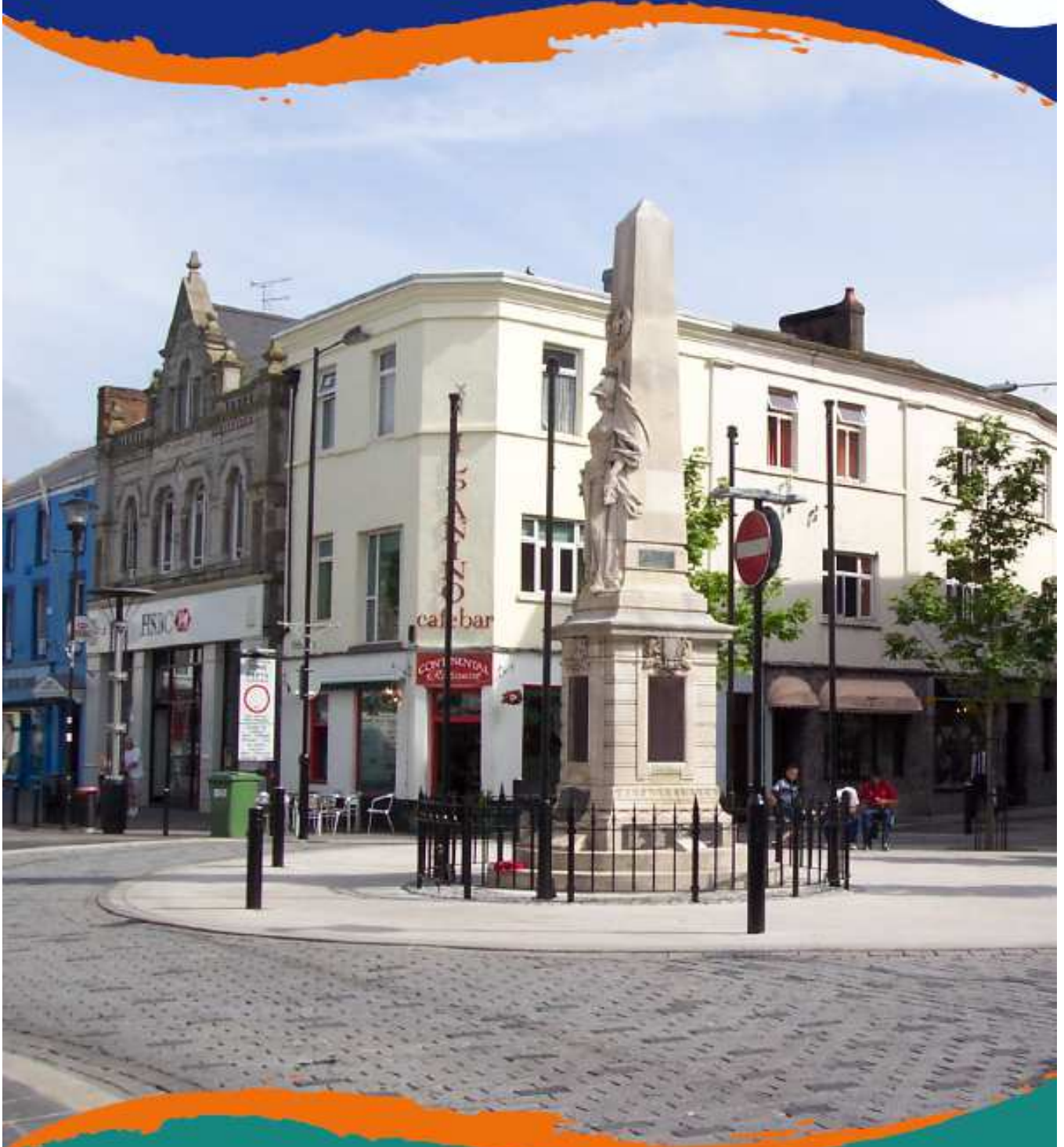


Annual Performance Report 2016



Local Planning Authority

Bridgend County Borough Council

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1. PREFACE

I am pleased to introduce the second Annual Performance Report for Bridgend County Borough Council's Planning Service for the period 2015/2016. In line with our Corporate Plan 2016-2020, our vision as a Council is to work together to improve lives across the County Borough by taking a balanced approach to improving the wellbeing of communities through social, physical, cultural and economic improvements, in order to achieve a safe, pleasant and sustainable environment for residents of, and visitors to, Bridgend County Borough.

