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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
Bridgend County Borough Council



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*Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.
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: Monday, 4 March 2024

Dear Councillor,

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

A meeting of the Town & Community Council Forum will be held remotely - via Microsoft Teams on
Monday, 11 March 2024 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 - 12
To receive for approval the Minutes of 13/11/2023
4. Armed Forces Covenant 13 - 14
5. Invasive Species 15 - 16
6. Replacement Local Development Plan Update 17 - 26
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: Please note: This will be a virtual meeting and Members and Officers will be attending remotely 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 643147 / 643148.

By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £00.52 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
R J Smith

Councillors

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

Councillors

J H Tildesley MBE
MJ Williams
R Williams
E D Winstanley
T Wood

To include a representative from
each Town and Community
Council

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM HELD REMOTELY ON 13 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

H T Bennett
B Doughty
J Gebbie
M R John
R J Smith
R Williams

G Chappell
S Easterbrook
RM Granville
M Jones
I M Spiller
E D Winstanley

C Davies
M J Evans
S J Griffiths
S Parker
Y Walton-Davies
T Wood

C L C Davies
P Ford
P W Jenkins
Pratt
MJ Williams

Apologies for Absence

None

Officers:

Zoe Edwards
Carys Lord
Andrew Mason
Kevin Mulcahy
Nimi Chandrasena

Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Rights of Way Manager
Group Manager - Highways Services
Democratic Services Officer - Support

Declarations of Interest

None

Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	That the minutes of a meeting of the Town and Community Council Forum on 29/08/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	13 November 2023

22. Update on Bridgend County Borough Council Public Rights of Way

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of the report, presented by Group Manager - Highways & Green Spaces and the Rights of Way Manager was to advise on the current status of the public rights of way network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member asked for assurance that when the next round on compliance was required that BCBC makes grant applications in time so as to not to lose any proportion of the grant that was available. <p>The Rights of Way Manager responded that if the point made referred to the Access improvement grant from the Welsh Government – If the Authority were able to secure this, there were two conditions attached to it.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have the local access forum, set up and running, which had been done. b. Review of the rights away improvement plan. <p>He stated that point b had not been achieved. The document was vast and meant that the Council had to review the whole of the network. Determine the exact condition looking at all the issues. The review would require a plan of how the work is potentially improved how funding is secured. It also involves a lot of engagement with the town of Community councils, all user groups, and all statutory undertakers. The task would also involve every member of the Council to be engaged and consulted with. The Rights of Way Manager stated it was a huge undertaking and it was not something they had been able to complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member asked how many Rights Of Way Applications were awaiting consideration from the department. <p>The Rights of Way Manager responded that in 2020 when they recruited the staff member they had over 80 applications outstanding and currently stands at 48.</p>
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- A member asked when they would have access to the new definitive map.

The Rights of Way Manager stated that there was a working copy of the map (updated with all the changes that had taken place since 2005) available on the Council's website through the 'view it' portal. However, they were unable to provide a date for when the definitive map would be updated.

- A member inquired what five local authorities were working in conjunction in relation to the Bridal Way networks and funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund. She also inquired if the funding would be used to improve existing bridal ways or create new ones. The member also inquired if they could be extended and linked using the quiet lanes legislation.

The Rights of Way Manager explained that prior to the implementation of the shared prosperity fund, the authority were required to enrol funding from the Welsh Government, this involved 5 councils, namely, Bridgend, VOG, RCT, Cardiff and Merthyr local authorities. With the Shared prosperity fund, both Bridgend and VOG have benefitted from the funding. He stated that the five local authorities placed a bid for funding through the Enrol Project to create a large network of bridal ways, not only to improve existing ones but also create links between bridal ways that already exist in the Bridgend area by creating new bridal ways or upgrading existing foot paths. The whole project is called the Great Glamorgan Way.

- A member asked, what the reasoning behind the installation of pedestrian gates on a bridal way in the Kenfig Nature Reserve was.

The Rights of Way Manager responded they were in discussion with NRW when consulting on the proposal to put up fences. He stated that BCBC could not enforce any provision for gates or furniture on permissive routes as this would have been for the landowner to decide. He informed the committee that they could speak with the landowner. He stated they were in discussions with the reserve manager about the rights of way network . He suggested the possibility of consulting the Town and Community Councils and other user groups on discussions at a further date.

