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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

Bridgend County Borough Council



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Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich
dewis iaith.*

*We welcome correspondence in Welsh. Please
let us know if your language choice is Welsh.*



Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate

Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line /: 01656 643148 /
643147 / 643694

Gofynnwch am / Ask for:

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad/Date: Tuesday, 11 July 2023

Dear Councillor,

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

A meeting of the Town & Community Council Forum will be held remotely - via Microsoft Teams on
Monday, 17 July 2023 at 16:00.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by Council from 1 September 2008.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 8
To receive for approval the Minutes of 06/03/2023
4. Planning Update - 20 Minute Neighbourhoods 9 - 54
5. United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund 55 - 82
6. Corporate Self Assessment 2022-2023 83 - 86
7. Urgent Items
To consider any other item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: This will be a Remote meeting and Members and Officers will be attending Remotely via Microsoft Teams. The meeting will be recorded for subsequent transmission via the Council's internet site which will be available as soon as practicable after the meeting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact cabinet_committee@bridgend.gov.uk or tel. 01656 643148 / 643694 / 643513 / .643696

By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £1.72 in printing costs

Yours faithfully

K Watson

Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy

Councillors:

H T Bennett
HJ David
C Davies
CLC Davies
S Easterbrook
M J Evans

Councillors

P Ford
J Gebbie
RM Granville
P W Jenkins
M R John
M Jones
R J Smith

Councillors

I M Spiller
JH Tildesley MBE
MJ Williams
R Williams
E D Winstanley
T Wood

To include a representative
from each Town and
Community Council

Agenda Item 3

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM - MONDAY, 6 MARCH 2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM HELD
REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY, 6 MARCH 2023 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|
| H T Bennett | E L P Caparros | C Davies | C L C Davies |
| S Easterbrook | M J Evans | P Ford | J Gebbie |
| RM Granville | M R John | L Lewis | R J Smith |
| I M Spiller | JH Tildesley MBE | MJ Williams | E D Winstanley |
| T Wood | | | |

Officers:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Julie Ellams | Democratic Services Officer - Committees |
| Mark Galvin | Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees |
| Rachel Keepins | Democratic Services Manager |
| Michael Pitman | Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services |
| Mark Shephard | Chief Executive |
| Guy Smith | Community Asset Transfer Officer |
| Sue Whittaker | Skills and Sustainable Development Manager |

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Smith declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5, as he was a Director of a company that was a recipient of a Warm Hub grant.

Councillor H Bennett declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5, as an employer of an organisation that was administering the grants.

Councillor E Winstanley declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 5, as an employer of an organisation that was administering the grants.

Councillor S Parker declared a personal interest in Agenda item 5, as his wife was a member of Cornelly Warm Hubs who have also been in receipt of a grant.

12. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Town and Community Council Forum dated 21 November 2022, be approved as a true and accurate record.

13. CORPORATE PLAN 2023-28

The Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager presented a report, in order to provide an update on the Council's Corporate Plan and seek support from the Town and Community Council Forum on sharing the Corporate Plan 2023-28, that was attached at Appendix 1 to the covering report. This was due to be reported to Council later this month.

She confirmed that there are 7 wellbeing goals for Wales, set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the Council like other local authorities, needed to demonstrate our contribution to each of these goals, which are –

- A prosperous Wales

- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

The Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager added, that the Council must also consider the 5 ways of working as it develops the new Corporate Plan. These were –

- Long term - balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs
- Prevention - acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse to help the Council meet its objectives
- Integration – thinking about how its wellbeing goals will contribute to the 7 national goals, on its other objectives and on partners objectives.
- Collaboration – working across different parts of the Council and partners to achieve its objectives
- Involvement - involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring those people reflect the diversity of its area.

The Corporate Plan is the Council's main vehicle for demonstrating and communicating the priorities to local people and businesses. It was also an important part of the assurance framework for its regulators. Audit Wales intend to test approaches to developing the Corporate Plan (especially the well-being objectives) across Wales over the next 6 months. These Objectives were outlined in paragraph 3.5 of the report.

Welsh Government were also taking a keen interest in the development of well-being objectives, in line with the evolution of the Social Partnership Bill and guidance. They are keen to see evidence of the Council working with staff and Trade Unions on the development of its well-being objectives and plan.

The Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager then outlined some of the work that had been undertaken or was required, such as in relation to:

- Use of research, data and information to inform the Corporate Plan;
- Use of engagement, involvement and consultation to inform the Corporate Plan.

Further detail regarding the work carried out in these areas, was explained in the report, including feedback in terms of consultation both internally, for example through the Overview and Scrutiny process and externally with stakeholders, such as constituents, the Public Service Board and the Youth Council.

Following the consultation process, some changes had been made to the Corporate Plan based on the feedback received, such as:

- Rewriting the principles, and changing the icons that represent them, so they are more positive, aspirational and forward looking
- Adding a small section on context to each wellbeing objective to demonstrate the link with specific council services
- Reconfiguring the diagram on the Council's finances to reflect costs per day (per household)
- Adding references to town centres and Porthcawl
- Adding information in Wellbeing Objective 2 to focus on staff welfare, recruitment and pay.

- Adding information in Wellbeing Objective 6 to focus on listening to and responding to residents' views
- Adding information on youth employment, and the music service.

The Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager gave a power point presentation in support of the report.

Members of the Forum gratefully asked for the Corporate Plan to be shared with Town and Community Councils and the Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager confirmed that she would arrange this and, if necessary, either herself or members of her team could come along to talk on this for the benefit of Members.

A Member also felt that it would be advantageous to use the Corporate Plan as an opportunity to allow, where appropriate, Town and Community Councils to deliver some of the services included in the Plan, through joint working arrangements.

RESOLVED: That the Town and Community Council Forum, noted the Corporate Plan 2023-28 presented for approval to Council on 1 March as attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

14. **COST OF LIVING / WARM HUBS**

The Cost of Living Co-ordinator (Employability Bridgend) presented a report, the purpose of which, was to provide the Town and Community Council Forum with an update on the cost-of-living support activity, more specifically Warm Hubs, being provided to communities across Bridgend County Borough.

By way of some background information, she advised that the impact of the rising cost of living affects everyone but there are groups who are likely to be hardest hit. These people spend a greater proportion of their total income on food, housing and energy costs and therefore have less flexibility to meet increased costs. Those who were able to balance their budgets instead start struggling or find themselves in crisis.

Issues with older housing stock means many homes are relatively less energy efficient. In rural areas homes are more likely to be reliant on solid fuel, oil, or LPG for their heating. These are all factors that increase energy costs.

The Cost of Living Co-ordinator confirmed, that in April 2022 the domestic energy price cap was increased to £1,971 per year leading the Welsh Government to estimate that up to 45% of households could be in fuel poverty and up to 8% of households could be in severe fuel poverty. As 1 in 5 homes in Wales posed an unacceptable risk to health prior to the cost-of-living crisis the increase in households affected by fuel poverty is likely to increase excess winter deaths overall.

In September 2022, in response to the escalating cost of living crisis, specifically the increasing cost of energy, Welsh Government announced £1m of funding would be made available to support communities to develop Warm Hubs or expand and enhance Warm Hub provision.

Then in October 2022 it was announced that the funding would be distributed via local authorities who would work with local partners in the development and delivery of Warm Hubs. Bridgend County Borough Council was allocated £44,590 to support Warm Hubs through a grant scheme to be spent by 31 March 2023.

She explained that Warm Hubs are intended as places in local communities where people can find a safe and warm environment during the day to help reduce the cost of

heating their own homes and to help people facing extreme fuel poverty this winter. Depending on their location and facilities, Warm Hubs offer a range of support including basic refreshments and snacks as a minimum, extending to a more substantive meal where possible, enrichment activities such as arts and crafts, exercise and cultural activity and the provision of advice and support services such as health and wellbeing, financial matters, and digital accessibility for those who attend.

The aim of the Warm Hubs fund is to provide safe, accessible, friendly, free to use spaces to provide support with the rising cost of living whilst helping communities to be well and stay as such.

To facilitate the allocation of grant funding a scoping exercise was undertaken across the County Borough. To reflect the diversity of local communities across the County Borough and help to address the unique challenges in different areas, a series of local meetings were held. 11 meetings were organised, and efforts were made to invite representatives from community groups, town and community councils, community venues, Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) Councillors and Third Sector organisation including Halo and Awen.

The purpose of the scoping meetings was to discuss community solutions to the rising cost of domestic energy, identifying and capturing information on the support and activities already available to avoid future duplication and create a position to build from. Following the meetings, circulation lists for each area were created to assist with future communication both to and between local representatives. The mailing groups had been an effective way of gathering further information and sharing local knowledge and updates on Warm Hubs.

The Cost of Living Co-ordinator advised that funding was drawn down from the WLGA and agreement was subsequently made with Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) in January 2023 to provide the administration of the funds. BAVO's role extends to the advertising of the Warm Hubs funding scheme and the collation of applications, with BCBC responsible for the decision making through a Grant Panel, and monitoring and reporting to WLGA.

The BCBC Grant Panel is comprised of the Employability and Enterprise Manager, Group Manager – Sports and Physical Activity Prevention and Wellbeing and the Cost of Living Co-ordinator. The Grant Panel has been able to agree applications quickly, meeting twice weekly since the grant fund was opened. Applications to the fund have now exceeded the amount of funding available from Welsh Government and over 30 recipients have received Warm Hubs funding. Additional funds are being made available through BCBC's Discretionary Cost of Living Funds.

Officers from Employability then responded to questions from Members and further details regarding this can be found [here](#)

RESOLVED: That the Town and Community Council Forum noted the report.

15. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

| | |
|--|--|
| Meeting of: | TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM |
| Date of Meeting: | 17 JULY 2023 |
| Report Title: | PLANNING UPDATE – 20 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS |
| Report Owner / Corporate Director: | CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES |
| Responsible Officer: | JONATHAN PARSONS – GROUP MANAGER PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES |
| Policy Framework and Procedure Rules: | The report content has no direct effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules. |
| Executive Summary: | <p style="text-align: center;">The report outlines the Council’s position regarding the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods as put forward through the strategic development sites outlined in the Replacement Local Development Plan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 Minute neighbourhoods are designed to allow people to have access to facilities such as schools, shops, recreation space and health facilities within a 20 minute walk or cycle ride from their homes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The concept is a well established urban planning principle and is widely seen as a key component to good placemaking</p> |

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a briefing on the concept of 20-minute neighbourhoods, which has been incorporated into the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).

2. Background

- 2.1 The 20-minute neighbourhood is an established principle of urban design and planning that is becoming popular across the world. Developed in different ways in cities like Melbourne, Portland and Paris, the principle is intended to enable residents to access retail, leisure, education, primary healthcare and employment close to their place of residence and within the local neighbourhood i.e. within a 20-minute walk/cycle. It also means having access to greenspace nearby and a local environment that encourages active travel to promote health and wellbeing. It is a place where people want to live, so affordable housing must be part of it. The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about ‘living locally’—giving people the ability to meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute walk or cycle ride from home, with safe cycling and local transport options.

- 2.2 In the context of Bridgend, a 20-minute neighbourhood is one that enables access services within a 20-minute period either by walking or cycling, with public transport provision also available as a fallback option to ensure there is a range of sustainable travel options available within each neighbourhood.
- 2.3 High Quality, Sustainable Places are the result of good planning and design which fully embraces placemaking. Adopting a placemaking approach has multiple benefits which not only helps improve quality of life, but also helps to tackle climate change, reduce carbon footprint and improve biodiversity and ecological resilience for the future. The legal obligations on Local Authorities under the Environment and Well-Being of Future Generations Acts must be recognised within the Council's approach.
- 2.4 This concept is enshrined in national planning policy – Future Wales 2040 (The National Plan) and Planning Policy Wales 11 (2021) and as such will be cascaded into regional and local development planning framework.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 The nature and form of a neighbourhood can have a direct impact on physical and mental health. This can be enabled by creating well-designed walkable neighbourhoods that are connected through a mix of land-uses, housing types and access to quality public transport. The spatial land use planning framework for Bridgend is set on the Local Development Plan (LDP), which is a statutory, high-level strategy which must be prepared and sets out in land-use terms the priorities and objectives of the Council.
- 3.2 The RLDP is at advanced stage following extensive consultation and an examination in public. One of its principal aims is to make neighbourhoods across the Borough more liveable. In Bridgend, whilst many established areas have some built form features for a 20-minute neighbourhood, they are not always walkable and may not offer affordable housing options. Therefore, the 20-minute neighbourhood principle has been considered and embedded into the RLDP from the outset of plan preparation.
- 3.3 As part of the preparation of the RLDP a report (Background Paper 19) was prepared to assess the practical delivery of the 20-minute neighbourhood principle against the strategic and housing allocations proposed within the RLDP. A copy of this report is attached as **Appendix A**. The report considered the national policy context as well as outlining what a 20 minute neighbourhood could look like and its benefits. The report also highlights the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has resulted in people spending more time at home and within their local neighbourhoods. As a consequence of the crisis, it has been further highlighted that the importance of the provision of high-quality local environments and well located, secure and affordable homes make in making a positive benefit to people's health and well-being. The location, quality, size and features of homes influenced how residents managed through the lockdown periods.
- 3.4 The quality, flexibility and adaptability of the local built environment also has a huge impact on how healthcare, education, food, and medical supplies have been

provided. During the crisis, the importance of local services and infrastructure has also become more apparent, with people spending more time in their local neighbourhoods. The continuation of people working from home and more locally is expected to be a long-term trend. As such it is vital to ensure that the RLDP will enable new homes and neighbourhoods to be delivered and that these are quality places to live, with easy access to services and appropriate infrastructure and greenspace and key to this will be the development of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

- 3.5 The Placemaking Wales Charter, launched in September 2020, has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership. This consists of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests and organisations working within the built and natural environment. The Charter is intended to reflect a commitment to support the development of high-quality places across Wales for the benefit of communities. Bridgend County Borough Council, as a signatory to the Charter, pledges to:
- Involve the local community in the development of proposals
 - Choose sustainable locations for new development
 - Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport
 - Create inclusive, well defined, safe, and welcoming streets and public spaces
 - Promote a sustainable mix of uses to make places vibrant
 - Value and respect the positive distinctive qualities and identity of existing places.
- 3.6 The commitment to the placemaking charter aligns with the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood and is incorporated within the RLDP to ensure that Bridgend is adopting a coordinated approach to placemaking and well-connected neighbourhoods.
- 3.7 Further work contained within the Health Impact Assessment as part of the RLDP preparation has also highlighted that the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood in ensuring that opportunities to maximise health and well-being benefits within potential development are important. The Green Infrastructure Assessment also provides the opportunity to incorporate the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood in to the RLDP process. In applying a green infrastructure approach to identify and enhance the natural assets present within the County Borough, the Council can ensure that proposed development is centered around proximity to green infrastructure and that natural green spaces can be easily accessed within 20-minutes via sustainable modes of travel.
- 3.8 What Should a 20-Minute Neighbourhood Look Like? The core of a 20-minute neighbourhood is its pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. This equates to 800 metres (approximately half a mile) in distance or 20-minutes in time (based on average walking times of healthy adult and taking into account waiting at junctions and meandering routes). These neighbourhoods should be well connected to public transport, jobs, and services in the region provide local employment opportunities, local shopping, health and school facilities, public parks/ green spaces and sport and recreation facilities. In so doing they must be safe, accessible, and well-connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport and offer high-quality public realm and open spaces.

