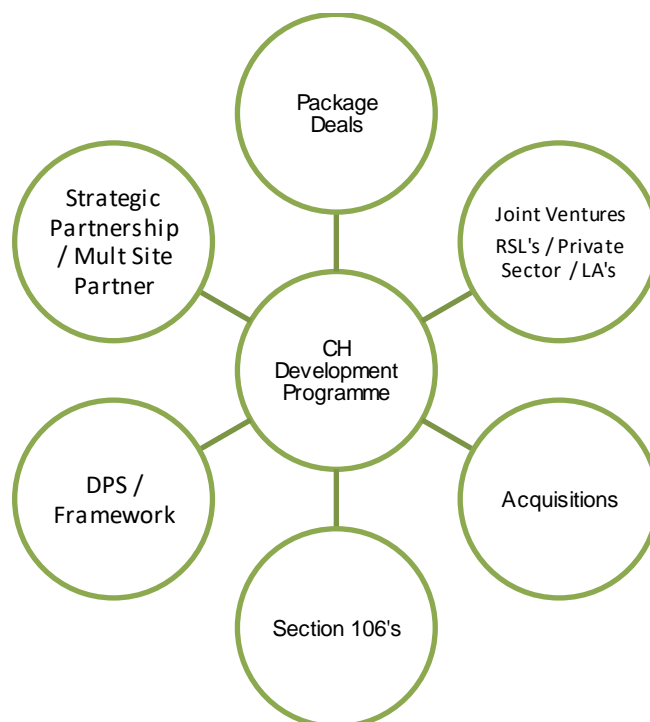
*Denotes yet to be recruited

Caerphilly Homes will keep the structure of the Development Team under review to ensure that adequate resources are available to support the delivery of a sustainable pipeline of sites.

3 DELIVERY

To maximise the opportunities to increase the Caerphilly Homes stock portfolio and deliver mixed tenure developments, a range of complementary delivery routes and interventions are required. These include traditional S106 contractual arrangements with developers, potential joint ventures with partner housing associations, package deals, strategic partnerships, and acquisitions (both land and property).

The following diagram illustrates the delivery routes that will be adopted to increase the number of homes within the Caerphilly Homes portfolio and introduce mixed tenure sites including Low-Cost Home Ownership and Market Sales:



Package Deals

Where a developer approaches Caerphilly Homes with an offer to develop land and affordable homes combined as a package, Caerphilly Homes will only engage where the developer can demonstrate 'exclusive rights' to the land in question.

In the case of all package deal opportunities, Caerphilly Homes will need to ensure appropriate due diligence. The following conditions would have to be met:

- 1) A satisfactory planning permission for the scheme
- 2) A satisfactory valuation of the proposed scheme (an independent valuation by the District Valuer)
- 3) A satisfactory review of the proposed scheme costs via an independent Chartered Quantity Surveyor
- 4) A positive financial viability assessment of the total scheme costs.
- 5) Formal approval of the SAB proposal for the scheme.
- 6) Completion of due diligence of the developing entity to evidence their ability to deliver the scheme (this could take the form of annual accounts, credit referencing, references etc).

Strategic Partnerships / Multi Site Partner

To bring scale and pace to the development programme, Caerphilly Homes may seek to work with a designated strategic development partner who would be able to evidence a track record of developing low carbon affordable and market sale homes.

This arrangement could take the form of a direct award or an open market procurement. It would mean that the chosen partner would be able to take schemes through the entire RIBA process from inception to handover, utilising and coordinating a multi-disciplinary team of specialists. The strategic partner would work on the larger, strategic sites within the Caerphilly Homes development portfolio or a package of smaller sites that collectively offer an attractive proposition to the market.

Caerphilly Homes would maintain control and influence over the output from any development in such an arrangement through being closely involved in clienting the build, designing the specification and monitoring the quality of the finished home.

Partnering with another Local Authority in the procurement of a multi-site developer would be beneficial given the capacity and resource it requires to run a large tender and then manage the contractual relationship. This is being explored as an efficient route to deliver on any number of sites.

Joint Ventures

This approach could be beneficial to Caerphilly Homes where resources (land, finances, skills etc) are pooled to deliver a defined outcome, maximise efficiency and also spreading risk. As an example, this could be where Caerphilly Homes partners with a partner Housing Association, developer or financial institution to complete the delivery of new, affordable homes together. It could be a simple arrangement or a complex one. It could unlock alternative financing models, new land opportunities and shared delivery arrangements. It may also present opportunities to share cost and risk.