- A member inquired if there was a way the Community Councils could influence the manner of funding provided for the linking bridal of ways together to make up the Great Glamorgan Way.

The Rights of Way Manager responded that if the town or community councils had specific bridal ways or routes that could be upgraded to bridal ways that they felt the funding should be allocated to and spent on the team could consider those.

- A member asked what time scale was in place to clear the backlog that the team had.

The Rights of Way Manager responded that he was unable to specify an exact time scale but assured the committee that they were getting through the queries according to priority and with the resources available.

- A Member stated that some Community Councils, particularly smaller ones, face difficulties sourcing reliable contractors undertake maintenance work. She asked if the local authority have a potential for a framework of contractors that town and community councils can connect with to contract some of the work.

The Rights of Way Manager stated that the team did not have such a framework. They had a list of one or two contractors that they utilised annually. He stated that they experience a similar difficulty due to the bigger contractors' availability to carry out minor work. The Group Manager - Highways & Green Spaces stated that he would consult with colleagues get back to the committee.

- A member asked how information from the Local Access Forum gets fed back to Town and Community Councils.

The Rights of Way Manager responded that the minutes and the reports are delivered to the TCC Representative to the Bridgend Local Access Forum. He stated that there was no fixed process in place for sharing the information and will look into implementing this.

- A member inquired about spending limitations with regard to agency agreements. He asked if all Community Councils spent the maximum available to them and asked what happens to the surplus if any at the end of the agreed period.

The Rights of Way Manager responded that not all town and community councils reach their spend limit. There were also Community Councils that spent more than their limit, in such instances, they utilised their own resources to supplement the money that they get from the Rights Of Way Budget. He stated that where was an underspend, the Rights Of Way team utilise the funds to carry out maintenance work within the county borough.

- A member stated it was interesting to note that if there was an underspend, the funding would be spent elsewhere rather than in the ward that could have claimed it. She asked if there was something that could be done around improving communication between Community Councils and

	<p>the Rights of Way to indicate that a council has aspirations but cannot secure contractors and would therefore not be able to spend the funding by the deadline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another member asked the possibility of approaching the Welsh Assembly Government for additional funding required for the maintenance of footpaths. <p>The Chairperson responded by referring to a previous point made in the meeting about the improvement grant, stating that the team would be carrying out that review whilst the committee appreciates that it involves significant work for the team.</p> <p>The Rights of Way manager stated the team always look to apply for additional funding to carry out work on the rights of way network. As a note of caution, he stated that the funding usually applied for is generally towards making improvements or big capital schemes. He stated that it was unusual for funding bodies to fund maintenance work because they see that as the Council's statutory duty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson summarised the action points from the discussion as follows : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Obtain information on Community Council expenditure on Rights of Way + The authority are open to ideas at improving bridal ways and encourage community councils to put their suggestions forward. + Work is to be carried out to look into opportunities around quiet lanes +Review the Rights of Way improvement planning +Share information with Town and Community Councils regarding the Glamorgan Way +Locate the function on the BCBC website that allows individuals to view the Rights of Way in their locality. • The Rights of Way manager stated that he would be sharing two weblinks with the DS Committees to be sent to the Town and Community Councils. <p><u>RESOLVED</u> : The Town and Community Council Forum noted the report and agreed to proceed with the actions that resulted.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 November 2023