- 3.9 The benefits of 20-minute neighbourhoods encompass health, social, economic, and environmental benefits, as well as the positive impact of access to local amenities and services as described above.
- 4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**
- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.
- 5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**
- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.
- 6. Climate Change Implications**
- 6.1 There are no Climate Change Implications arising from this report, however, the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods aims to reduce dependency on carbon intensive transport options.
- 7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**
- 7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications arising from this report.
- 8. Financial Implications**
- 8.1 The report is for noting and current procedures are carried out within existing budget headings.
- 9. Recommendation(s)**
- 9.1 That the Town and Community Council Forum notes the report

Background documents

None

Appendix A : Bridgend RLDP Background Paper 19 – The 20 Minute Neighbourhood

Bridgend Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033



Background Paper 19: The 20-Minute Neighbourhood

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1. Overview

- 1.1 The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about 'living locally'—giving people the ability to meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute walk or cycle ride from home, with safe cycling and local transport options.
- 1.2 In the context of the county of Bridgend, a 20-minute neighbourhood is one that enables access services within a 20-minute period either by walking or cycling, with public transport provision also available as a fallback option to ensure there is a range of sustainable travel options available within each neighbourhood.
- 1.3 The 20-minute neighbourhood is an established principle of urban design and planning that is becoming popular across the world. Developed in different ways in cities like Melbourne, Portland and Paris, people can meet most of their essential needs within a 20-minute walk. This principle enables residents to access retail, leisure, education, primary healthcare and employment close to their place of residence and within the local neighbourhood. It also means having access to greenspace nearby and a local environment that encourages active travel to promote health and wellbeing. It is a place where people want to live, so affordable housing must be part of it.
- 1.4 Neighbourhoods can have a direct impact on physical and mental health. By creating well-designed walkable neighbourhoods that are connected through a mix of land-uses, housing types and access to quality public transport, the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) aims to make neighbourhoods across the Borough more liveable. In Bridgend, whilst many established areas have some built form features for a 20-minute neighbourhood, they are not always walkable and may not offer affordable housing options. Therefore, the 20-minute neighbourhood principle has been considered and embedded into the RLDP from the outset of plan preparation.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to assess the practical delivery of the 20-minute neighbourhood principle against the strategic and housing allocations proposed within the RLDP.

2. The National Sustainable Placemaking Agenda

- 2.1 High Quality Sustainable Places are the result of good planning and design which fully embraces placemaking. Adopting a placemaking approach has multiple benefits which not only helps improve quality of life, but also helps to tackle climate change, reduce carbon footprint and improve biodiversity and ecological resilience for the future. The legal obligations on Local Authorities under the Environment and Well-Being of Future Generations Acts must be recognised within the Council's approach.
- 2.2 The National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes and Objectives of Good Design set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Objectives of Good Design



Source: PPW, 2021, p.26

Figure 2: National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes



Source: PPW, 2021, p.19

3. Future Wales 2040 (National Development Framework)

3.1 The National Development Framework (NDF) considers the issues significant to Wales's prosperity and well-being, such as the economy, housing, transport, energy, and the environment. It identifies where national developments should take place, where the key growth areas are and what infrastructure and services are needed. The NDF is set in the context of a vision that will help deliver sustainable places across Wales by 2040, by supporting placemaking and ensuring development is directed to the right places, making the best use of resources, creating and sustaining

accessible healthy communities, protecting the environment and supporting prosperity for residents.

- 3.2 The NDF outlines that cities, towns, and villages will be physically and digitally well-connected places, offering good quality of life to their residents. High quality homes meeting the needs of society will be well located in relation to jobs, services, and accessible green and open spaces. Places will meet and suit the needs of a diverse population, with accessible community facilities and services. This approach aligns with the goal of the 20-minute neighbourhood and its principles should therefore be put in to practice within the RLDP to ensure that Bridgend is adopting a co-ordinated approach to placemaking and well-connected places.

4. Staying Local & Creating Neighbourhoods

- 4.1 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic people have been spending more time at home and within local neighbourhoods, which has further highlighted the importance of the high-quality local environments. The crisis has also placed additional emphasis on the importance of well located, secure and affordable homes for people's health and well-being. The location, quality, size and features of homes influenced how residents managed through the lockdown. The quality, flexibility and adaptability of the local built environment has had a huge impact on how healthcare, education, food, and medical supplies have been provided. During this time, the importance of local services and infrastructure has also become more apparent, with people spending more time in their local neighbourhoods.
- 4.2 The continuation of people working from home and more locally is expected to be a long-term trend. It is important to ensure the RLDP will enable new homes and neighbourhoods to be delivered that are great places to live, with easy access to services and appropriate infrastructure and greenspace.
- 4.3 Enabling people to live in well-located and well-designed energy efficient homes is a key role for planning. Housebuilding is also an important part of the Welsh economy and delivering new affordable and market homes can make a significant contribution to economic recovery and social cohesion. Sustainable plan-led growth is key to ensuring socio-economic recovery post the pandemic, whilst also enabling delivery of better-connected neighbourhoods grounded in placemaking principles.

4.4 The planning system's most important role is in guiding how places grow and evolve. LDPs have a fundamental role in directing new development, especially housing, to the right locations. Forward planning can also establish key factors to the success of a place, such as the mix of uses, types of housing (including affordable housing), proximity to facilities and public transport, density, the street network and access to greenspace and nature. These are key aspects of placemaking, which are reflected throughout PPW, with specific policy and guidance in the strategic placemaking and housing sections.

4.5 National Planning Policy expects proposals for new communities (in rural and urban areas) and housing sites to integrate with existing services and infrastructure and, where extra provision is required as a result of the development, for this to be forthcoming. Creativity and innovation will be required in order for various agencies, infrastructure partners and public sector providers to come together to deliver truly sustainable sites.

4.6 The Placemaking Charter

4.6.1 The Placemaking Wales Charter, launched in September 2020, has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership. This consists of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests and organisations working within the built and natural environment. The Charter is intended to reflect a commitment to support the development of high-quality places across Wales for the benefit of communities. Bridgend County Borough Council, as a signatory to the Charter, pledges to:

- Involve the local community in the development of proposals
- Choose sustainable locations for new development
- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport
- Create inclusive, well defined, safe, and welcoming streets and public spaces
- Promote a sustainable mix of uses to make places vibrant
- Value and respect the positive distinctive qualities and identity of existing places.

4.6.2 This will require a commitment across a wide range of departments and Council functions, all of which have a role to play in ensuring that new development and

supporting infrastructure are informed by placemaking objectives. This commitment from the Council aligns with the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood and should therefore be incorporated within the RLDP to ensure that Bridgend is adopting a co-ordinated approach to placemaking and well-connected neighbourhoods.

4.7 Health Impact Assessment

4.7.1 The RLDP is required to plan for and detail how local land-use can support the local well-being objectives and priorities of the Bridgend Public Services Board's (PSB) Well-being Plan and meet the requirements of other national and local policies.

4.7.2 A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a systematic yet flexible process that assesses the potential positive, detrimental, or unintended consequences for health and well-being of the proposed RLDP as it emerges and how it will impact on the population of Bridgend County Borough. It has considered inequalities and assessed the potential impacts on vulnerable groups within this population. The HIA provides a set of evidence-based recommendations and suggestions to be considered within the RLDP development process.

4.7.3 Overall, the key health and well-being impacts and priorities identified by stakeholders are reflected and addressed in the RLDP. The Sustainability Appraisal for the RLDP also identifies no gaps or incompatibilities. A number of follow up actions have been identified, all of which are focused on strengthening the opportunities that the RLDP presents for health and well-being.

4.7.4 The outcomes of the HIA demonstrate the RLDP's alignment with the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood in ensuring that opportunities to maximise health and well-being benefits within potential development are incorporated within the process.

4.8 Green Infrastructure Assessment

4.8.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as a multifunctional network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, green corridors, rivers, and lakes that intersperse and connect places. At its heart, the aim of green infrastructure is to sustainably manage the many, often conflicting, pressures for housing, industry, transport and travel, energy, agriculture, nature conservation, recreation, and aesthetics. A green

infrastructure approach to land-use planning, design and management enables us to demand and deliver more from the land in a sustainable way.

4.8.2 The purpose of undertaking a GI assessment in this instance is to guide and shape the planning and delivery of green infrastructure in Bridgend. It forms the baseline for a holistic, positive and proactive approach to the management and enhancement of Bridgend's natural assets, in particular when associated with the level of growth identified in the RLDP.

4.8.3 The Green Infrastructure Assessment provides the Council with an opportunity to incorporate the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood in to the RLDP process. By applying a green infrastructure approach to identify and enhance the natural assets present within the Borough, the Council can ensure that proposed development is centred around proximity to green infrastructure and that natural green spaces can be easily accessed within 20-minutes via sustainable modes of travel.

4.9 Covid-19 Policy Review

4.9.1 In order to provide an update and review on the preparation of the RLDP in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, a Covid-19 Policy Review report has been undertaken to evaluate the foundations of the RLDP's strategic direction. The aim of the report is to determine whether the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Strategic Policies and supporting technical studies remain appropriate given the emerging impacts of the pandemic. It also considers whether any updates and/or modifications are necessary to ensure the RLDP remains sufficiently flexible to accommodate any potential eventualities.

4.9.2 Crucially to the RLDP's ability to implement the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, the report concludes that the overall direction of the RLDP still holds true, subject to minor flexibility amendments to ensure the RLDP Policies can respond to changing circumstances over the RLDP period. This is demonstrated in areas such as active travel, in which the pandemic has demonstrated an even greater reliance to access local services and to enable recalibration of households' work/life balance. The report notes that the RLDP policies already reflect the importance of active travel, sustainable transport and accessibility, which will prove key in overcoming issues presented by COVID-19.

4.9.3 The pandemic has also further served to emphasise the importance of having locally accessible open/green spaces for health, well-being and recreation. This will continue to remain a key element of sustainable placemaking. A refreshed and holistic Green Infrastructure Assessment has been completed to contribute to development of the RLDP's evidence base in this respect.

5. Active Travel: Exercise and Rediscovered Transport Methods

5.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about unprecedented changes that affect all aspects of life including travel throughout the borough. Transport, across all modes, has been affected due to the restrictions imposed. Large reductions in motorised traffic have been seen on all parts of the road network, reduced patronage of buses and trains, high levels of home working and higher rates of walking and cycling, both for essential journeys and for daily exercise. For the benefit of the environment, health, and well-being, it is important to build on the current positive transport modal shift.

5.2 The RLDP needs to secure, for the long-term, the continued shift from the private car to sustainable and active travel modes for everyday journeys both to and from and within places, without causing unintended inequalities. The increased walking and cycling infrastructure that has been temporarily created to accommodate a major shift to active travel during this time could be made permanent in order to continue to support healthy lifestyles and connect communities.

5.3 The RLDP will support developments which are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by active and sustainable travel modes without the need for a car. It will maximise opportunities for residents to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys and leisure. The planning system must also ensure the chosen locations and resulting design of new developments support sustainable travel modes and maximise accessibility by walking and cycling.

6. What Should a 20-Minute Neighbourhood Look Like?

6.1 The core of a 20-minute neighbourhood is its pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. This equates to 800 metres (approximately half a mile) in distance or 20-minutes in

time (based on average walking times of healthy adult and taking into account waiting at junctions and meandering routes), as illustrated by Figure 3.

Figure 3: Services and Facilities Within a 20-Minute Neighbourhood



6.2 Liveable communities should provide the following features as part of sustainable urban extensions:

- Well-connected to public transport, jobs, and services in the region;
- Local employment opportunities;
- Local shopping centres;
- Local health facilities;
- Local schools
- Local public parks and green spaces
- Sport and recreation facilities

They must:

- be safe, accessible, and well-connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport
- offer high-quality public realm and open spaces

- provide services and destinations that support local living
- facilitate access to quality public transport that connects people to jobs and higher-order services
- deliver housing/population at densities that make local services and transport viable
- support thriving economies
- Rebalance nature of out-of-town shopping areas

Figure 4: Features of a 20-Minute Neighbourhood



6.3 The Role and Function of Neighbourhood Activity Centres

6.3.1 Traditionally, the focal point for neighbourhoods were its high streets and local centres. While the structure of local shopping centres has changed over time, these places are an integral part of community life and fundamental to creating an area of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

- 6.3.2 Neighbourhood activity centres provide retail services and goods (newsagent, bakery, and supermarket), local entertainment facilities (cafes and restaurants) and local health services and facilities to meet daily needs. While individually these places may only serve a local community's needs, the network of these places across the County Borough plays a significant role in creating a sustainable, equitable, and accessible Bridgend.
- 6.3.3 To ensure that the RLDP underpins the principles of neighbourhood activity centres, the Council undertook a revised Settlement Assessment to analyse the components of existing settlements, their functional relationships with each other plus their current and potential future roles. The Settlement Assessment can be used to identify the most appropriate locations to accommodate future development in order to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth, minimise unsustainable patterns of movement and support local services and facilities. This process is fundamental to achieving the RLDP's Vision of transforming Bridgend County Borough into an inclusive network of communities comprising strong, interdependent, connected, and cohesive settlements, in-keeping with the principles of neighbourhood activity centres and the 20 Minute Neighbourhood.
- 6.3.4 The findings from the Settlement Assessment evidenced a clear hierarchy that can be used to identify which settlements are most sustainable and have capacity to deliver additional growth. This evidence contributes to the Spatial Strategy formulation, based on the role and function of places and utilising principles of sustainable development.
- 6.3.5 The Spatial Strategy is an integral component of the RLDP and has ensured that the Council has been in accordance with the key principles of sustainability and placemaking throughout the process. The Spatial Strategy builds on the extant evidence underpinning the current adopted LDP to formulate four possible and realistic spatial strategy options moving forward which help to achieve the goals of the RLDP. These options have been successively evaluated based on a number of factors, including:

- The aspirations of the RLDP
- Availability and suitability of brownfield land in preference to greenfield
- Land and land of high agricultural, ecological or landscape value
- The need to minimise the need to travel, especially by private vehicles
- Capacity of existing and potential infrastructure
- Scale and location of market and affordable housing required
- Scale and location of employment opportunities
- Environmental implications, e.g., energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, flood risk, biodiversity, green infrastructure, mineral resources, and ground conditions, including mine gas
- Social and cultural factors, including consideration of the Welsh language
- Accessibility to jobs, shops, and services
- Viability (in terms of how different market areas can affect the viability of delivering private and affordable housing as well as associated infrastructure to support the level of development proposed)
- Deliverability of key sites and overall strategy
- National strategies and priorities, such as decarbonisation and health.