The Planning Function lies at the very heart of this vision. It is my privilege to serve as the Cabinet Member for Communities and Planning has a key role to play in my portfolio. Bridgend has always been at the forefront of delivering an innovative and responsive planning service and I hope this report will highlight the achievements as well as the challenges for the future.

Councillor Ceri Reeves, Cabinet Member for Communities



2. CONTEXT

Bridgend County Borough Council is one of the smallest and most diverse Authorities in Wales covering an area of approximately 28,500 hectares. It is characterised by a coastline onto the Bristol Channel and a mix of urban and rural communities within the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmere Valleys at the heart of South Wales.

The County Borough is a Unitary Authority and is bordered by Neath Port Talbot County Borough to the west and north, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough to the north and north east and by the Vale of Glamorgan Council to the east. The main administrative centre, Bridgend, lies approximately 18 miles to the west of Cardiff and 20 miles to the east of Swansea. The largest town is Bridgend (pop: 39,773) followed by Maesteg (pop: 20,700) and the seaside resort of Porthcawl (pop: 19,238).

The County Borough is home to the Ford Bridgend Engine Plant, a manufacturing facility of Ford of Europe, the Sony UK Technology Centre, a division of Sony Europe Limited, which is the manufacturing and customer service centre for Sony in the UK, and the World renowned Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. The Bridgend sub-area is the home of the Princess of Wales Hospital, a district general hospital within the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust.

Planning background

The Bridgend County Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 18th September 2013 and will guide development in the County Borough up to 2021. The LDP replaced the Bridgend County Borough Council Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in May 2005 and covered the period up to 2016. Bridgend CBC has always had an adopted Development Plan in place to guide development.

Place and fit within the Single Integrated Partnership Plan/Corporate Plan

Bridgend County Together (April 2013 – March 2018) is the overarching single integrated partnership plan for the county and is prepared by the Local Service Board (LSB) made up of senior representatives across a range of organisations working in Bridgend County. The Vision set out in the plan by the LSB is:-

Bridgend County is a healthy, prosperous and safe county where people can reach their full potential.

The 4 priority areas that make up the Vision are: -

- People in Bridgend are healthier
- People in Bridgend are engaged and empowered to achieve their full potential.
- People in Bridgend benefit from a stronger and more prosperous economy.
- Bridgend County is a great place to live, work and visit.

The plan sits above the Corporate Plan for the Council and sets out the Local Service Board's priorities up to 2018 and has been developed through a Comprehensive Strategic Needs Assessment and public consultation. The plan was formally agreed by the LSB on 30th April 2013.

The priorities and actions of the single integrated partnership plan has implications for the corporate plans of the Council and the LSB member organisations.

The plan is a long term plan and changes over its lifetime and there is a requirement to formally review and report annually on its progress to the public, Welsh Government, elected members and LSB member organisations.

As a result of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act there is now a statutory requirement in Wales to publish a new type of partnership plan – the Local Wellbeing Plan.

In response to this requirement Bridgend’s Local Service Board (LSB) has become the Public Service Board (PSB). This new partnership organisation will undertake an Assessment of Local Wellbeing which will be published in 2017, followed by the Wellbeing Plan which is required to be in place by April 2018.

Bridgend’s Corporate Plan (2016-2020) Working Together to Improve Lives which sits under the single integrated partnership plan has 3 key priorities. These are:-

1. Supporting a successful economy

Taking steps to make the County Borough a good place to do business and ensuring that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all young people in the county.

2. Helping people to be more self-reliant

Taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.

3. Smarter use of resources

Ensuring that all resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and as efficiently as possible and supporting the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver our aims.

The Planning function has an important role in implementing the Corporate Plan and the wellbeing goals set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The challenge facing the service is to align with the new wider and corporate aims.

The Bridgend Local Development Plan was developed in the context of a Strategic Environmental Assessment incorporating a Sustainability Appraisal, and as such it broadly aligns with the Wellbeing goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

The Vision of the Bridgend Local Development Plan is:-

By 2021, Bridgend County Borough will be transformed to become a sustainable, safe, healthy and inclusive network of communities comprising strong, interdependent and connected settlements

with improved quality of life and opportunities for all people living, working, visiting and relaxing in the area.