Engagement and Participation Strategy

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of the report, presented by Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager was to update the Town and Community Council Forum on the current situation and to inform them that a public consultation had commenced to seek views on the proposed Strategy which they can support by promoting within their local communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member asked what was being done to encourage people within the communities to speak positively about changes in the authority so that there is a broad data set of whether the ideas presented are really unpopular, very popular or somewhere in the middle. <p>The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager stated that they have looked at reaching new or harder to reach groups that they can engage with by making themselves available for more public engagement.</p> <p>The Chairperson stated that it was important the authority ensured that consultation engagement was as representative as it as it could be whilst being mindful that there were some groups that were harder to engage with than others. He welcomed suggestions or ideas from members on how they could engage better with communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Member stated that historically, there has been a reliance on consultation through the means listed and not so much on participation, involvement and Co production. She stated it would be beneficial to gain people's views to Co produce the final version of the document. She asked how the diverse communities that are more difficult to reach could be reached. <p>The Member suggested the need to do things a differently in order to encourage views and to talk to communities. She mentioned the need to engage at a hyper local level with organisations that could be through the 3rd sector and through other partners. The member mentioned that whilst it is a step in the right direction there needs to be more work around involvement and inclusivity.</p> <p>The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager responded that they have pre communication with parties such as South Wales Police, The Youth Service and the College in order that they full range of engagement with the different groups. They were considering a link with People's First Bridgend who cater to different needs with their service users and have an engagement opportunities. They were also considering attending food banks and they were forming a partnership with the Hate crime Awareness sessions expected to be carried out over the next few weeks with the intention of obtaining feedback from residents.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member mentioned that he was representative for Pencoed for the Youth Engagement Panel and stated that he did not believe any contact had been made to engage. The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager acknowledged that it was a useful to know and engage with in the future. <p>The Deputy Leader suggested that it would be beneficial to engage on several matters together because there is much work being done. She stated that WLGA has asked for a specific schedule about events planned and it would be useful to formulate a schedule together to try and engage on various matters with a view to obtaining more feedback from residents.</p> <p>The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager mentioned that if the Community Councils so wished, she would be able to go through awareness sessions with them in preparation for members speaking with constituents regarding the strategy. She stated that this could be done individually or as a group.</p> <p>RESOLVED : It was agreed that the Town and Community Council Forum noted the development of the Engagement and Participation Strategy and promoted the public consultation within their local communities to encourage their residents to provide feedback ahead of final approval by Cabinet.</p>
Date Decision Made	13 November 2023

24. Budget Update

Decision Made	<p>The purpose of the report, presented by Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change was to provide a briefing on the current budget position for Bridgend County Borough Council as at 30th September 2023.</p> <p>The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change mentioned that they would be requesting a return of the precept figures from Community Councils for the coming year by Friday the 5th of January 2024 and the Chairperson suggested that Community Councils are notified of this in writing as early as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member asked if Community Councils could be informed of how the Authority would like them helping, as in turn, it would help town and community councils in setting their precepts. He stated that Community Councils would benefit from knowing the Authority’s strategy and vision of how Town and Community councils can fill a gap.
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The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change responded that the Authority was considering budget options for the coming financial year. The prediction was that there would be considerable financial pressure next year. There will be significant in year pressure and the anticipation was that it would carry forward into the next year. She agreed that it would be beneficial to have a dialogue between both the local authority and the Town and Community councils about how they can support each other. She stated her concern was that precepts were due within the next few weeks, therefore, the opportunity for dialogue felt tight. She suggested that a discussion with the Authority would be beneficial to determining whether there was anything further that could be done support the authority in the next financial year.

- A member asked the impact on the budget of discovering RAC in a council owned building.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change responded that it was too early in the process to determine the impact by speculating on the costs that may be incurred as the building in question was undergoing a detailed survey to determine the work that would be required to remedy the issues.

- A member stated that given that there were Community Councils of varying sizes with greater or lesser appetites to take on services some community councils undertake work at their own cost. He queried how it was possible to break that cycle so that was not always too late to discuss it. He asked if it was possible to have a sub-committee of the TCCF with a representative from each minor authority to have a meaningful conversation about how agency agreements regarding other services can be made. He stated that it would be dependent on each Community Council, their appetite and their capability but with would provide Town and Community councils the opportunity to contribute to what is ultimately a joint effort. He also asked if, in the current time of austerity, that the Community Ownership funds were safe.

The Chairperson agreed that it would be helpful and beneficial to look at individual savings, challenges faced and services provided by Town and Community councils. He stated it would be better to systematically receive the information for consistency.

The Chairperson also stated that all members and Officers see the value of the Community Ownership Fund and therefore there is a willingness to continue, he however stated that like many other things, it would be subject to a review and could only result in prioritising funds differently.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change added that as the Community Councils were of different sizes, had different aspirations and capacities any plans put in place would require both

the Authority and the Town of Community Councils to be cognizant of that.