6.3.6 In this regard, the Spatial Strategy options are based on factors which share the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood, representing an aligned approach. The RLDP's cohesive Spatial Strategy seeks to deliver PPW's 'Town Centre First' principle by maximising placemaking principles, active travel provision, and transit orientated development, whilst ensuring that the 20-minute neighbourhood principles are implemented effectively across the County Borough.

7. Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods

7.1 Tables 1-4 outline the benefits associated with a successful 20-minute neighbourhood. These encompass health, social, economic, and environmental benefits, and evidence the positive impact of access to local amenities and services.

Table 1. Economic Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods

| Economic benefits of 20-minute neighbourhoods | |
|---|---|
| Local businesses | Investment in better streets and public spaces for pedestrians can boost footfall and trading by up to 40% ¹ and can help to reduce retail vacancy in high streets and town centres. |
| Productivity | Walkable environments with highly connected street networks are more likely to make a positive contribution to labour productivity. ² |
| New jobs | Keeping investment local through community wealth-building can develop the skills of local people, encourage employers to expand within or move to the area and create stable, well-paying jobs. ³ |
| Land value | Investment in better place-making can boost land values. ⁴ Walkable environments sustain and increase their value because they are popular places in which to live and do business. This can be beneficial in that it could bring investment and jobs, but it also underlines how important it is to ensure that truly affordable housing is provided and protected in the neighbourhood. ⁵ |
| Road congestion | Many journeys under five miles long are often made by car when instead they could have been made by walking or cycling. ⁶ Making active travel safer and more inviting can help to minimise traffic and unproductive congestion. |

¹ [Street Appeal: The Value of Street Improvements](#). University College London, for Transport for London, 2018.

² M Rohani and G Lawrence: [The Relationship between Pedestrian Connectivity and Economic Productivity in Auckland's City Centre](#). Auckland Council, 2017.

³ [How We Built Community Wealth in Preston: Achievements and Lessons](#). Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), Jul. 2019.

⁴ [The Pedestrian Pound: The Business Case for Better Streets and Places](#). Living Streets, 2018.

⁵ [Walkability and Mixed-Use: Making Valuable and Healthy Communities](#). The Prince's Foundation, Dec. 2020.

⁶ [Development: The Value of Placemaking](#). Savills, 2016.

Table 2. Environmental Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods

| Environmental Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods | |
|--|---|
| Air Quality | Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health, and results in up to 36,000 deaths per year in the UK, with vehicle emissions the largest source of air pollution. ⁷ Evidence is also emerging which shows that air pollution increases the number and severity of airborne viruses. ⁸ Promoting a shift from private cars to active travel can help to reduce air pollution. ⁹ Urban greening, such as the introduction of street trees, can also help to improve air quality. ¹⁰ |
| Climate Resilience and Mitigation | Road transport is a major source of both greenhouse gases and air pollutants, with around a fifth (21%) of UK greenhouse gas emissions coming from road transport in 2017. Walkable environments assist in climate change mitigation by reducing the reliance on fossil fuels for transportation, as well as by supporting climate resilience through mitigation of the urban heat island effect. |
| Energy Efficiency | Creating walkable environments provides opportunities to develop community district heating systems and zero-carbon homes, reducing the demand for non-sustainable sources of energy. ¹¹ |
| Biodiversity | Planning for walkable environments offers opportunities to improve biodiversity, particularly when considering street connectivity and the movement of flora and fauna across landscapes. ¹² |

⁷ [Health Matters: Air Pollution](#). Guidance. Public Health England, Nov. 2018.

⁸ D Carrington: '[Tiny air pollution rise linked to 11% more Covid-19 deaths – study](#)'. The Guardian, 4 Nov. 2020.

⁹ [First Steps in Urban Air Quality](#). Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG), Jan. 2019.

¹⁰ [Road Transport and Air Emissions](#). Office for National Statistics, Sept. 2019.

¹¹ N Robertson and C Hachem-Vermette: '[Walkability as an indicator of neighbourhood resilience \(breakout presentation\)](#)'. Journal of Transport & Health, 2017, Vol 7, Dec. (Supplement), S85.

¹² *ibid.*

Table 3. Economic Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods

| Social Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods | |
|---|--|
| Sense of community | Living in a walkable environment can support a sense of community and improve social interaction, as residents are more likely to know their neighbours and trust others, participate politically, and be involved in the community. |
| Safety | Increased pedestrian activity in public space can improve perceptions of safety through passive surveillance that naturally aids the prevention of crime, with more 'eyes on the street'. Investment in safe streets can also reduce the number of traffic-related pedestrian injuries and deaths. ¹³ |
| Inclusiveness | Creating a well-designed, more walkable environment provides opportunities to support inclusive design. ¹⁴ Older people are more likely to engage in walking than in other forms of exercise, which can help to prevent ageing conditions such as arthritis, and child-friendly streets allow for informal play and increased independence, which is important for child development. |

¹³ M Brierley and P Cockett: '[Urban biodiversity as strategy for walkability \(breakout presentation\)](#)'. Journal of Transport & Health, 2017, Vol 7, Dec. (Supplement), S28-S29.

¹⁴ [National Design Guide](#). Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Jan. 2021.

Table 4. Health Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods

| Health Benefits of 20-minute Neighbourhoods | |
|---|---|
| Physical and Mental Health | The physical and mental health benefits of regular physical activity are well established. Time spent walking in green spaces contributes directly to mental health and recovery. ¹⁵ Those who walk and cycle to work are at a reduced risk of early death or illness compared with those who commute by car. ¹⁶ |
| Healthcare Costs | Physical inactivity is responsible for one in six deaths in the UK and is estimated to cost the NHS up to £1 billion per annum. ¹⁷ Encouraging people to become more active can improve physical and mental health, helping to relieve pressure on the NHS. ¹⁸ Regular use of parks and green spaces saves the NHS £111 million each year, simply through a reduction in GP appointments. ¹⁹ |
| Accessible Healthcare | The Council has been liaising with the NHS throughout the RLDP preparation to enable alignment between primary healthcare services and growth areas with the aim of reducing the need to travel to healthcare facilities. |
| Healthy Diet | Poor diet is associated with heart disease, stroke, cancers and type 2 diabetes, and people on lower incomes are more likely to suffer from these diet-related illnesses. ²⁰ Improving the local food environment in a walkable neighbourhood, through local food-growing, can enable people to access healthier options. ²¹ |

¹⁵ KM Leyden: '[Social capital and the built environment: the importance of walkable neighbourhoods](#)'. American Journal of Public Health, 2003, Vol. 93 (9), 1546-51.

¹⁶ [Green Walking in Mental Health Recovery: A Guide](#). Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, May 2020.

¹⁷ [Health Matters: Physical Activity – Prevention and Management of Long-Term Conditions](#). Guidance. Public Health England, Jan. 2020.

¹⁸ M Wood and S Finlayson: [Health on the High Street](#). NHS Confederation, Dec. 2020.

¹⁹ [Cities Alive: Towards a Walking World](#). Arup, Jun. 2016.

²⁰ R Patterson, J Panter, EP Vamos, et al.: '[Associations between commute mode and cardiovascular disease, cancer, and all-cause mortality, and cancer incidence, using linked Census data over 25 years in England and Wales: a cohort study](#)'. The Lancet Planetary Health, 2020, Vol. 4 (5), e186-e194.

²¹ [Putting Health into Place: Principles 4-8: Design, Deliver and Manage](#). TCPA, The King's Fund, The Young Foundation, and Public Health England, for NHS England, Sept. 2019.

8. Candidate Site Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal - Alignment with 20-Minute Neighbourhood Principles

- 8.1 As part of the RLDP process, a Candidate Site Assessment (CSA) has been undertaken to assess the feasibility of potential sites put forward for allocation to align with the Council's preferred growth and spatial strategy. The RLDP has also been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which has assessed the likely sustainability and significant environmental effects of all substantive components of the RLDP (strategy, policies, site allocations, etc.) and any identified reasonable alternatives.
- 8.2 Welsh Government considers Candidate Sites and the SA process to be 'the building blocks of plan making'. Identification of suitable sites for future housing, employment, retailing, transportation, and other main land uses (such as recreation and community facilities) is a key foundation for the RLDP process and must follow a sustainable thread throughout.
- 8.3 Stage 1 of the Candidate Site Assessment process incorporated sustainability criteria into the site assessment process, based on the 14 objectives developed for the SA. The SA (incorporating the SEA) provides an evaluation / validation of the site selection process in respect of the overall contribution (or otherwise) to sustainable development. Following a base level assessment of all Candidate Sites, the SA excluded some sites for consideration based on significant environmental or deliverability criteria e.g., flood risk or common land. Stage 1 specifically addressed sites identified with major constraints that have been excluded from further consideration. This provided an opportunity for site promoters to provide further information to demonstrate that identified constraints could be satisfactorily overcome before any decision was made at Deposit Stage as to which Candidate Sites should be allocated.
- 8.4 Stage 2 of the CSA involved scrutinising the sites that progressed from Stage 1 in greater detail. During Stage 2, sites were examined based on any specific issues they raised in terms of their deliverability, general location, neighbouring land uses, existing use(s), accessibility, physical character, environmental constraints, and opportunities. In addition, there was an assessment of the policy context, together with the local geographical context, including known infrastructure issues. Following

completion of Stage 2, the Council obtained the views of a limited number of specific consultation bodies in respect of those sites considered suitable for future development and possible allocation in the RLDP. As a result of this assessment, a range of sites were identified for inclusion within the RLDP (Stage 4), acknowledging the conclusions drawn from Stage 2 and comments received from Stage 3.

8.5 This paper further evaluates the sites proposed for allocation in the context of the 20-minute neighbourhood principle, aiming to create healthier, more liveable communities over the RLDP period. The forthcoming analysis demonstrates how far each site will enable delivery of walkable neighbourhoods that are connected through a mix of land-uses, housing types and access to quality public transport.

9. Strategic Sites – Distances to Key Services & Amenities

9.1 As outlined previously, in the context of county borough of Bridgend, a 20-minute neighbourhood is defined as the ability to access services and facilities within a 20-minute period either by walking or cycling, with public transport provision also available as a fallback option to ensure there is a range of sustainable travel options available within each neighbourhood.

9.2 The sites proposed for allocation have been identified to ensure they are within close proximity of local services, facilities and active travel opportunities. All sites can therefore be accessed via sustainable means of travel, either by walking or cycling, within a 20-minute period. This is evidenced in the below maps, which illustrate the associated services, facilities and sustainable travel options within close proximity to each site.



Table 5. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Facility | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Porthcawl Town Centre | 9-minutes | 3-minutes |
| John Street Bus Stop | 10-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Ysgol Gyfun Porthcawl Comprehensive School (The site also would deliver a 1 form entry Welsh Medium Primary School & 4 classroom block extension at the existing English Medium Primary School.) | 16-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Porthcawl Medical Centre | 20-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Co-op) | 9-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Proposed Large Convenience Store (As part of the wider masterplans for the site, a new Aldi supermarket is proposed to provide residents with greater choice and flexibility.) | <1-minute | <1-minute |
| Amenity Green Space | <1-minute | <1-minute |
| Proposed Metro Stop | <1-minute | <1-minute |

9.4 SP2(2): Land South of Bridgend (Island Farm), Bridgend Sustainable Growth Area



Table 6. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bridgend Town Centre | 20-minutes | 9-minutes |
| Bridgend Train Station | 29-minutes | 7-minutes |
| Priory Avenue Bus Stop | 9-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Brynteg Comprehensive School | 7-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Lower Brynteg Comprehensive School | 16-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Bridgend Group Practice Medical Centre (formerly Ashfield Surgery) | 17-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Premier) | 10-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (Tesco Superstore) | 20-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | <1-minute | <1-minute |
| Employment Centre – Bridgend Industrial Estate | 36-minutes | 11-minutes |











-  Existing Settlement
-  Mixed Use Strategic Site - PLA3
-  Active Travel Network
-  Established Commercial Centre
-  Town Centre
-  Large Convenience Store
-  Local Convenience Store
-  Employment
-  School
-  Doctors Surgery
-  Train Station
-  Bus Stop
-  Sports Facilities / Open Space

Table 7. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Bridgend Town Centre | 29-minutes | 11-minutes |
| Bridgend Train Station | 31-minutes | 11-minutes |
| High Street Bus Stop | 2-minutes | <1-minute |
| Bryntirion Comprehensive School | 21-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Lower Brynteg Comprehensive School | 40-minutes | 12-minutes |
| Bridgend Group Practice Medical Centre (formerly Newcastle Surgery) | 19-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (One-Stop) | 2-minutes | <1-minute |
| Large Convenience Store (Tesco Superstore) | 33-minutes | 11-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | 7-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Employment Centre – Trews Field Industrial Estate | 35-minutes | 12-minutes |