Prior to considering entry into a joint venture, Caerphilly Homes will seek specialist legal, procurement and financial advice to ensure the Council's interests are protected and before presenting a comprehensive report to DGPB detailing costs, liabilities, and risks.

Section 106's

A Section 106 Agreement is another mechanism to increase the number of homes within the Caerphilly Homes portfolio. It is a legal agreement between the Local Planning Authority and a developer which sets out planning obligations that must be met. A section 106 can vary depending on the nature of the development; the most common obligations include, the provision of Public Open Space, Education or Highways infrastructure, town centre or health facilities or affordable housing.

The affordable housing obligations within Caerphilly County Borough are set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance LDP1 (SPG LDP1). Where there is evidence of housing need, the Local Planning Authority (Council) will seek to negotiate an affordable housing contribution with a developer based on the following targets:

- I. 40% in the Caerphilly Basin area (excluding Aber Valley);
- II. 25% in the Northern Connections Corridor (excluding Newbridge);
- III. 10% in the Rest of Caerphilly County Borough (including Aber Valley and Newbridge);
- IV. 0% in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (affordable housing can still be negotiated subject to viability).

Meeting these targets are dependent on the financial viability of each scheme. Often developers will argue that they are unable to provide the proportion of affordable homes specified due to viability.

The Council in its role as the Local Planning Authority specifies to the developer what affordable homes will be provided as part of the Section 106 contribution, including the type/mix of properties to be developed e.g. 1, 2, or 3 bedroom houses/flats/bungalows, social rent, rent to buy etc., with the mix of homes being derived from the data contained within the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA). The transfer cost of these properties to the social landlord is prescribed at the rates set out within the SPG.

The percentage of affordable housing to be provided by a developer is set out within the Section 106 Agreement. Within the agreement the Council can specify a preferred social landlord to whom the developer must transfer the affordable housing at the prescribed costs. Caerphilly Homes are the preferred landlord in each case unless it is not considered a scheme that is viable. This will enable Caerphilly Homes to purchase a number of Section 106 properties to add to its portfolio throughout the lifetime of the Strategy.

Products

Caerphilly Homes recognises that to create sustainable and cohesive communities and meet the current and future needs of customers and residents a variety of tenures are required.

Social Rent

Caerphilly Homes' primary purpose is to develop homes for social rent for those who choose to rent and those who are deemed the most vulnerable in our society and can be at risk of homelessness. Caerphilly Homes will provide a range of social rent accommodation to meet local need including general needs accommodation, temporary accommodation, later living / older persons accommodation and other specialist accommodation.

Low-Cost Home Ownership (LCHO)

The Council has recently introduced a Low-Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) product which will allow those who are unable to afford the full market value of a home, to purchase a share of their home. The Council's Low-Cost Home Ownership Policy was approved in 2022 and sets out the eligibility criteria and process that will apply. Caerphilly Homes is committed to building LCHO homes as part of mixed tenure developments.

Caerphilly Homes will potentially explore options to include specialist LCHO products for particular groups including older people and people looking to purchase their first home.

Market Sale Homes

Where appropriate and subject to viability, Caerphilly Homes will build homes for sale on the open market. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to develop sites that are entirely for market sale in order to cross subsidise the delivery of more affordable homes in other parts of the borough.

Caerphilly Homes market sale homes will exhibit the same energy credentials and building standards of the LCHO and social rent homes. This means that market sale Caerphilly Homes will be compliant with WDQR space standards and therefore occupy a larger footprint than our competitors. Whilst building to this standard for market sale homes results in increased cost, it facilitates a tenure blind approach to development schemes, adds value to placemaking and helps mitigate risk.

Caerphilly Homes will continue to work with partners to explore the use of innovative financing models and new products particularly other intermediate products addressing the widest set of needs of our communities as the development programme evolves.

Later Living

The scale of demographic change and the characteristics of the existing housing stock demands a rapid increase in the number of healthy, lifetime homes, which are flexible and adaptable to accommodate changing needs across the life course. Caerphilly Homes will deliver new homes that support positive agile ageing, enable people to live in their home for longer and are flexible and adaptable to accommodate the changing needs of inhabitants.