- A member asked, as the Revenue Report had suggested that there was a saving to be made in relation to the operating times of the Community Recycling Facility in Pyle but was not realised due to the delay in receiving a license, if there was now an agreed date for the reopening of the Facility. She also asked if it was known when the closure of a day or a week was due to be implemented.

The Chairperson responded that he was aware of a report being sent into Cabinet on the upcoming the consultation on the opening days of the Community recycling centres. He stated that he was also in discussion with Natural Resources Wales, he shared that progress had been made but the Authority was dependent on obtaining the license allowing NRW to operate the site and while the current facility in Pyle was Authority owned and would generate a saving, the transfer from the existing facility came at a cost.

- A member stated he was unsure if Council Tax rates were due for an increase in May 2024, he was concerned that if his local Community Town Council set their precept higher during a cost of living crisis, his residents were going to find it difficult. He suggested that it would be better introduce a strategy where the Local Authority and the Town and Community Council work in collaboration when making decisions that impact the local communities.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change responded that there were some decisions that would work that way and some others not so much, primarily because some services may be better delivered at scale if they particularly require significant equipment or where certain types of funding are required. She agreed that clear communication is required when reaching out to the residents so that they were absolutely clear of what they are paying for.

The Chairperson stated that the vast majority of the statutory services were continuing to be delivered, by the local authority. He acknowledged that town and community councils had taken significant additional responsibilities. He acknowledged that the Local Authority employ over 6000 people in Bridgend most of whom are employed in schools and social services where most of funding for those services and most of the taxation from those services will come from. He stated that the Authority were working very hard to identify ways of saving money and to identify ways of being more efficient and more effective. He said that if town and community councils had any specific suggestions or ideas that they thought should be considered, the Authority would be glad to know of them.

He acknowledged that Town and community councils had a lot of experience and knowledge of good practice and would welcome the possibility of benefiting from that.

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM - MONDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2023

Date Decision Made	13 November 2023

Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	13 November 2023

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 17:47

Agenda Item 4

Meeting of:	TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM
Date of Meeting:	11 MARCH 2024
Report Title:	PRESENTATION TO THE TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM BY THE REGIONAL ARMED FORCES COVENANT LIAISON OFFICER, BRIDGEND, NEATH PORT TALBOT & SWANSEA LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – LEGAL, REGULATORY SERVICES, HR AND CORPORATE POLICY
Responsible Officer:	MARK GALVIN SENIOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER – COMMITTEES
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	All 22 local authorities in Wales have a legal duty to pay ‘due regard’ to the principles of the Covenant. Many of whom have signed the Armed Forces Covenant, a promise that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should not be disadvantaged by their service.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Town and Community Council Forum of a presentation proposed to be delivered by the Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer.

2. Background

- 2.1 Members will be accustomed to receiving presentations from its key partners and stakeholders.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 A presentation will be given to the Forum at its March meeting on the topic of the Armed Forces Covenant.
- 3.2 The presentation will detail why it is important for local authorities to pledge their commitment to and the legal duty of regard in terms of the Armed Forces Covenant.

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 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.

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 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 That the Town and Community Council Forum is recommended to note the presentation as referred to at paragraph 3.1 of the report.

Background documents

None.

Agenda Item 5

Meeting of:	TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM
Date of Meeting:	26 FEBRUARY 2024
Report Title:	PRESENTATION ON INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
Responsible Officer:	STUART BALDWIN CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE MANAGER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	The report and accompanying presentation will update Town and Community Councils on awareness of Invasive Non Native Species (INNS).

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Town and Community Council (T&CC) Forum of a presentation proposed to raise awareness of Invasive Non Native Species (INNS).

2. Background

- 2.1 A members awareness session on INNS was delivered to Bridgend County Borough Councillors on 14th February 2024.

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 The presentation will be given to T&CC Forum at its February meeting to raise awareness on INNS.

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 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.

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 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The T&CC Forum is recommended to note the presentation as referred to in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

Background documents

None.

Meeting of:	TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM
Date of Meeting:	11 MARCH 2024
Report Title:	UPDATE OF THE REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018-2033
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	JANINE NIGHTINGALE, CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES
Responsible Officer:	RICHARD MATTHAMS, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION MANAGER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (RLDP) following Examination in Public (EIP) and receipt of the Inspector's Report which details recommended changes to ensure the RLDP is sound, while meeting legal and statutory requirements.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (**RLDP**) following Examination in Public (**EIP**) and receipt of the Inspector's Report which details recommended changes to ensure the RLDP is sound, while meeting legal and statutory requirements.