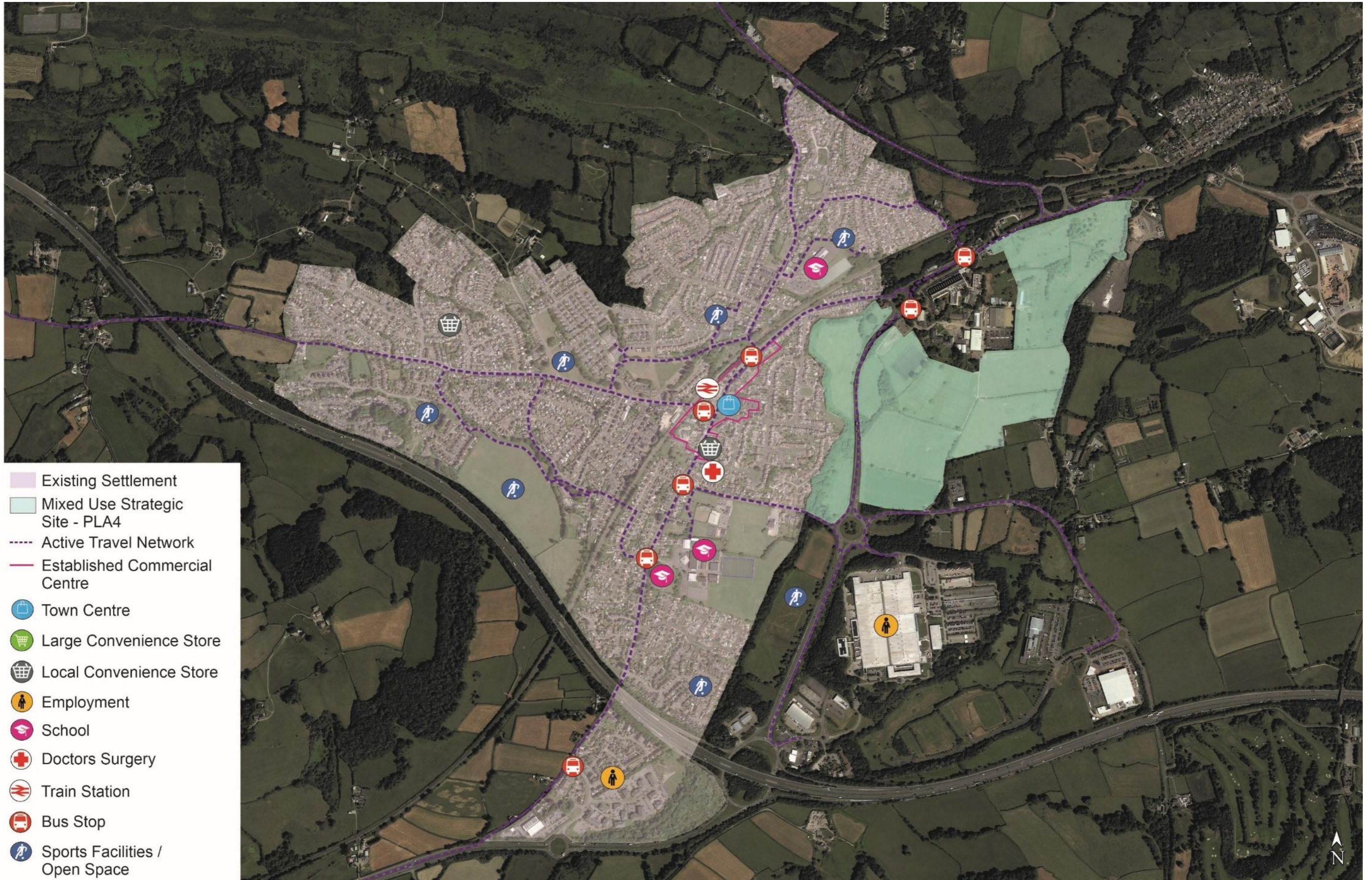


Table 8. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pencoed Town Centre | 13-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Pencoed Train Station | 9-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Ty Merchant Bus Stop | 3-minutes | <1-minute |
| Pencoed Comprehensive School (The site would also deliver its own primary school to ensure sustainable travel is enabled and to remove strain from existing facilities.) | 18-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Pencoed Medical Centre | 13-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Tesco Express) | 12-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (Co-op) | 10-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | 12-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Employment Centre – Pencoed Technology Park | 15-minutes | 4-minutes |

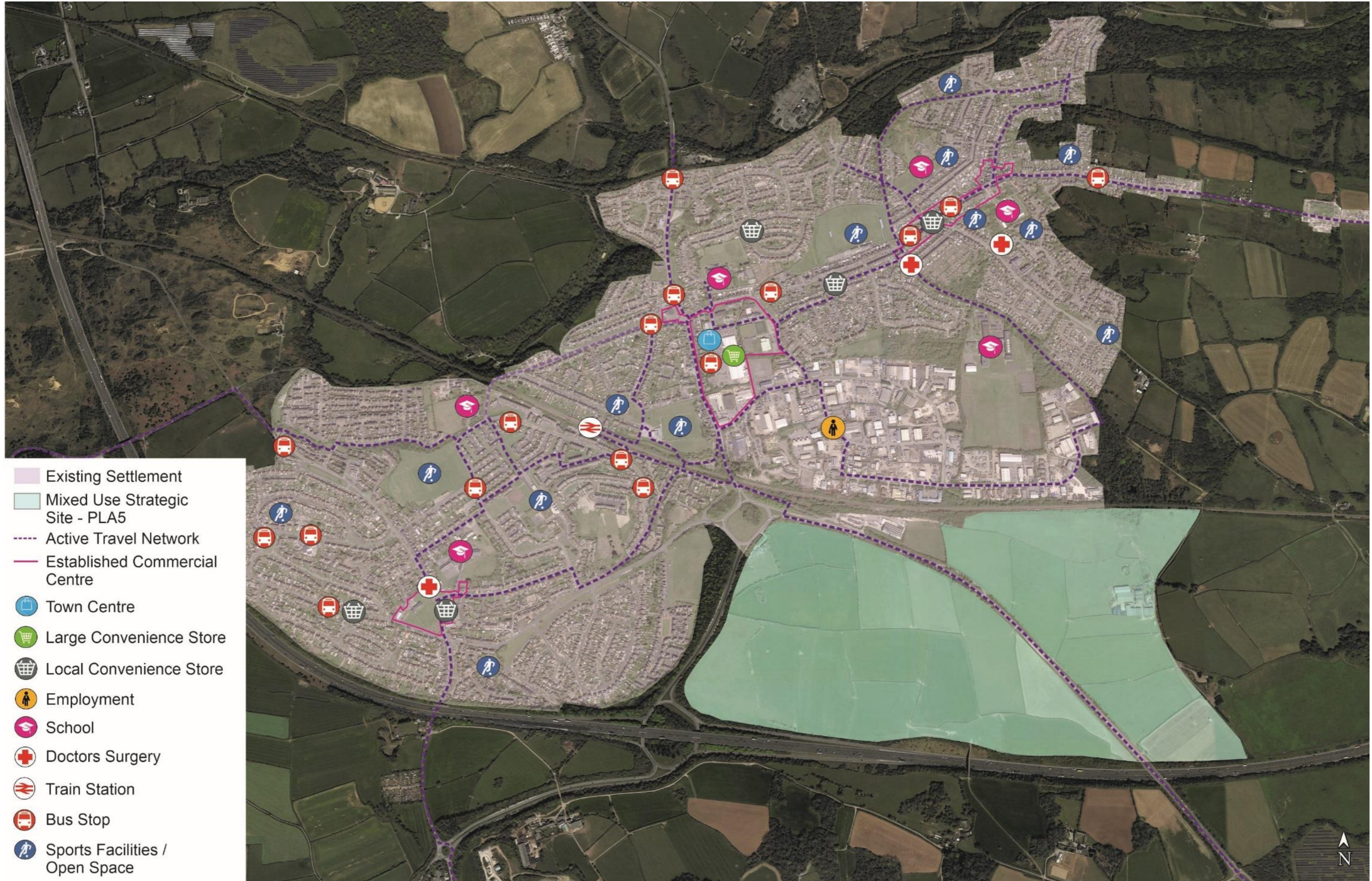


Table 9. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pyle Town Centre | 11-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Pyle Train Station | 9-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Ael-y-Bryn Bus Stop | 9-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Cynffig Comprehensive School (The site would also deliver its own primary school to ensure sustainable travel is enabled and to remove strain from existing facilities.) | 24-minutes | 9-minutes |
| North Cornelly Doctor's Surgery | 20-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Filco Supermarket) | 16-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (Asda) | 15-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | 10-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Employment Centre – Village Farm Industrial Estate | 6-minutes | 3-minutes |

10. Non-Strategic and Regeneration Sites - Distances to Key Services & Amenities

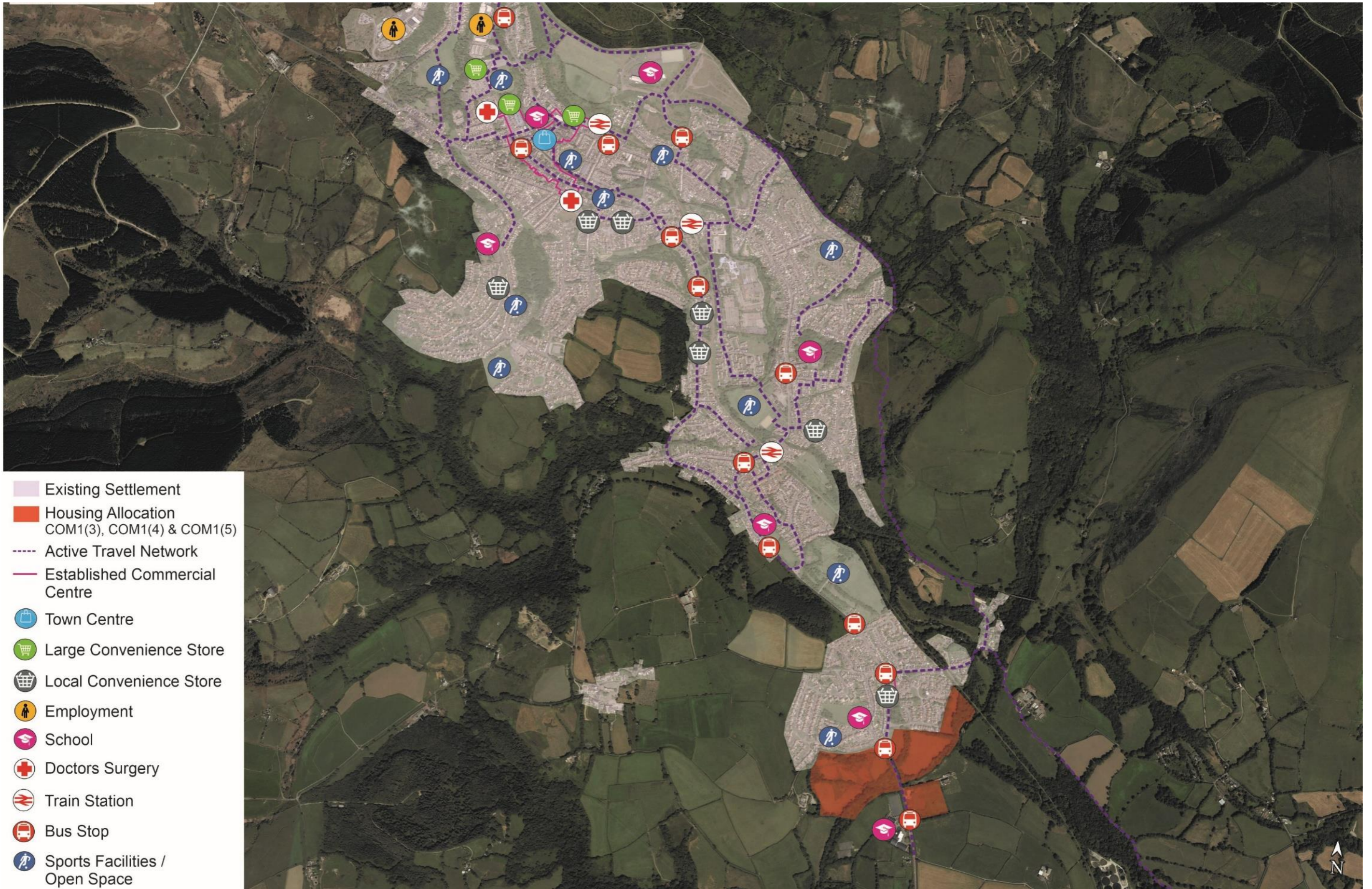
10.1 COM1 (1): Craig y Parcau



Table 10. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bridgend Town Centre | 28-minutes | 8-minutes |
| Bridgend Train Station | 29-minutes | 7-minutes |
| Gentle Way Bus Stop | 8-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Brynteg Comprehensive School | 20-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Bridgend Group Practice Doctor's Surgery | 24-minutes | 7-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Tesco Express) | 9-minutes | 3-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (Tesco Superstore) | 22-minutes | 8-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | 6-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Employment Centre – Bridgend Industrial Estate | 38-minutes | 11-minutes |

10.2 COM1(2-4): Land Southeast / South / Southwest of Pont Rhyd-y-cyff



- Existing Settlement
- Housing Allocation
COM1(3), COM1(4) & COM1(5)
- Active Travel Network
- Established Commercial Centre
- 🛍️ Town Centre
- 🛒 Large Convenience Store
- 🛒 Local Convenience Store
- 👤 Employment
- 🎓 School
- + Doctors Surgery
- 🚆 Train Station
- 🚌 Bus Stop
- 🏃 Sports Facilities /
Open Space

Table 11. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Maesteg Town Centre | 44-minutes | 11-minutes |
| Garth Train Station | 20-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Llangynwyd Square Bus Stop | <1-minute | <1-minute |
| Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd School (The site is also located within close proximity to Llangynwyd Primary School, an English Medium school which is a 3-minute walk or 2-minute cycle from the site.) | 5-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Llynfi Doctor's Surgery | 48-minutes | 12-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Premier) | 3-minutes | 1-minute |
| Large Convenience Store (Asda) | 44-minutes | 12-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | <1-minute | <1-minute |
| Employment Centre – Ge Buildings Forge Industrial Estate | 57-minutes | 15-minutes |