Caerphilly Homes will consider and apply the recommendations set out by the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) which include generous space standards, units that are care ready, adaptable for new technologies, energy efficient and well insulated together with spaces that encourage interaction and facilitate positive engagement with the wider community.

Caerphilly Homes are seeking to create a new standard for later living accommodation which will be based on the learning taken from the delivery of an exemplar 46 apartment scheme at Ty Darran, Risca where we are exceeding space standards, maximising energy efficiency and applying lifetime homes standards.

Specialist Housing

Caerphilly Homes will work alongside the Occupational Therapist to ensure that on all new developments we are able to accommodate individuals and families with specialist housing requirements.

All our ground floor apartment accommodation will be fully accessible and compliant with Lifetime Homes Standards. They will contain accessible wet rooms (unless specified by the Occupational Therapist) and be constructed to ensure structural alignment between the bedroom and the bathroom thereby enabling a hoist to be installed if required.

Where requested to do so by the Council's Occupational Therapist our developments will also include single storey accommodation which is large enough to accommodate families with specialist housing needs. These homes will also be delivered in accordance with Lifetime Homes and WDQR Standards.

In relation to the provision of temporary accommodation, the Development Team will work closely with the Housing Solutions Manager and the Supporting People Manager to identify suitable opportunities for development. The development of temporary accommodation will be a core focus of the team given the increasing need for both temporary and move on accommodation within the borough.

Scheme Viability / Development Appraisals

Viability of a scheme to deliver either a profit margin for a mainstream developer or through a Caerphilly Homes lens; delivering the optimum level of affordable housing ensuring that the scheme does not make a significant loss, is one of the critical factors in determining whether a scheme will go ahead or not.

For schemes including affordable housing, an initial development appraisal will be undertaken following confirmation from the Caerphilly Homes Development and Strategy Team that the proposed development and location of the development is coterminous with the need identified within the Local Housing Market Assessment and the principles contained within the Local Housing Strategy.

Each development appraisal will ensure that proposals endorsed by the Strategy Team undergo a robust financial viability test to ensure each development is affordable and undertaken in accordance with Financial Regulations. This information will be presented to the DGPB at an early stage in the development process (Appendix B).

Value for money will be an important consideration however, Caerphilly Homes will consider proposals which may incur significant up-front material and construction costs but which have less of an impact on the local environment, provide healthier internal environments and offer customers the opportunity to lower energy costs. The cost of development at the outset will be balanced by materials and technology designed to mitigate the impact of climate change; that create healthier, safer homes that help reduce the pressure on primary care services and which help tackle issues of fuel poverty and debt. All these elements are costs to society as a whole and to the public sector and by investing up front in our most basic of needs, a safe and secure home; the cost and impact on the public purse and society as a whole can be reduced.

For a scheme to proceed, the scheme viability must be approved by the DGPB. The following considerations will each form part of the development appraisal process:

- Demand in the location proposed and housing need
- Strategic fit with WG requirements
- Strategic fit with the Council's LDP and corporate objectives
- The community, environmental and economic benefits of the proposal
- The 5 ways of working and 7 goals within the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (2015)
- Delivery mechanism
- Technical Viability
- Financial Viability and Funding (including hurdle rates)
- Risks

These aspects of the development appraisal process aim to ensure that Caerphilly Homes considers the wider impact of any development it undertakes on the Council's role as custodians of the county borough, the environment, the economy and local communities.

In addition to financial viability there will be political, social, economic or other relevant reasons for progressing (or not progressing) a particular scheme and these will also be considered.

With the rising cost of materials and labour; poor quality land and abnormalities such as contamination, ecology or infrastructure costs; compliance with WDQR standards and a net zero carbon ambition, most sites in Caerphilly are unlikely to be financially viable and will be reliant on securing Welsh Government Social Housing Grant (SHG) for the acquisition and delivery of most sites. A high-level viability appraisal will be undertaken at the very outset of a scheme prior to any procurement exercise or land purchase.

Design & Quality

The Council and Caerphilly Homes are committed to a new dawn of development; of doing things differently to meet the evolving and changing needs of our customers. We will build high quality, fabric first, energy efficient homes that address rising fuel costs and create healthier internal environments. We will ensure that the Future Generations Act 2015 and Design Commission for Wales's Placemaking Charter underpins all our developments thereby ensuring the provision of sustainable homes and communities that leave a legacy for generations now and in the future.