2. Background

- 2.1 An up-to-date Local Development Plan (**LDP**) is an essential part of a plan-led planning system in Wales. It sets the framework to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development in a co-ordinated manner, enabling a wider, problem-solving outlook than would be possible by dealing with local issues in isolation. Without an up-to-date LDP, it would become progressively difficult for the Council to focus on integrating and addressing multiple land use concerns and the local planning process would become fragmented, un-coordinated and reactive.
- 2.2 The Local Planning Authority (**LPA**) is statutorily required, under section 69 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to undertake a full review of the adopted LDP at intervals no longer than every 4 years from the date of adoption. As

such, a review of the existing adopted LDP (2006-2021) was triggered and a Review Report was published in 2018. That Review Report recognised an urgent need to address the shortfall in the housing land supply through the identification of additional housing sites, whilst reviewing other significant contextual changes in circumstances and policy at a national, regional and local level.

2.3 Over the course of its extensive preparation, the RLDP has progressed through the following key stages:

- Delivery Agreement and Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) (April - June 2018)
- Call for Candidate Sites (September – November 2018)
- Pre-Deposit Participation (January – July 2019)
- Pre-Deposit (Preferred Strategy) Consultation (September – November 2019)
- Deposit Consultation (June – July 2021)

2.4 Following completion of these key stages, a resolution was made to submit the Replacement LDP to Welsh Government and the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. This was to determine whether the Plan satisfied the procedural tests and could be considered sound in accordance with the Tests of Soundness. A rigorous and robust public examination process then commenced, with a series of topic-based public hearing sessions taking place from 28th February 2023 to 29th March 2023. **The appointed Inspector duly considered all representations made up until and during the hearing sessions.** In response to the matters and issues raised by the Inspector during the hearing sessions, the LPA proposed a series of Matters Arising Changes (**MACs**) to the Plan. These changes were deemed necessary to make the Plan sound. The MAC Schedule was subject to public consultation from 31st July 2023 until 11th September 2023, following which a MAC Consultation Report was published. That report listed the representations made about each of the proposed MACs, provided a summary of the main issues raised and outlined the LPA's responses. All duly made representations were considered by the Inspector. A further final public hearing session was held on 24th January 2024 prior to the Inspector's Report being published. Following the Inspector's Report, the Replacement LDP was adopted.

3. Current situation/ proposal

Summary of Inspector's Report

3.1 Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended), requires the Council to adopt the RLDP within eight weeks of receipt of the Inspector's Report. The Inspector's Report concludes that, subject to the binding recommended changes, the Bridgend RLDP satisfies the

requirements of section 64(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and meets the Welsh Government's tests of soundness.

3.2 All duly made representations and the matters raised at the Examination hearings were considered by the Inspector prior to publication of this Report.

The Inspector's recommended changes, needed in order to meet legal and statutory requirements and to ensure that the RLDP is sound, are binding on the Council. Almost all the recommended changes were put forward by the LPA in response to matters discussed during the Examination. Most changes relate to policy wording clarifications, revision of targets to reflect updated evidence / trajectories and the inclusion of additional detail provided to the Inspector during the Examination. The main changes are summarised as:

- Amendments to the Plan's Strategic Framework to explain the national and regional development context;
- A reduction in the supply of housing land over the Plan period; and resultant changes to the housing trajectory and flexibility allowance;
- Alterations to the specific housing site allocations, including the deletion of Land at Parc Afon Ewenni, Bridgend and the allocation of the Land at the Former Cooper Standards Site, Ewenny Road, Maesteg as a result of updated evidence;
- The revision of the Plan-wide affordable housing target to reflect changes in the supply of housing land; and an update to the requirement figure for the provision of Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the Plan period;
- Alterations to the affordable housing rural exceptions, residential density and houses in multiple occupation policies to clarify requirements and ensure compliance with national policy;
- Amendments to the policy framework for the allocation of Strategic Development Sites to include greater clarity in relation to site specific matters such as the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity, green infrastructure, transportation, design and placemaking;
- A minor reduction in the provision of land for employment related development to reflect changes in the provision of available land;
- The inclusion of a retail need figure for the Plan period and alterations to the policy framework to explain how the requirement will be met;
- Revisions to the policy framework for renewable and low carbon energy development to reflect the supporting evidence and ensure compliance with national policy; and
- The deletion of policy requirements in relation to historic assets of special local importance, conservation areas and listed buildings to ensure the Plan complies with the requirements of national policy.