10.3 COM1 (R1): Coenant Reclamation Site

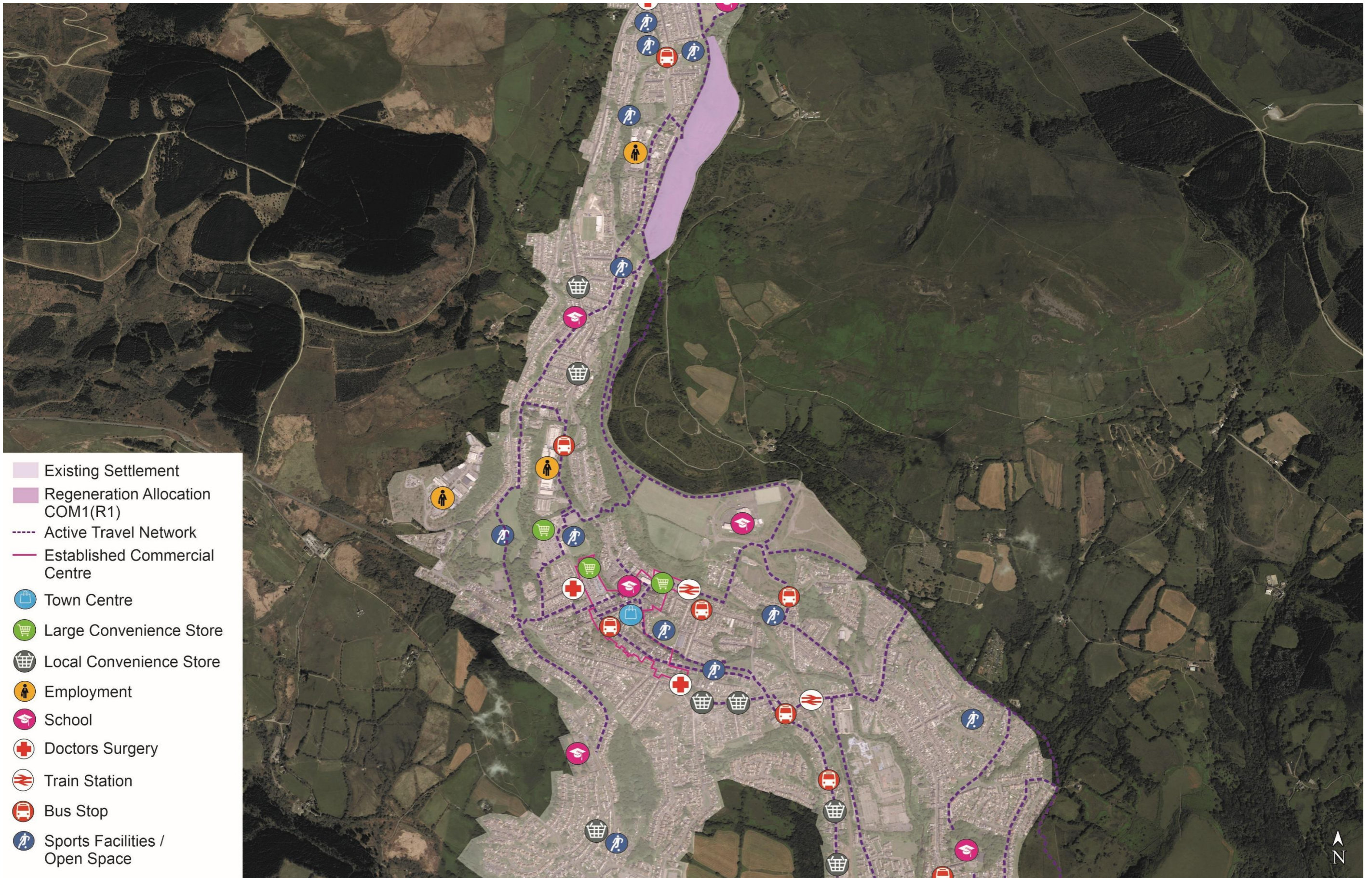


Table 12. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Maesteg Town Centre | 27-minutes | 10-minutes |
| Maesteg Train Station | 30-minutes | 8-minutes |
| Hearts of Oak Bus Stop | 3-minutes | <1-minute |
| Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd School | 30-minutes | 8-minutes |
| Woodlands Doctor's Surgery | 13-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Filco Supermarket) | 9-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (Tesco Superstore) | 24-minutes | 9-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | 2-minutes | <1-minute |
| Employment Centre – Knott Avonride | 5-minutes | 2-minutes |

10.4 COM1 (R2): Former Cooper Standard Site, Ewenny Road



Table 13. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Maesteg Town Centre | 15-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Maesteg Train Station | 14-minutes | 5-minutes |
| Llwydarth Road Bus Stop | 3-minutes | <1-minute |
| Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd School | 19-minutes | 8-minutes |
| Llynfi Doctor's Surgery | 18-minutes | 7-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Katko Supermarket) | 6-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (Tesco Superstore) | 8-minutes | 21-minutes |
| Amenity Green Space | 11-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Employment Centre – Forge Industrial Estate | 26-minutes | 8-minutes |

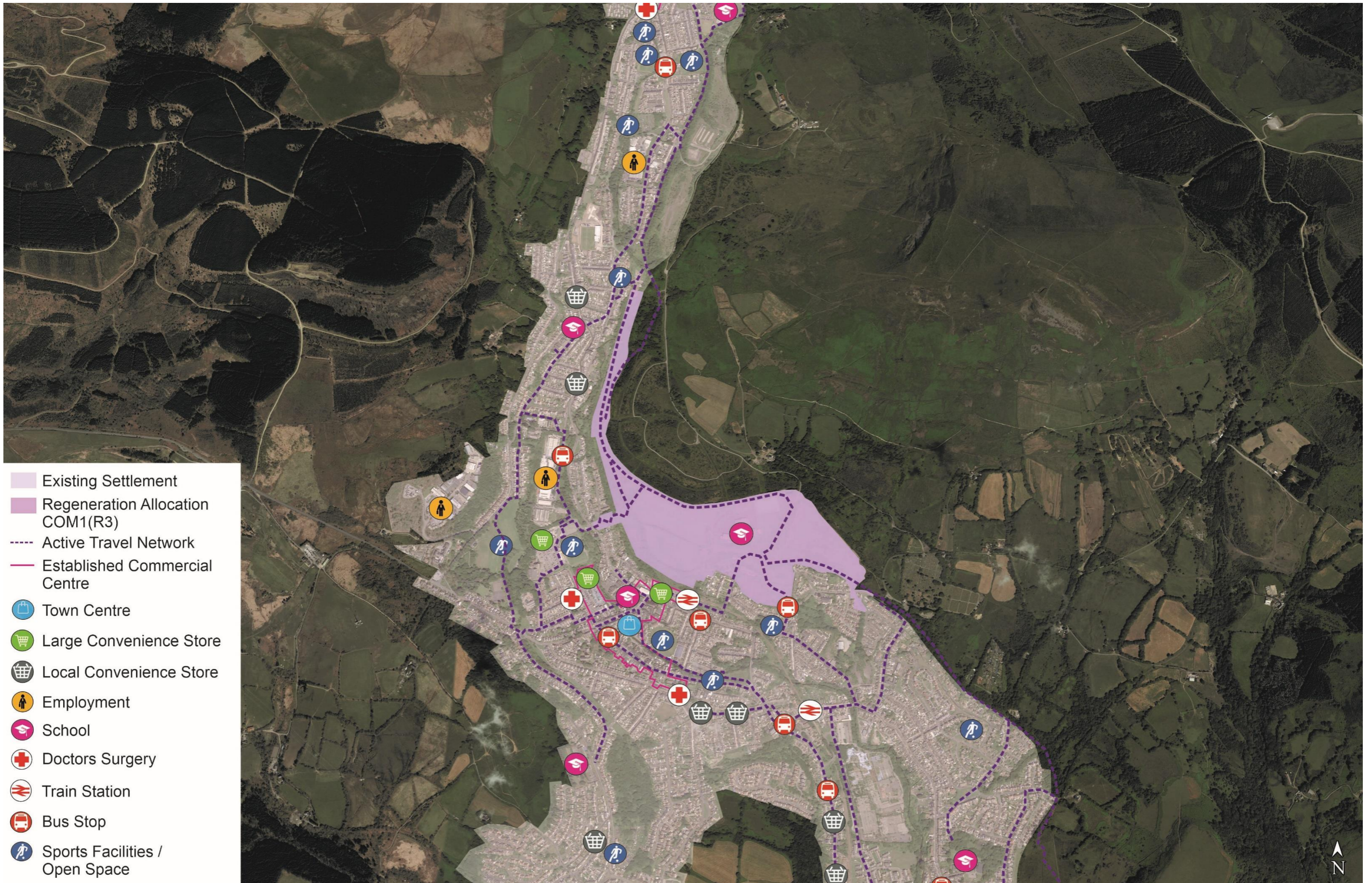


Table 14. Distances to services/facilities via Active Travel

| Service/Amenity | Distance from site via walking | Distance from site via cycling |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Maesteg Town Centre | 7-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Maesteg Train Station | 7-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Castle Street Bus Stop | 3-minutes | <1-minute |
| Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd School | 10-minutes | 4-minutes |
| Llynfi Doctor's Surgery | 6-minutes | 2-minutes |
| Local Convenience Store (Nisa Local) | 10-minutes | 6-minutes |
| Large Convenience Store (ASDA Superstore) | 2-minutes | <1-minute |
| Amenity Green Space | 2-minutes | <1-minute |
| Employment Centre – Forge Industrial Estate | 10-minutes | 5-minutes |

11. Conclusions

- 11.1 As the strategic mapping above demonstrates, the sites proposed for allocation are all within an accessible distance of key local amenities and services by means of sustainable travel. Additionally, all sites are located within close proximity to the respective town centre and wider services and can be accessed by walking, cycling or use of public transport. The sites are shown to integrate with existing services and infrastructure, whilst also being conveniently located to enable a well-connected mix of access to public transport and sustainable travel options.
- 11.2 This report demonstrates that the strategic, non-strategic and regeneration site allocations within the RLDP are well-placed to positively impact and create cohesive local communities over the plan period. The sites actively promote the planning principles implemented at national level and are in alignment with the goals of the National Sustainable Placemaking Agenda set out by Welsh Government in PPW, as well as the NDF and the promotion of active travel within the borough.

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Agenda Item 5

| | |
|--|---|
| Meeting of: | TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM |
| Date of Meeting: | 17 JULY 2023 |
| Report Title: | UNITED KINGDOM SHARED PROSPERITY FUND |
| Report Owner / Corporate Director: | CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES |
| Responsible Officer: | IEUAN SHERWOOD, GROUP MANAGER ECONOMY, NATURAL RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABILITY |
| Policy Framework and Procedure Rules: | There is no effect upon the Council's policy framework or procedure rules as a result of this report. |
| Executive Summary: | <p>The purpose of this report is to update the Town and Community Council Forum on the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund and a series of grant funds available as part of the delivery programme for Bridgend's Local Investment Plan through the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>The funds are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bridgend Valley Placemaking Property Improvement Grant• Empty Property Survey Grants• Community Feasibility Fund• The Business Development Grant• Bridgend County Business Future Scoping Programme• Bridgend County Tourism Events Support |

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Town and Community Council Forum of the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and to outline a series of grant funds available as part of the delivery programme for Bridgend's Local Investment Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1 Following the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union on 31 January 2020, the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund is the UK government's replacement for the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF).
- 2.2 The UKSPF is a key part of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda, forming part of complementary funding, including the Levelling Up Fund and Community Ownership Fund.
- 2.3 The primary aim of the fund is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. Underpinning this aim are three investment Priorities: communities and place; supporting local business and people and skills.
- The **Communities and Place** investment priority will enable places to invest to restore their community spaces and relationships and create the foundations for economic development at the neighbourhood-level. The intention of this is to strengthen the social fabric of communities, supporting in building pride in place.
 - The **Supporting Local Business** investment priority will enable places to fund interventions that support local businesses to thrive, innovate and grow.
 - The **People and Skills** investment priority will help reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment and education. Places can also target funding into skills for local areas to support employment and local growth.

As part of the People and Skills priority there is a dedicated and ringfenced element of the UKSPF called Multiply which seeks to improve adult numeracy skills.

- 2.4 Following a series of internal workshops with officers from across all Directorates within the Council a draft set of proposals was developed to access UKSPF. This set of proposals was then discussed with the County Borough's Economic Partnership and the Public Service Board (PSB). In addition, the proposals were shared and discussed with Members of the Senedd and Bridgend County's two Members of Parliament, whose support is required for the proposed activity outlined in the Bridgend County Borough Local Investment Plan information. Following engagement and feedback, proposals were revised before being presented to Cabinet in July 2022. As information and guidance evolves and further detail is provided it may be the case that proposals change again.
- 2.5 In July 2022 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) Cabinet delegated authority to the Corporate Director Communities to submit the Bridgend County Local Investment Plan to Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCTCBC) for inclusion in the overall submission of the South East Wales Local Investment Plan to the UK Government. As part of the funding process there was, and remains, a need to appoint one local authority to assume the role of the 'Lead Local Authority' for the region for the UKSPF. It was agreed by BCBC Cabinet that RCTCBC performs this role. A copy of the Bridgend Local Investment Plan that was submitted in August 2022 is at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.6 An overview of the Bridgend County Borough Local Investment Plan proposals presented to Cabinet in July 2022 is set out below under a series of regional theme descriptions, which were developed by RCTCBC:

Communities and Place

| Regional Theme Description* | Proposed Bridgend County delivery |
|---|--|
| Development and resilience of communities by improving facilities and access to services and supporting community-based organisations | Bridgend County Local Resilience Planning |
| Action to support individuals and community-based organisations to deal with the challenges of the current economic environment and cost of living crisis | |
| Supporting the improvement and redevelopment of town centres and community places to revitalise them. | Bridgend County Thriving Communities |
| Improving access to and facilities for local people and communities in sport, culture, arts and heritage. | |
| Supporting action to improve services and facilities for young people. | |
| Action to support decarbonisation, energy efficiency and green initiatives in communities and places. | Bridgend County Green Spaces Enhancement Scheme |
| Other activity such as feasibility studies | Bridgend County Community Future Scoping Programme |

*Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework may offer an opportunity to deliver across all.