The catalysts for this transformation will be: a successful regional employment, commercial and service centre in Bridgend; a vibrant waterfront and tourist destination in Porthcawl; a revitalised Maesteg; and thriving Valley communities.

The LDP Vision will be delivered through four strategic LDP objectives which seek to address the national, regional and local issues facing the County Borough. These four strategic objectives are at the centre of the LDP and form the basis for its policy development. They are:

1. To produce high quality sustainable **Places** where people want to live.
2. To protect and enhance the **Environment**.
3. To spread prosperity and opportunity through **Regeneration**.
4. To create safe, healthy and inclusive **Communities**.

The Bridgend LDP is scheduled for a full review in 2017 and the new plan will be developed to express in land-use terms the priorities of the forthcoming Local Wellbeing Plan for Bridgend and will also be the subject of SEA and SA.

Existing and previous major influences on land use (e.g. heavy industrial, agricultural, energy, transport)

Bridgend owes its origin to its strategic location at the lowest bridging point on the River Ogmore, where east to west and north to south traditional trade routes met.

It was originally a small market town serving the western agricultural community of the Vale of Glamorgan which grew when the coal mining industry flourished to the north. The local road and railway network was developed to provide access to communities from the rest of South East Wales, taking advantage of Bridgend's strategic location. With further planned post-War urban growth based on local manufacturing, it became the administrative centre for the area. From the late 1970s to date it has grown once more in response to commuter housing pressures generated from its proximity to Cardiff and general economic growth westwards along the M4 Motorway corridor.

The wider settlement structure of the County Borough still reflects its agricultural and industrial heritage. The coal mining industry fostered the growth of Maesteg in the upper Llynfi Valley and many smaller towns and villages, such as Blaengarw, Pontycymer, Nantymoel, Ogmore Vale and Evanstown in the Garw and Ogmore Valleys and Pyle, Kenfig Hill, Cefn Cribwr, Tondu, Aberkenfig, Ynysawdre, Sarn, Bryncethin, Brynmenyn, Heol-y-Cyw and Pencoed in the more southerly coalfield fringe.

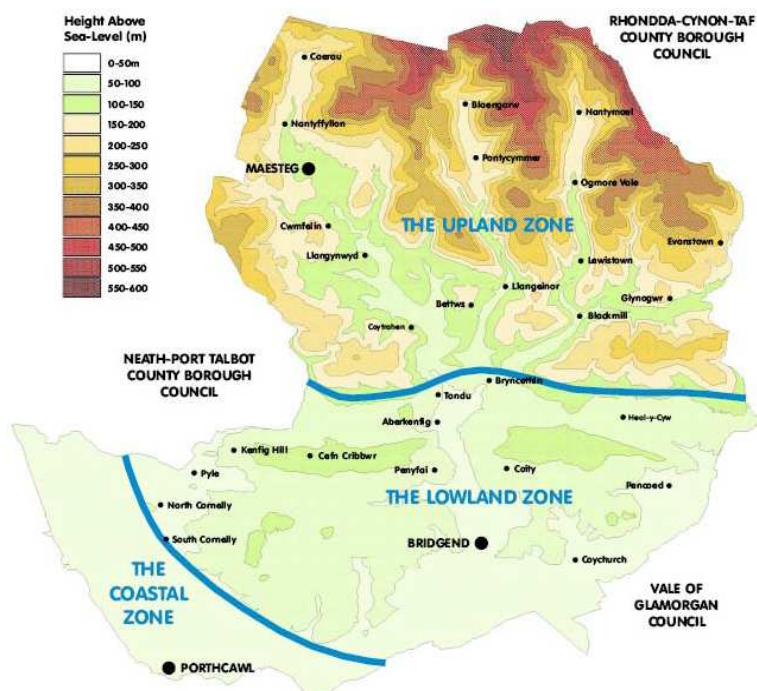
Porthcawl grew initially as a small port with rail links to the valleys and the coal mining industry. Later, in the inter-War period, it prospered as a popular coastal tourist resort. During the post-World War II period it expanded significantly, along with the village of North Cornelly and the town of Pyle, to provide housing for workers in the growing iron and steel industry in nearby Port Talbot.

Historic/landscape setting of the area, including AONBs, conservation areas etc.

The County Borough extends from the Afon Cynffig in the west to the Afon Ewenni Fach in the east, taking in the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmores valleys from their sources in the north to the Bristol Channel in the south. From north to south the area can be broken down into zones which reflect the area's physical character, i.e. its upland, lowland, and coastal zones.