3.3 Minor Editorial Changes (MECs) have also been identified by the LPA, which are not the subject of a binding recommendation. They do, however, improve the usability of the final Plan document. The LPA is authorised to make such necessary MECs to the Plan arising from inclusion of the changes recommended for soundness. These include minor typographical or factual corrections, consequential changes or presentational matters required in the production of the final adopted version of the RLDP.

Plan Adoption, Monitoring and Review

- 3.4 Once adopted, the Bridgend RLDP 2018-2033 will become the statutory Development Plan for the County Borough and the existing LDP 2006-2021 will cease to have effect. From the date of adoption, the RLDP will be subject to a six week challenge period to the High Court under section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and as referenced within the Adoption Statement.
- 3.5 Following the adoption of the RLDP, the LPA must publish and submit to Welsh Government an Annual Monitoring Report (**AMR**) under Regulation 37 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended). The first AMR is required to be submitted by 31st October in the year following adoption of the RLDP (i.e. 2025). This will assess the extent to which the RLDP's strategy, policies and key site allocations are being delivered. The results will also identify any challenges, opportunities and possible ways forward for revising policies and proposals at a future Plan review. In this respect, the LPA must undertake a mandatory full Plan review 4 years following its adoption to ensure that the RLDP remains up to date. This will be due to take place in March 2028.

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

- 4.1 There are no direct equalities implications associated with this report. However, the policies and allocations contained within the RLDP have been subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment (**EIA**). The EIA considers the impact of the RLDP on the nine protected characteristics, the Socio-economic Duty and the use of the Welsh Language.

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

- 5.1 The RLDP has full regard to the provisions of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and to the "*Well-being Goals*". The promotion and recognition of well-being was interwoven into plan preparation from the outset, through effective stakeholder engagement via the Public Service Board. The theme of well-being and the provisions of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are considered through the Sustainability Appraisal process and reflected in the use of the local Well-being Goals in framing the RLDP's Strategic Objectives and the Strategic Policies.
- 5.2 The RLDP will provide the framework to deliver against all 7 "*Corporate Wellbeing Objectives*" by enabling delivery of new homes, jobs, education facilities, recreation provision, highways improvements, active travel provision and a wide range of other supporting infrastructure. The RLDP will function as a catalyst to lever significant investment into Bridgend County Borough; approximately £116,000,000 in private sector investment together with 1,711 affordable homes over the life of the Plan.

5.3 The RLDP will also enhance strategic direction and contribute to the full suite of goals within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, most notably:

- A prosperous Wales – sustainable, placemaking-led development will reduce the reliance on costly transport, promote active travel opportunities, enable new jobs and support town centres within the County Borough.
- A resilient Wales – provision of good quality market and affordable housing alongside new employment provision will increase the resilience of both individuals and communities.
- A Wales of cohesive communities – enabling well-connected, mixed-use and multi-tenure developments will foster sustainable, socially cohesive communities.

6. Climate Change Implications

6.1 The RLDP sets a framework for mitigating the impacts of climate change through Policy SP4. In order to do so, Policy SP4 requires that all development makes a positive contribution towards tackling the causes of, and / or adapting to, the impacts of climate change. Proposals must: reflect sustainable transport and access principles; have low / zero carbon energy requirements; utilise local materials and supplies; encourage the development of renewable and low / zero carbon energy generation; be of a design that helps wildlife and habitats adapt to climate change and assist in cooling the urban environment; use resources more efficiently; and direct development away from areas of flood risk. The RLDP's approach to mitigating the impact of climate change has been deemed robust and consistent with the requirements of national policy by the Independent Inspector.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 There are no Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications from this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The RLDP preparation process has been funded through the RLDP budget.

9. Recommendation(s)

9.1 That the Town and Community Council Forum notes the report.

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