The Council, as custodians of the borough, is passionately committed to ensuring that its investment in homes delivers new training and employment opportunities; forms new partnerships with schools and colleges creates new and sustains existing local supply chains; enhances biodiversity and creates cohesive communities.

Building Standards

The quality of new Caerphilly Homes is of paramount importance to the Council. Caerphilly Homes recognises that as custodians of the county borough we have a responsibility to ensure that our developments are delivered with communities thereby ensuring cohesion and integration.

We will develop in accordance with the Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter and the six principles that underpin the Charter; people and community, movement, public realm, location, mix of uses and identity.

We will give due regard to the environment in which our developments are located, working with the topography of the borough and where possible, seeking to achieve net biodiversity gain on all sites employing biophilic design principles.

Caerphilly Homes recognises the benefits of early engagement with the Local Planning Authority, the Highways and Drainage Teams, Ecologists, Placemaking Officer, Landscape Architect and Tree Preservation Officer. It will utilise the Internal Stakeholder Forum to ensure early awareness of potential development sites and ongoing engagement throughout the development process. Early engagement with Welsh Water, the Coal Authority (where applicable), National Resources Wales (where applicable), the Fire Service and the Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) will also be sought.

Caerphilly Homes will, as a minimum, build affordable homes to the standards set out by the Welsh Government in Welsh Development Quality Requirements 2021, Beautiful Homes and Spaces. We will ensure that our developments contain accessible homes that are built to Lifetime Homes Standards and homes that can be easily adapted to reflect the changing circumstances and needs of our customers.

Digital connectivity is an important component in the delivery of new, future ready, affordable homes. Caerphilly Homes recognises that access to fast and reliable broadband is essential to residents; opening up access to lifelong learning opportunities, helping to tackle social isolation, providing access to public services, enabling home working and bringing people together. Caerphilly Homes will work with its contractors to explore the installation of gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure at all new development sites and encourage the use of smart technology that can enable people live at home independently for longer and reduce isolation. Electric car charging infrastructure will also be provided.

Net Zero Carbon

In seeking to deliver developments that are deemed net zero carbon, Caerphilly Homes' ambition will be to examine the embodied and operational carbon of each development taking into consideration lifetime carbon and costs. Considering each development on its own merits taking a fabric first approach; using building techniques and materials where possible which are coterminous with our net zero ambition. Priority will be given to ensuring that customers benefit from a building with a fabric first approach through increased energy efficiency, healthier internal environments, and lower energy costs.

Building will initially be to Building Regulations 2025 thereby ensuring our first major developments are low carbon or as near to net zero carbon as is possible.

This links directly with the Council's ambitions to decarbonise by 2030 and Welsh Government's aspirations to make Wales net zero by 2050.

All Wales Net Zero Carbon Timber Frame Project

Caerphilly Homes is one of 11 retention authorities and 4 Registered Social Landlords who are participating in the All Wales Net Zero Carbon Timber Frame project which seeks to design and deliver a build system for a suite of whole life net zero carbon homes, which are fully prototyped, tested, and have secured warranties to satisfy mortgage lenders. The output from the project will be the production of manuals for the manufacture and assembly of all property types, which can be used for free by participating social landlords, but whose use by all other users, attracts a licence fee.

The Cabinet Member for Housing signed a memorandum of Understanding in 2020 which commits the Council to part funding the project along with the partner organisations and allocating a suitable site within Caerphilly in which to test out the project deliverables.

Design Guide

Caerphilly Homes will develop a high-level design guide that will reflect the uniqueness of Caerphilly's landscape, ecology, heritage and communities. It will set out the internal and external specification of homes together with placemaking, technology and energy efficiency credentials. It will also reflect the Council and Welsh Government's ambitions to lower carbon emissions and mitigate the impact of climate change, lower energy costs for customers and build resilient communities.

The internal specification will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is fit for purpose ensuring that products are continually kept under review and that new innovations are incorporated where appropriate. The internal specification for new build will evolve into our existing homes over time therefore ensuring synergy between the development and maintenance and repairs functions.