The Upland Zone

This zone is characteristic of the wider South Wales Coalfield which is dominated by the pennant sandstone plateau, its moor land and hill pastures. It is cut through by a number of rivers running generally south or south westwards to form a series of deep valleys. The ridges between these valleys rise steeply to heights exceeding 550m in the northern part of the County Borough.



The Lowland Zone

This zone is characterised by a series of east-west ridges generally not exceeding about 130m in height south of the Coalfield Plateau. Its undulating terrain, of generally higher quality agricultural land, forms a swathe through the central and south eastern parts of the County Borough.

The Coastal Zone

This zone constitutes a generally flat plain which extends from 3.0 km to 1.5 km inland from the Bristol Channel where it meets the higher lowland zone. It includes the sand dune systems of Kenfig Burrows, in the west, and Merthyr Mawr Warren, in the south, and terminates in the south east at the River Ogmores estuary, which is the County Borough boundary.

Landscape assessments identified nationally and regionally important landscapes in the County Borough. These include the western part of the nationally important Glamorgan Heritage Coast, one of the most scenically beautiful stretches of undeveloped coast in England and Wales.

Also, Merthyr Mawr, Kenfig and Margam Burrows and Margam Mountain are recognised by Cadw/CCW/ICOMOS as being of 'Outstanding' and 'Special Historic Interest' in their Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales.

The 'Strategic Coalfield Plateau and its Associated Valley Sides' is designated as a sub-regionally important Special Landscape Area. Several 'Landscape Conservation Areas' are also designated as being of local significance.

Agricultural land makes an important contribution to the County Borough's landscape, even though only 44% of the area (excluding Common Land) was in agricultural production in 2004. This is much less than the 80% average figure for Wales. Some 90% (over 10,000ha) is grassland, mainly used for sheep farming, whereas about 4% (506ha) is used for arable crops, mainly barley.

There are 3,033 Ha of registered common land in the County Borough which represents 12% of its area.

The County Borough has a wide range of biodiversity and nature conservation interests including:

- Three sites of International/European nature conservation importance at Kenfig Burrows and Merthyr Mawr Warren coastal dune systems, Cefn Cribbwr grasslands and Blackmill woodlands, each of which is a designated 'Special Area of Conservation' (SAC);
- Twelve nationally designated 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSIs), including Kenfig SSSI and Merthyr Mawr SSSI which form the Kenfig SAC and which are also 'National Nature Reserves' (NNRs);
- Three existing, and four proposed, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and one Regionally Important Geological or Geomorphological Site (RIGS);
- Over 160 non-statutory 'Sites of Nature Conservation Importance' (SINCs); and
- A wide range of species due to the area's geographical variation and a considerable range of habitats. Especially its internationally important sand dune systems, which include European and UK protected and rare flora and fauna.

The statutory sites cover 1,215ha, or 4.8% of the area, 974ha of which comprises the Kenfig SAC.

The County Borough also has a rich Built Heritage and Historic Environment including:

- 62 Scheduled Ancient Monuments of national importance and a considerable and varied archaeological resource including known archaeological monuments which are not currently scheduled but which are, nonetheless, included in the County Sites and Monuments Record maintained by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust;
- 361 Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest;
- 15 designated Conservation Areas; and
- 6 Historic Parks and Gardens, in addition to those Historic Landscapes noted above, which are also included in the Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales prepared by Cadw/CCW/ICOMOS.