Supporting Local Business

| Regional Theme Description* | Proposed Bridgend County delivery |
|---|--|
| Business premises development and improvement. | Bridgend County Centres of Enterprise |
| Small business support and development including finance for growth and resilience. | -Bridgend County Business Prosperity Programme -Bridgend County Local Enterprise Support Programme |
| Small business support for key growth sectors, research and development and innovation. | |
| Action to support decarbonisation, energy efficiency and green economy initiatives for businesses and social enterprises. | |
| Support for the growth and development of the visitor economy including businesses, facilities, and events. | - Bridgend County Tourism Events Support - Bridgend County Local Destination Management and Marketing |
| Other activity such as feasibility studies | Bridgend County Business Future Scoping Programme |

*Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework may offer an opportunity to deliver across all.

People and Skills

| Regional Theme Description* | Proposed Bridgend County delivery |
|--|--|
| Regional Employability and Skills Framework Package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in employment and key sectors | |

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed and economically inactive people • Young people to enter employment | -CELT**+ <i>Bridgend Inspire 2 Work / Achieve</i> -CELT + <i>Employability - Bridgend County</i> -CELT+ <i>Regional Joint Commissioning</i> |
| Regional joint commissioning Jointly commission FE/HE/ training providers / specific organisations to provide the following type of support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap-around support for those at risk of disengaging from FE • Upskilling at work • Upskilling to meet skill gaps in sectors i.e., green jobs, manufacturing, creative and digital. | |

*Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework may offer an opportunity to deliver across all.

**Connect Engage Listen Thrive

2.7 **Appendix 1** is set against the challenges and opportunities that have been evidenced through the Bridgend Economic Strategy, the Bridgend Local Development Plan, the Bridgend Net Zero Carbon Strategy and the Bridgend and Cwm Taf Well-being Assessment. Whilst there are clear areas of alignment between these documents and opportunities through UKSPF it is not the case that all areas are aligned, nor is it the case that UKSPF is the only source of funding available to deliver these key strategic documents.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 In March 2023 the Corporate Director Communities exercised the authority delegated by BCBC Cabinet in July 2022 to authorise entering into a regional funding agreement regarding the UKSPF with RCTCBC, under decision reference CMM-ED-23-046.

3.2 The UKSPF allows Local Authorities to deliver activity via a range of mechanisms, namely:

- In-House Delivery
- Commissioning
- Procurement
- Grant Funds

3.3 In July 2022 Cabinet were presented with an overview of a suite of projects to be delivered in line with the delivery mechanism.

3.4 The following projects are to be delivered, either in part or wholly, via grant funds:

- Bridgend County Thriving Communities
- Bridgend County Community Future Scoping Programme
- Bridgend County Business Prosperity Programme
- Bridgend County Business Future Scoping Programme
- Bridgend County Tourism Events Support

3.5 The grant funds outlined below, which form part of Bridgend County's delivery of the UKSPF, will be set up and delivered:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Name of Project | Bridgend County Thriving Communities |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Name of fund | Bridgend Valley Placemaking Property Improvement Grant |
| Purpose of fund | <p>There are two elements to this:</p> <p>1) To enhance building frontages and bring vacant commercial floor space back into beneficial use, by supporting commercial property frontage improvements, along with other external and internal works.</p> <p>2) To convert vacant upper-floor space into new residential accommodation above commercial units, including internal and external works to bring vacant space back into use for residential purposes.</p> |
| Areas covered | The District Centres & Local Service centres in the valleys of the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmored (excluding Maesteg Town Centre). |
| Grant Rate | <p>The grant will be a maximum of 80% of reasonable eligible costs, up to a maximum grant award of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o £30,000 for occupied properties o £50,000 for properties that have been vacant for more than 6 months. <p>This will be subject to on-going review</p> |
| Maximum Grant | As above |
| Total funds available in grant | Minimum of £270,000 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Name of Project | Bridgend County Thriving Communities |
| Name of fund | Empty Property Survey Grants |
| Purpose of fund | To offer applicants the opportunity to undertake building condition surveys/architectural assessments and concept designs in order to progress the redevelopment of empty commercial properties. |
| Areas covered | The District Centres & Local Service centres in the valleys of the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmored (excluding Maesteg Town Centre). |
| Grant Rate | 100% of reasonable eligible costs |
| Maximum Grant | <p>Up to £2,000 for Condition Surveys (depending on size of property)</p> <p>Up to £3,000 for Architectural Assessments and Concept Designs</p> <p>This will be subject to on-going review</p> |
| Total funds available in grant | Minimum of £20,000 |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Name of Project | Bridgend County Community Future Scoping Programme |
|-----------------|--|

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Name of fund | Community Feasibility Fund |
| Purpose of fund | The fund has been set up to test the feasibility of longer-term community-led ideas. It will provide communities in the Borough the opportunity to gather evidence to support locally led community project ideas. Focusing on Health, Climate and Economy they will provide the required data, knowledge and understanding with the ambition to lead to future funding bids and continue community resilience planning. |
| Areas covered | Whole County |
| Grant Rate | Up to 100% |
| Maximum Grant | Up to £35,316 |
| Total funds available in grant | £282,531 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Name of Project | Bridgend County Business Prosperity Programme |
| Name of fund | The Business Development Grant |
| Purpose of fund | The Business Development Grant will support Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Bridgend County Borough to diversify, decarbonise and grow which will contribute to creating a vibrant and strong local economy. |
| Areas covered | Whole County |
| Grant Rate | Provides 50% of eligible capital projects costs. The minimum grant is £5,000 and the maximum grant available is £25,000 (excluding VAT). |
| Maximum Grant | Up to £25,000 (excluding VAT). |
| Total funds available in grant | £392,377 |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Name of Project | Bridgend County Business Future Scoping Programme |
| Name of fund | The Business Feasibility Grant |
| Purpose of fund | The Business Feasibility Grant is to support businesses to explore feasibility of longer-term options to diversify, decarbonise and grow including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of plans and studies, e.g. Business Plans/Feasibility Studies - Before purchasing a piece of machinery, the study could determine the market for increased production or new product is financially viable. - Explore using space in retail, hospitality to introduce new service / product e.g. new hotel spa - Cost benefit analysis to introduce Green procurement |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Areas covered | Whole County |
| Grant Rate | Provides 100% of eligible revenue projects costs. The minimum grant is £5,000 and the maximum grant available is £25,000 (excluding VAT). |
| Maximum Grant | Up to £25,000 (excluding VAT). |
| Total funds available in grant | £255,000 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Name of Project | Bridgend County Tourism Events Support |
| Name of fund | Bridgend County Tourism Events Support |
| Purpose of fund | To support tourism events which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have strong potential to attract visitors from outside the local area, whether that is from other regions or other countries. - have a positive impact on the local economy, such as by generating revenue for local businesses, creating jobs, or promoting the region as a tourist destination. - have cultural significance or highlight a unique aspect of the local area's history, culture, or identity. - have the potential to raise the profile of the county borough in a positive way |
| Areas covered | Whole County |
| Grant Rate | Tier 1 - Up to 50% of eligible revenue costs Tier 2 - Up to 20% of eligible revenue costs |
| Maximum Grant | Tier 1 - Up to £2,500 Tier 2 - Up to £10,000 |
| Total funds available in grant | Up to £100,000 |

- 3.6 A grant panel will be set up to oversee and make recommendations for approval for the grants outlined in 3.5. The panel will include relevant BCBC departments, e.g. finance, regeneration and enterprise.
- 3.7 Decisions relating to award of grants will be made in line with the Scheme of Delegation.
- 3.8 Any required statutory consents (e.g. planning permission, SuDS Approving Body) remain the responsibility of any grant applicant for any of the grant funds in 3.5.
- 3.9 Each scheme will have its own assessment criteria which will be robust but proportionate, depending on the different level of financial assistance available. Assessment criteria will be agreed by the grant panel.
- 3.10 The allocations of funding available through each grant fund and their associated criteria and processes will be kept under review and, should changes be required, these will be considered in line with BCBC policies and procedures.

3.11 A two-tier governance structure has been implemented as the result of the 2022 Economic Strategy, resulting in the establishment of the Bridgend Economic Partnership, which reports to the BCBC Economic Programme Board. Given that the majority of the UKSPF funded programmes address economic development challenges, it was agreed by Cabinet that the Economic Partnership and Economic Programme Board be involved in the governance and oversight of the UKSPF programmes within Bridgend County Borough. Close liaison and interaction will be required for oversight of the programmes that align more closely to the Public Services Board (PSB) agenda.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 BCBC is committed to promoting sustainable development and to discharge its duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. A summary relating to the five ways of working and how they connect to the Corporate Well-being Objectives is below:

Long-term: The grant funds outlined in 3.5 that are included within the Bridgend Local Investment Plan have been identified following discussion with key stakeholders and in relation to current understanding of the potential long-term challenges on the County Borough. Building on the process of developing and creating the Economic Strategy, the Local Development Plan (LDP) and the Wellbeing Plan for the County Borough it has been possible to set out a long-term response.

Prevention: BCBC has for many years worked closely with stakeholders and the local business community to support the local economy in a wide variety of proactive ways. As well as a continuation of BCBC's ability to react to local situations, the development of the UKSPF Local Investment Plan and the grant funds contained within it builds on strengths to plan for the future, take proactive action and support local businesses and local communities.

Integration: The work to develop the UKSPF Local Investment Plan is closely aligned with the BCBC Corporate Plan, the Local Development Plan and the Public Service Board's Well-being Plan and the Bridgend County Economic Strategy.

Collaboration: The development of the UKSPF Local Investment Plan has been steered by a BCBC officer group and will be delivered in partnership with key stakeholders.

Involvement: For the UKSPF Local Investment Plan to successfully operate it will require the involvement of senior members of local public sectors organisations,

community leaders, business leaders, representatives of business sectors and trade bodies and other key stakeholders.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 The grant funds outlined in 3.5 will contain within the criteria detail relating to the expectations of applicants to support BCBC Climate Change and Decarbonisation ambitions. Assessment of applications will consider the relevance of proposals to the criteria and decisions made as a result.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The UKSPF provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than a competition.

8.2 All places in the UK received a conditional allocation from the UKSPF to cover the period up to March 2025. Table 1 below details the allocation per Authority for the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR).

Table 1: UKSPF allocation in CCR

| Individual authorities | Core UKSPF £ | Multiply £ | Total £ | % of regional allocation |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Blaenau Gwent | 23,301,572 | 4,863,920 | 28,165,492 | 10.11 |
| Bridgend | 19,116,296 | 3,990,295 | 23,106,591 | 8.30 |
| Caerphilly | 28,272,298 | 5,901,499 | 34,173,797 | 12.27 |
| Cardiff | 34,587,594 | 7,219,740 | 41,807,334 | 15.01 |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 22,698,977 | 4,738,136 | 27,437,113 | 9.85 |
| Monmouthshire | 5,919,533 | 1,235,631 | 7,155,164 | 2.57 |
| Newport | 27,177,563 | 5,672,986 | 32,850,549 | 11.79 |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf | 37,320,994 | 7,790,305 | 45,111,299 | 16.20 |
| Torfaen | 20,431,241 | 4,264,774 | 24,696,015 | 8.86 |
| Vale of Glamorgan | 11,606,505 | 2,422,717 | 14,029,222 | 5.04 |
| Total for the region | 230,432,573 | 48,100,003 | 278,532,576 | 100.00 |

8.3 Bridgend's allocation is 8.3% of the total allocation for the region.

8.4 In September 2022 officers submitted a growth pressure proposal as part of the 2023-2027 Medium Term Financial Strategy process for an increase in funding of £2,523,289 to 'top-up' the budget to match the ambition of the proposals developed by project leads and ensure full delivery of the proposed activities outlined in Appendix 1. This growth pressure was not funded in the final MTFs proposal. As a result, all projects had to re-align their budgets and delivery to ensure delivery within the total UKSPF allocation of £23,106,591.

- 8.5 The amounts available through the grant funds outlined within 3.5 are contained within the overall programme budget which is set out in the funding agreement which is in place with RCTCBC and its ancillary documents.
- 8.6 Regular monitoring, reporting and claims will ensure that commitments and expenditure are in line with the funding agreement and its associated annual profiles.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Town and Community Council Forum notes the report.

Background documents

None

United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Bridgend County Borough Local Investment Plan information

Challenges, Opportunities and Proposals

July 2022



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UKSPF Programmes Overview

The UKSPF will support the UK government's wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the levelling up objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency

Within the overarching objective of the UKSPF of building pride in place and increasing life chances, there are three key investment priorities:

1. Community and Place
2. Supporting Local Business
3. People and Skills

Within each of these investment priorities are the following objectives:

Communities & Place

- Strengthening social fabric and fostering sense of local pride and belonging
- Building resilient, safe and healthy neighbourhoods, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

People & Skills

- Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work
- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through intensive life and employment support Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work

Supporting Local Businesses

- Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions
- Promoting networking and collaboration
- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for SMEs to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.

This document identifies the challenges and opportunities identified through a number of key strategic documents in Bridgend County Borough which identify potential areas of alignment with the UKSPF. The document also highlights some areas of opportunity that align with the UKSPF. Current thinking in relation to governance arrangements for programme oversight and fund disbursement, and programme risks are detailed, to ensure that the programmes are well structured, fairly administered, and deliver real outcomes to the residents, businesses and communities in Bridgend County Borough.

It is important to note however that detailed technical guidance is yet to be published and therefore the information contained, whilst valid at the time of writing is subject to change.

Local Challenges and Opportunities

The Bridgend Economic Strategy, the Bridgend Local Development Plan, the (draft) Bridgend Net Zero Carbon Strategy and the Bridgend and Cwm Taff Wellbeing Assessment set out key challenges across and within each of the three key investment priorities, accompanied by substantial evidence from research and from stakeholder engagement and consultations. Whilst there are clear areas of alignment between these documents and opportunities through UKSPF it is not the case that all areas are aligned, nor is it the case that UKSPF is the only source of funding available to deliver these key strategic documents.