The design guide will be made available to developers wishing to work with the Council, be in line with our Asset Maintenance and Repair Strategy and be applicable to Section 106 homes that Caerphilly Homes acquires.

Quality Control

A Contract & Construction Manager together with a Project Manager and Clerk of Works (COW) will oversee the delivery of work on site. The Contract / Construction Manager, the Project Manager and COW will monitor the quality of the workmanship provided by the contractor on site, ensure adherence to the drawings and specification agreed and compliance with CDM regulations, building regulations, Sustainable Urban Drainage legislation and planning conditions.

Prior to the handover of properties, the COW together with appropriate officers will undertake a detailed snagging inspection of each property, communal areas and the external environment to ensure that the quality of the finish meets the Council's expectations and contract requirements. Caerphilly Homes will develop appropriate handover procedures to ensure that the customer is familiar with their new home and that they are aware of the wider support that is available to them.

All main contractors working on behalf of Caerphilly Homes will be expected to be part of the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS).

All Caerphilly Homes developments will be under warranty for a minimum of 10 years via a nationally recognised provider (NHBC, LABC etc). Defects that arise outside of the initial snagging period will be handled via the insurance process. Contractors will be required to provide Caerphilly Homes with a Company Guarantee and component collateral warranties which can be utilised for any major defects that arise.

Caerphilly Homes will undertake a post occupancy survey together with a visit after 1 month, 3 months and 12 months to occupants of new homes in order to gather data and information to learn and inform future developments.

Performance Monitoring

From the inception of the scheme, delivery and operation of the resulting homes, the Head of Development and Strategy will oversee and assess the performance of each contract and consultant (where appropriate). Performance will be assessed in accordance with the terms and conditions of contracts including social value requirements and the key performance indicators (KPI's) included therein.

An annual update containing information on the performance of each contractor and the KPI's delivered will be provided to DGPB at the end of each financial year. The Board will manage by exception hence where significant issues arise these will be raised in an exception report.

4 SOCIAL VALUE & IMPACT

Procurements

The procurement of development partners and consultants will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Financial Standing Orders and Standing Orders for Contracts. Colleagues from the Council's Legal Services and Procurement Team will assist in advising the Development Team on procurement options and legal requirements appropriate to the development scheme proposal.

The chosen procurement route will seek to deliver schemes on time and within budget with quality being a key consideration. The minimisation of risk to the Council will also be an important factor.

Social Value / Economic Impact

Through our procurements and partnerships, we will seek to develop and support local supply chains. Caerphilly Homes will prioritise social value and ensure that our investments in new homes deliver more for the local economy, the environment, our people and our communities.

All primary contractors that work with Caerphilly Homes will be required to prepare a social value plan that sets out how and what they will deliver. They will be encouraged to work and add value to existing support services to deliver new employment and training opportunities; with local schools and colleges to promote the opportunities that are available within the immediate construction project and the sector; promote the green skills agenda and support the circular economy.

5 BRANDING & MARKETING

Caerphilly Homes are developers of not only high quality, low carbon affordable homes but also sites which include a range of tenure options including market sales. As a result, we acknowledge the need to work closely with our commercial advisors and contractors to ensure that our homes are not only comparable with our competitors but exceed customer expectations of what a Caerphilly Homes development looks and feels like. Our sites have to work harder than our competitors to challenge the stigma often associated with affordable homes and create a brand that crosses tenure and is appealing and inclusive. Over the next 12 months Caerphilly Homes will explore what that 'brand' is and how it can be applied, in the first instance to the flagship development at the site of the former Oakdale Comprehensive School.

CONCLUSION

There is an ever-increasing need for all types of housing nationally and within the locality. The number of households and individuals that are on the Council's Common Housing Register and in temporary accommodation are rising exponentially and are not expected to reduce any time soon. Welsh Government who are committed to building 20,000 low carbon, new affordable homes by 2025.

As one of 11 Council's across Wales who have retained their housing stock, Caerphilly Homes is in the advantageous position of having the ability to build new, low carbon affordable homes in response to this ever-pressing need.

This Strategy provides the framework within which Caerphilly Homes will deliver 100 new, low carbon, affordable homes per annum. It sets out the governance arrangements that underpin the development process through the creation of the DGPB and highlights the quality and standards that will be achieved using the Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter as a framework for creating great places.

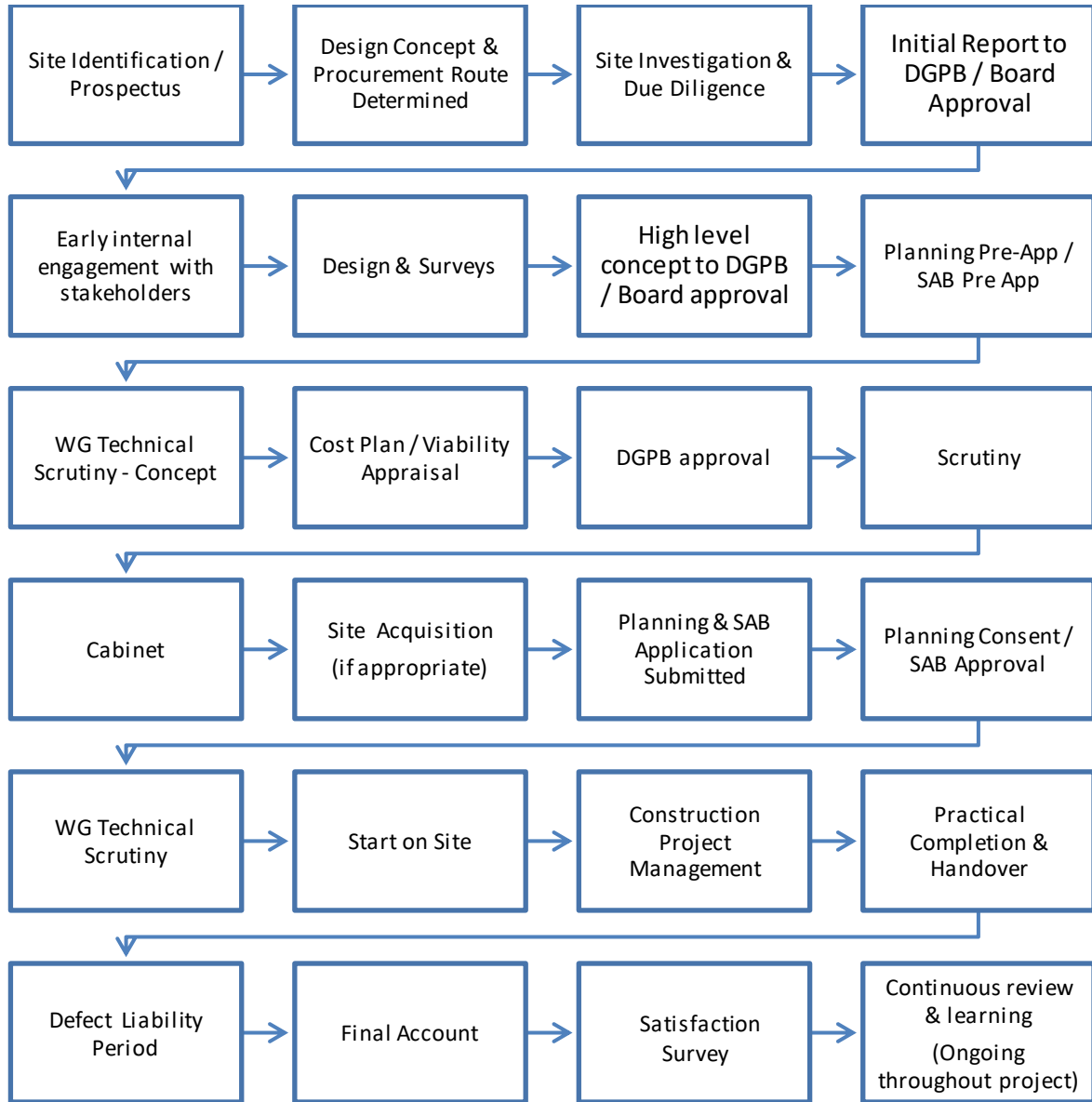
Furthermore, this Strategy sets out the added value that will be delivered as a result of the Council's sizable investment in new homes through working in partnership with the private sector and creating an open for business environment where the creation of new employment and training opportunities together with activities designed to support the local supply chain and circular economy are just as important as the delivery of new homes.

APPENDICIES

A - Land Prospectus

B – Development Process

Caerphilly Homes Development Process



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