Challenges aligned to Community and Place theme include:

- **Local resilience planning:** Support for local communities to undertake local resilience planning, focusing on Health, Climate and Economy. Linked directly to future delivery of key local strategies, such as the Climate Response Programme, Local Development Plan, Wellbeing Plan and Economic Strategy.
- **Nature recovery and resilience:** There is a pressing need for action to build resilient ecological networks across our whole land and seascape to safeguard species and habitats and the benefits they provide, addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss, and targeting interventions to help species recover where necessary (Economic Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment).
- **Decarbonisation of the economy:** The need for individual, business and community action to live more sustainably has been identified in community engagement work, and detailed in the Net Zero Carbon Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment and Economic Strategy.
- **Transport Infrastructure:** Lack of, or deficiencies in, public transport infrastructure, especially regarding “last mile” connectivity, particularly in the valleys (Economic Strategy).
- **Active Travel:** The need to expand active travel infrastructure beyond current plans (Economic Strategy, Net Zero Carbon Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment).
- **Town Centres:** Bridgend Town Centre in particular needs improvement, but all the town centres need attention (Economic Strategy, Local Development Plan).
- **Inequality:** The Economic Strategy, Local Development Plan and the Wellbeing assessment all identify substantial inequalities between areas (in terms of wealth/income, educational attainment, access to resources and employment, transport and digital connectivity).
- **Community Safety:** Whilst crime is generally lower in Bridgend than in many areas of Wales, there remain concerns for some feeling safe walking after dark, in particular, some worried about anti-social behaviour and gangs gathering (Wellbeing Assessment).
- **Feasibility Planning:** Feasibility studies will provide the required data, knowledge and understanding leading to further funding bids and will underpin the development of future bids to LUF, UKSPF and other strategic funds from any other relevant sources.

There are already 4 major projects ongoing in the County Borough which will all contribute to significant improvements across Bridgend:

- the proposed plan for Bridgend Town Centre in the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan;
- the renovation of the Maesteg Town Hall;
- the development plans for Porthcawl waterfront;
- and the “Employment Land” plans for the industrial areas outside Bridgend Town.

Opportunities aligned to Community and Place theme include:

- Establishment of community resilience committees, the development of a 'Resilience Hwb' (a virtual hub as well as physical location) offering exhibition, demonstration space and a trader's corner.
- A fund for community-driven resilience response actions such as feasibility, action plans, options appraisals, and a scheme for community projects to include some capital.
- Work with community venues, tying in cultural and heritage sites, to increase engagement in the community and sustainability of community groups.
- Review, refresh and deliver the Nature Recovery Plan in Bridgend to create and improve green space.
- Ensure suitable commercial premises, and flexible working spaces / co-working spaces.
- Coordinating net-zero strategies across the County Borough, including public/private/voluntary sectors.
- Create a long-term programme for rolling out low-carbon retrofitting solutions to the wider borough.
- Support the attractions in the Valleys and Coast through improved signage and marketing.
- Develop more accommodation options to increase the visitor capacity of the area
- Working with cultural groups to increase and broaden the cultural opportunities across the County.
- Coordinating the planning of public transport services into the evening to support the local night-time economy and to support last-mile public transport connectivity.

Challenges aligned to Supporting Local Businesses theme include:

Challenges identified through broad stakeholder engagement for the Economic Strategy in 2021 additionally identified:

- **Visitor Attraction / Marketing:** A perception of poor marketing and PR for Bridgend County (outside of the county) as a place to live and work (Economic Strategy)
- **Decarbonisation:** Significant challenges to businesses due to climate change, and the imperative to move to a low-carbon economy (Economic Strategy, Net Zero Carbon Strategy)
- **Business Premises:** A lack of available and suitable business premises prevents the Bridgend County business community from reaching its full potential with businesses required to be put on a waiting list for premises (Economic Strategy, Local Development Plan)
- **Recruitment:** Difficulties to recruit skilled individuals, specifically in hospitality, tourism, care etc., but more widely too (Economic Strategy consultations)
- **Business Skills:** Businesses require a skilled workforce, but they also need specific business skills to meet their full potential. The 2021 business survey undertaken by the council indicated that marketing, social media and digital skills (ranging from basic knowledge of Microsoft products to more technical IT knowledge) were deemed particularly important for local businesses. Industry-specific skills such as food hygiene were also indicated as important.

Opportunities aligned to Supporting Local Business theme include:

- Working across sectors to support businesses to diversify, decarbonise and grow

- Support for the creation of development and investment plans, built on local needs and engagement and the creation of 'fund ready' business plan and delivery propositions.
- Strategic capital interventions across the County that support adaptations to existing (council-owned) property to create more diverse business accommodation and development of new property.
- A local enterprise support programme to provide case and account management, training, advice and support to existing businesses and support the development of new business ideas.
- Supporting existing and developing tourism events across the County that offer opportunities in relation to targeted and niche markets and delivering a range of seasonal and targeted marketing campaigns in partnership with the local tourism industry.

Challenges aligned to People and Skills theme include:

- **Skills Gaps:** Bridgend County has a structural economic constraint of skill shortage which has caused a trend of long-term unemployment (2021 Economic Strategy). This has meant that over time, families and communities have become embedded in cycles of unemployment, exacerbating already existing issues of deprivation and inequality.
- **Economic Inactivity / Worklessness:** The Economic Strategy and Wellbeing Assessment identify deep-rooted economic and social problems within some areas of Bridgend County Borough. This is most clearly recognised in the labour market where there are issues of high economic inactivity (almost 30% in some areas) and significant geographical inequality. There is a large pool of jobless people who are potentially available to work, although a significant proportion of whom are likely to require varying degrees of assistance to re-enter the labour market one of the large drivers of the higher economic inactivity rate is a comparatively high number of people who are long-term sick.
- **Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET):** There is a need to reduce the number of 11 to 19-year-olds who are in education but at risk of becoming not in education, training, or employment (Pre-NEET), and those who are 16 to 24-year-olds who are NEET, to bring about their sustainable integration into the labour market, thereby contributing to a reduction in youth unemployment (Economic Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment).

Opportunities aligned to People and Skills theme include:

For Bridgend County, capacity building is essential across all levels of the community, to develop skills and competencies to take greater control of their own lives and contribute to inclusive local development.

- There is significant untapped economic potential to be unlocked by facilitating re-skilling and up-skilling of the existing workforce.
- Continued focus on basic skills is needed to ensure workforce (and potential workforce) with a strong and broad set of basic skills that encourages people into work and ensures they can succeed.
- Bridgend County can capitalise on its strong background in the advanced manufacturing sector, bringing economic advantage as that sector develops and enabling Bridgend County to consolidate its position as a regional hub.
- The Low Carbon economy is set to expand rapidly and create a wealth of new jobs. Bridgend County can capitalise on this with the right training programmes, aligned to national and local strategies to de-carbonise the economy.

- Support young people to make a positive transition into education, employment or training when they leave school, reduce the number of 11 to 24-year-olds who are NEET, and address wider issues such as poor emotional/physical/sexual health and youth homelessness.
- Boost learning, skills and employability in the immediate and future workforce especially those cohorts with barriers to establishing a secure employment situation.

Summary of Project Proposals

1. Community and Place

Bridgend County Local Resilience Planning

Support for local communities to undertake local resilience planning, focusing on Health, Climate and Economy, linked directly to future delivery of key local strategies, such as the Climate Response Programme, Local Development Plan, Wellbeing Plan and Economic Strategy. To include activities such as community resilience analysis, the establishment of community resilience committees, support for community-driven resilience response actions, the development of the 'Resilience Hwb' (a virtual hub as well as a physical, town centre location) offering exhibition, demonstration space and a traders corner. Also, Resilience Hwb on tour (a series of local-level talks, seminars and workshops targeted at the local level. In addition to this the options for action in relation to sites identified as community challenges will be explored.

This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning and procurement.

Current proposed value
£1,000,050

Bridgend County Thriving Communities

Part (a): Community Capacity and Development Building Programme

The community development and building capacity programme will include a range of new approaches co-produced with people and communities including the delivery of some approaches and programmes that have previously been progressed as pilot phases of development. This could include a new third sector fund to replace similar previous locally administered grant programmes.

Part (b): Transforming Bridgend County Borough/ Transforming Commercial Centres

Transforming Bridgend will support the design, development and feasibility of projects already identified through local placemaking and masterplanning strategies.

The capital element will extend funding to support commercial property grants beyond main town centres (outside of Transforming Towns Boundary), but also support major town centre infrastructure projects as match funding to the Transforming Towns programme.

Thriving Communities will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning, procurement, and grant fund.

Current proposed value
£2,080,000

Bridgend County Green Spaces Enhancement Scheme

Part (a): Bridgend County Local Nature Plan

This will take forward the delivery of the Bridgend County Local Nature Plan and deliver key actions outlined in the Biodiversity and Ecosystems Recovery Plan. A targeted approach will be adopted to carry out a wide range of locally focused biodiversity enhancement schemes based on local engagement and local involvement. Alongside this, a 'biodiversity' budgeting concept will be rolled out with resources being made available for community-led green space and biodiversity enhancement activities.

This will be delivered at a local level, although it has the opportunity to operate on a Sub-regional level, using a mix of in-house, commissioning and procurement.

Part (b): The Great Glamorgan Way.

This is a project which aims to continue to deliver a coherent 270KM network of green corridors within the South Wales Central region for the purposes of improving bridleway access and habitat connectivity. The project will also continue to develop its work on assessing and growing the economic impact the network will have with the varying local communities it passes through.

Current proposed value
£725,000

Bridgend County Community Future Scoping programme

Support the creation of development and investment plans, built on local needs and engagement and the creation of 'fund ready' business plans, funding bids and delivery propositions.

This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning, procurement, and grant fund.

Current proposed value
£400,000

Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework

This cross-cutting framework will provide the opportunity to adopt a co-production approach to design and delivery and adaptable and responsive delivery mechanisms by specialist organisations with targeted local to regional delivery in response to needs as they are considered to be and change. This will be delivered locally and will involve in-house, commissioning, procurement and grant fund.

Current proposed value
£1,000,000

2. Supporting Local Business

Bridgend County Business Prosperity programme

This programme will work across sectors to support businesses to diversify, decarbonise and grow through a wide range of targeted, clustered and County-wide interventions that enhance the capacity of businesses to develop and support opportunity maximisation. This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning, procurement and grant fund.

Current proposed value
£1,100,000

Bridgend County Business Future Scoping programme

Support the creation of development and investment plans, built on local needs and engagement and the creation of 'fund ready' business plans, funding bids and delivery propositions. This will enable the exploration of longer-term options to diversify, decarbonise and grow. This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning, procurement and grant fund.

Current proposed value
£425,000

Bridgend County Centres of Enterprise

A series of strategic capital interventions across the County that support adaptations to existing property to create more diverse business accommodation and development of new property. This could include the target to develop the 'Net-Zero market'. Examples, such as:

- Bridgend carbon neutral indoor market
- Industrial property development
- Town centre business premises

This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning and procurement.

Current proposed value
£ 3,500,000

Bridgend County Local Enterprise Support Programme

A local enterprise support programme to provide case and account management, training, advice and support to existing businesses and support the development of new business ideas. To enable a focus on 'meanwhile' spaces as a mechanism for businesses to test new products and markets and a series of meet-the-buyer-focused interventions. This would work with the Bridgend Business Forum.

This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning and procurement.

Current proposed value
£450,000

Bridgend County Tourism Events Support

Tourism events support will provide a tiered approach to supporting existing and developing tourism events across the County that offer opportunities in relation to targeted and niche markets. Coordination will be through a central portal and point of contact that will enable local supply chain development. Alongside these opportunities to identify suitable assets and event spaces will be explored and developed as is considered feasible. This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning, procurement, and grant fund.

Current proposed value

£450,000

Bridgend County Local Destination Management and Marketing

This will enable local attraction enhancement and support the delivery of a range of seasonal and targeted marketing campaigns in partnership with the local tourism industry. That partnership approach will support the development of a new and unique range of package offers.

Coordination of County wide destinations will enable the local economy to better respond to peak and seasonal demand placed upon it by tourism and ensure that visitor experience is enhanced. This will be delivered at a local level using a mix of in-house, commissioning, procurement and grant fund.

Current proposed value

£150,000

Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework

This cross-cutting framework will provide the opportunity to adopt a co-production approach to design and delivery and adaptable and responsive delivery mechanisms by specialist organisations with targeted local to regional delivery in response to needs as they are considered to be and change. This will be delivered locally and will involve in-house, commissioning, procurement and grant fund.

Current proposed value

£1,000,000

3. People and Skills

CELT+ (as part of a regional model)

This programme has 3 parts:

CELT + Bridgend Inspire 2 Work /Achieve

Preventative work with Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and other young people who are disengaging and disengaged with education, training and employment and need support to secure a suitable post-16 destination. Resources for participants (homeless, poor digital skills) to engage with services. The programme will delivery on the CELT model of engagement, community based using third sector partners as the point of contact, health board, young people.

This will be delivered locally and there is an aspiration for it to be co-ordinated regionally by a lead Local Authority. It will be delivered locally via in house, commissioning and procurement.

Current proposed value
£3,150,000

CELT+ Employability - Bridgend County

The programme will support a number of key intervention stages to support people within the County Borough: Getting involved; Becoming more employable; accessing employment; staying in employment; employment progression.

The programme will delivery on the CELT model of engagement, community based using third sector partners as the point of contact, health board, young people.

This will be delivered locally and there is an aspiration for it to be co-ordinated regionally by a lead Local Authorities will be delivered locally via in house, commissioning and procurement.

Current proposed value
£4,000,000

CELT+ Regional Procurement Opportunities

In order to support clients to achieve the best and most sustainable job we will work with regional partners, supported by the Regional Skills Partnership, to procure appropriate support for the CELT + cohort which will provide training and support to all age clients in Bridgend to access opportunities across the region. These industries which are currently new and niche are expecting high growth and investment and are predicted to provide secure sustainable employment going forward requiring skills which will be in high demand in the future.

Current proposed value
£875,000

Multiply - Bridgend County

Multiply is a standalone programme within the UKSPF that will seek to support adults (19+) by improving their functional numeracy skills through free personal tutoring, digital training, and flexible courses.

UK Government has defined success measures under the Multiply programme as:

1. More adults achieving maths qualifications / participating in numeracy courses (up to and including Level 2/ SCQF Level 5).
2. Improved labour market outcomes e.g. fewer numeracy skills gaps reported by employers, and an increase in the proportion of adults that progress into sustained employment and / or education.
3. Increased adult numeracy across the population.

A range of delivery mechanisms are being explored for Multiply within the region and at a local level. Therefore, it is currently considered that it will be delivered locally via in house, commissioning and procurement.

Current proposed value
£3,990,295

Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework

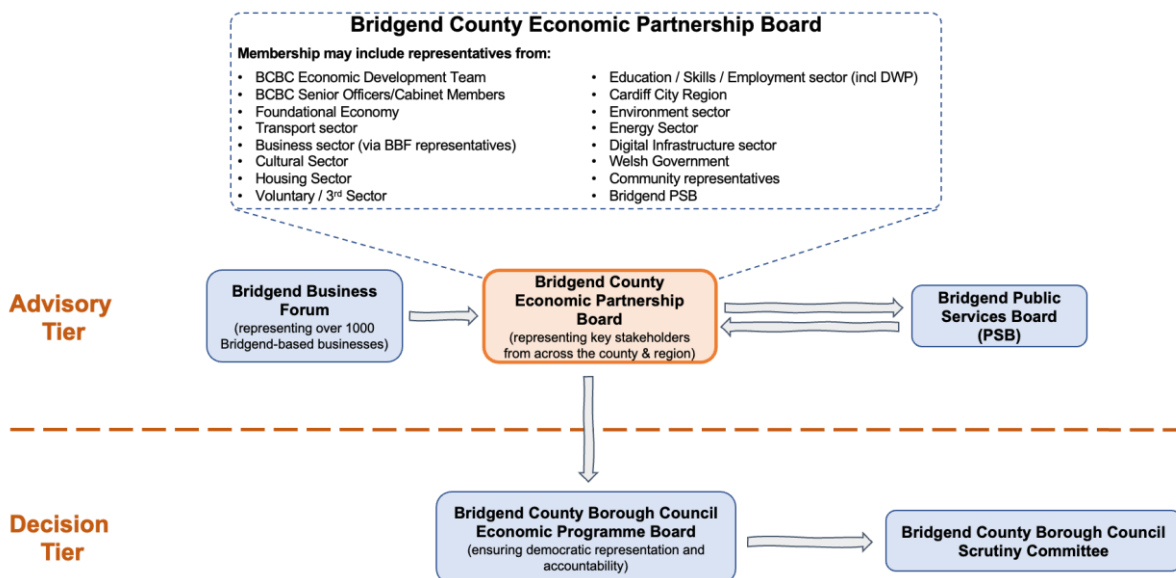
This cross-cutting framework will provide the opportunity to adopt a co-production approach to design and delivery and adaptable and responsive delivery mechanisms by specialist organisations with targeted local to regional delivery in response to needs as they are considered to be and change. This will be delivered locally and will involve in-house, commissioning, procurement and grant fund.

Current proposed value
£1,000,000

Local Governance

A two-tier governance structure has recently been implemented at a local level as the result of the 2022 Economic Strategy, resulting in the establishment of the Bridgend Economic Partnership, which reports to the BCBC Economic Programme Board. Given that the majority of the potential UKSPF funded programmes address economic development challenges, it is proposed that the Economic Partnership and Economic Programme Boards are appropriate structures for governance and oversight of the UKSPF programmes within Bridgend County Borough. Close liaison and interaction will be required for oversight of the programmes that align more closely to the Public Services Board (PSB) agenda.

This is represented in the following diagram:



The focus will be on balancing requirements for business recovery/growth with community wellbeing, environmental imperatives and ecological health, and recommending short, medium and longer-term actions to address these.

The council already has well-established governance models for programme execution in the existing Programme Board model. This model, along with the existing Council, Cabinet and Committee structures is employed to ensure democratic oversight, decision making and accountability for decisions that affect the communities, businesses and the natural environment. The Economic Programme Board is comprised of representatives from key departments, is chaired by the relevant cabinet member or director, and reports into the Cabinet and Corporate Management Board (CCMB).

UKSPF funded proposals face a number of key risk areas that could impact their success in achieving the target outcomes. General risks include:

- **Mobilisation and scale-up of delivery capacity:** there is a significant amount of delivery expected within a two-year period. A key risk relates to a failure to recruit sufficient project delivery staff, to ensure capacity to deliver (this applies equally to BCBC staff and staff within delivery partners).
- **Insufficient funds to complete target objectives:** In preparing the UKSPF proposals, informed assumptions have had to be made regarding the cost of delivery. Given ongoing inflationary pressures, there is a risk that funding falls short of the actual cost to deliver.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** All of the proposals will require on-going engagement with local residents, businesses and stakeholders in order to deliver true co-production of programmes. Insufficient engagement with stakeholders will lead to poor take up of opportunities provided by UKSPF, resulting in likely shortfalls in target outcomes.
- **Poor collaboration / alignment across delivery partners and within the council:** Effective collaboration across council departments and delivery partners will be vital to ensure effective and integrated delivery planning and delivery.
- **Council Processes:** The ability of participating local authorities to process all the required actions within a timely manner will be vital to delivery success.
- **Unknown support landscape from March 2023:** There exists a risk of planning a programme without full knowledge of the support landscape post March 2023, which may subsequently turn out to be insufficient to sustain the programme.
- **Significant external events:** large scale, disruptive external events or developments (e.g. Covid, International Conflict) beyond the influence of BCBC or delivery partners could cause significant disruption / delay to delivery programmes.
- **Poor quality of contractors:** Where contractors are required to deliver works or elements of a programme, it is essential that appropriate minimum quality standards are maintained.
- **Alignment of UKSPF with Welsh Government Programmes and funding:** It will be important to ensure alignment between UKSPF and WG programmes and funding streams, to maximise the benefits from both.
- **Timing of UKSPF funding:** Delays in the decision-making timetable of UKSPF could have knock-on impacts in relation to the delivery timetable of UKSPF.

Summary of UKSPF Programme Proposals

Community and Place

| Proposals | Activities | Delivery model | Delivery level | Current proposed value |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Bridgend County Local Resilience Planning | Health; Economy; Climate | In-house; commission; procurement | Local; sub-regional | £1,000,050 |
| Bridgend County Thriving Communities | Capital/revenue grant fund for community group access | In-house/commission; grant fund | Local | £2,080,000 |
| Bridgend County Green Spaces Enhancement Scheme | Targeted green space and biodiversity enhancement programme, including Great Glamorgan Way | In-house; commission; procurement | Local; sub-regional | £725,000 |
| Bridgend County Community Future Scoping programme | Fund to test the feasibility of longer term community-led ideas | In-house/commission; grant fund | Local | £400,000 |
| Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework | Core fund to support deliverability across all themes | In-house; grant fund | Local | £1,000,000 |
| | | | | £5,205,050 |

Supporting Local Business

| Proposals | Activities | Delivery model | Delivery level | Current proposed value |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Bridgend County Business Prosperity programme | Grant fund to support business diversification, decarbonise and growth | In-house; grant fund | Local; sub-regional | £1,100,000 |
| Bridgend County Business Future Scoping programme | Grant fund to support feasibility of longer-term options for diversification, decarbonise and growth | In-house; grant fund | Local; sub-regional | £425,000 |
| Bridgend County Centres of Enterprise | Capital support to create more diverse business accommodation | In-house; commission; procurement | Local | £3,500,000 |
| Bridgend County Local Enterprise Support Programme | Networking, training and development for local businesses | In-house; commission; procurement | Local | £450,000 |
| Bridgend County Tourism Events Support | Tiered grant fund to support events across the County | In-house; grant fund | Local | £450,000 |
| Bridgend County Local Destination Management & Marketing | Product-led marketing campaigns | In-house; commission; procurement | Local | £150,000 |
| Bridgend County Prosperity Co-Production Framework | Core fund to support deliverability across all themes | In-house; grant fund | Local | £1,000,000 |
| | | | | £7,075,000 |

People and Skills

| Proposals | Activities | Delivery model | Delivery level | Current proposed value |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| CELT+ Bridgend Inspire 2 Work / Achieve | Support for NEETS | In-house; Commission; procurement | Local | £3,150,000 |
| CELT + Employability -Bridgend County | Employability support for employees to improve labour market position | In-house; Commission; procurement | Local and regional co-ordination | £4,000,000 |
| CELT+ Regional Joint Commissioning | Support for local employers to improve the skills of their workforce | Commission; procurement; grant fund | Sub-regional; regional | £875,000 |
| Multiply – Bridgend County | Adult numeracy support programme | In-house; Commission; procurement | Local; sub-regional; regional | £3,990,295 |
| Bridgend County Prosperity Co-production Framework (cross-cutting) | Core fund to support deliverability across all themes | In-house; grant fund | Local | £1,000,000 |
| | | | | £13,015,295 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Meeting of: | TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM |
| Date of Meeting: | 17 JULY 2023 |
| Report Title: | CORPORATE SELF-ASSESSMENT 2022/23 |
| Report Owner / Corporate Director: | CHIEF OFFICER- LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY |
| Responsible Officer: | ALEX RAWLIN, POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER |
| Policy Framework and Procedure Rules: | Council priorities arising from the self-assessment inform Service Plans and the Annual Improvement Plan which form part of the Policy Framework. |
| Executive Summary: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report reflects on the Council’s self-assessment for 2021/22 and presents the Town and Community Council Forum with an approach, process and timeline for the development of the self-assessment for 2022/23. • The approach is simpler and more streamlined than the previous year’s with templates now being completed as part of regular quarterly performance monitoring arrangements. • Challenge sessions will take place earlier and consultation will be more comprehensive. |

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to reflect on the Council’s self-assessment for 2021/22 and present the Town and Community Council Forum with the Council’s approach, process and timeline for the development of the self-assessment for 2022/23.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 which received royal assent in January 2021 set out a new local government improvement regime. One of the requirements of the Act is for the Council to make and publish a self-assessment report once each financial year. The self-assessment report has to set out conclusions on whether the Council met the ‘performance requirements’ during that financial year, and actions needed to improve. The ‘performance requirements’, focus on -

- Are we exercising our functions effectively;
- Are we using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively;
- Is our governance strong.

2.2 The Council published its first self-assessment in October 2022 based on performance in 2021/22. The process was new, but based on existing data, reports and review / challenge meetings where possible. Feedback on the report was generally positive in terms of the honesty and transparency of ratings, length of the report and simplicity of the language. Although, some Elected Members felt that annual performance data should have been published alongside the self-assessment.

2.3 Many parts of the self-assessment process have now been embedded in the Council's regular performance management process, for example the regulatory tracker and inclusion of consultation, engagement and involvement exercises in the quarterly dashboard. By design, it is intended that the process for 2022/23 will be simpler and less resource intensive than the previous year.

3 Current situation/proposal

3.1 The existing, end of year performance process and timelines are being used to capture Directorate self-assessments of performance to satisfy the first performance requirement (as in 2021/22). However, a simpler template was designed with the previous year's information pre-populated for Directorate Management Teams (DMTs) to update. Directorates were asked to provide a realistic assessment of their progress, continue to use plain english to outline their challenges and achievements, retain the format of the information and keep contributions brief and to the point. The 4 templates will then be collated by the Performance Team for scrutiny and challenge.

3.2 The one proposed addition to this section is the inclusion of case studies. Having reviewed all other self-assessments in Wales, this is the one feature that stood out. Around half of local authorities included case studies, and they added an extra dimension to the reports.

3.3 The second performance requirement, on use of resources, also followed a similar process to last year. The 7 use of resources templates were reviewed and updated by the lead officers. All of the 7 areas have been included in the work of Audit Wales in the past year, and in many cases reviewed and discussed by the Governance and Audit Committee, or Scrutiny Committees or are included in the year ahead, so there is significant additional evidence to draw on. These 7 were then collated by the Performance Team for scrutiny and challenge.

3.4 The third performance requirement, on governance, is largely covered by the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) which is scrutinised and approved by the Governance and Audit Committee. It is proposed that this document will be summarised, and used to inform the self-assessment.

- 3.5 The draft findings from each of the three performance requirements were then pulled together into a single presentation for a full-day Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) meeting on 14 June 2023 and considered alongside end of year performance and the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.
- 3.6 Comments and changes from CPA have been used to inform a draft self-assessment report, which it is proposed will be presented to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) on 24 July 2023 and the Governance and Audit Committee (GAC) on 26 July 2023 as required by the Act.
- 3.7 Following engagement and consultation over the summer, it is proposed that the final self-assessment be presented to Cabinet and Council in September 2023.
- 3.8 It is recommended that the Forum consider how best the Town and Community Councils within the borough might provide their input and views on the draft self-assessment report between July and September 2023.
- 3.9 The below timeline was proposed:

| What | Who | By when |
|--|---|----------------|
| Officer scrutiny and challenge sessions | Corporate Management Board (CMB) / Heads of Service (HoS) joint meeting | 7 June |
| Member scrutiny and challenge | CPA | 14 June |
| Use findings to develop a draft self-assessment report | Performance team | June / July |
| Draft self-assessment sign-off | COSC | 24 July |
| | GAC | 26 July |
| Consultation on draft report | Performance Team | Summer |
| Self-assessment sign-off | Cabinet | 15 September |
| | Council | 16 September |

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 This report proposes an approach to measure progress against the following corporate well-being objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that formed part of the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-23:-

1. Supporting a successful sustainable economy
2. Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient
3. Smarter use of resources

5.2 The 5 ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act form a key part of the key lines of enquiry for officer and member challenge of the self-assessment findings. The annual wellbeing assessment will be merged with the annual self-assessment for 2022/23, as it was for 2021/22.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no specific implications of this report on climate change. However, the self assessment will consider the Council's performance and progress on specific climate change related commitments and targets in the Corporate Plan 2018-23.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no specific implications of this report on safeguarding or corporate parenting. However, the self assessment will consider the Council's performance and progress on specific safeguarding and corporate parenting related commitments and targets in the Corporate Plan 2018-23.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications associated with these arrangements.

9. Recommendations

9.1 The Town and Community Council Forum is recommended to: -

- Note the processes and arrangements for the corporate self-assessment 2022/23;
- Consider how the Towns and Community Councils can provide their input and views on the draft self-assessment during July and September 2023.

Background documents

None.