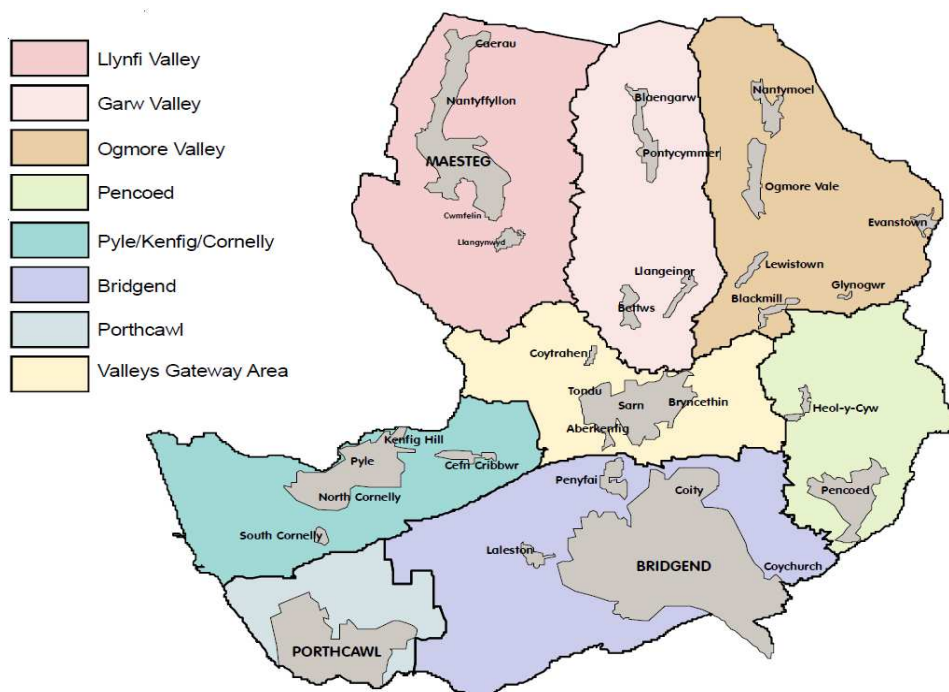
A Conservation Area Appraisal and Draft Management Plan for the Porthcawl Conservation Area were prepared and a consultation exercise was undertaken on the proposal to extend the Porthcawl Conservation Area with a view to adopting the extension in early 2016/2017.

Urban rural mix and major settlements

The County Borough is divided into eight sub-areas which are defined by the geography of the area, the transport network, existing settlements and the linkages between them.

The identified sub areas are:-

- Bridgend (the main administrative centre)
- The Llynfi Valley (including the main settlement of Maesteg)
- Porthcawl
- The Garw Valley
- The Ogmore Valley
- Pencoed
- The Valleys Gateway
- Pyle/Kenfig/Cornelly Area



Bridgend is a major employment centre serving the whole of the County Borough and the wider sub-region, largely because of its strategic location immediately south of the M4. There are a number of well-established large-scale industrial estates at Bridgend, Waterton and Brackla. In terms of the development of further additional employment sites 3 priority projects for funding under the Convergence Programme are identified at Brocastle, Island Farm and Waterton.

Bridgend acts as a sub-regional hub for retailing, representing the most significant retail centre between Swansea and Cardiff. The town is undergoing substantial physical regeneration with improvements to the public realm and to the fabric of the buildings, through various regeneration initiatives.

Maesteg and Porthcawl/Pyle are identified as 'hub settlements' in addition to Bridgend which is designated as a cross-border settlement.

In terms of their development, the hub settlements have a similar role to their counterparts in South East Wales. Their success will benefit the surrounding smaller settlements, rural and valley communities by offering increased access to employment and amenities whilst stimulating employment, housing and retail development.

The area's coastline is recognised as a key asset in creating a thriving retail, leisure and business environment. A Waterfront Masterplan has been developed to bring together existing proposals and identify new opportunities that cover development based on land and water to create a vibrant waterfront.

Population change and influence on LDP/forthcoming revisions

Bridgend County Borough is one of the smaller Unitary Authorities in Wales. However, it is the 10th largest in terms of its total population.

The population of the County Borough has, in general, grown continuously over the past 40 years, although it has not been uniform, as the level of growth recorded in the 1960s exceeded any subsequent growth rates. Overall, the population has grown approximately 22% between 1961 and 2006, from 108,950 to 132,584 respectively.

At present there are just over 142,000 citizens and it is predicted that this will reach 151,023 by 2036 although the rate of population growth in the County Borough is slowing and projections show a decrease in the birth rate in the coming years. The same projections show an increase in life expectancy forecast to rise from the 2011 average of 79.7 years to 82.9 years by 2036. This means that the area is likely to see an increase in the proportion of older people, whilst the size of the working age population falls.

The LDP's population projection for the County Borough for 2021 is 144,643. This compares to the latest 2011 based Welsh Government projection of 143,700. Therefore, the variance of only 943 in terms of population is not significant and should not be a deciding factor in any forthcoming early LDP review.



Population Projection for Bridgend County Borough

The LDP plan period covers the years 2006 to 2021 and the Plan sets out to provide a housing requirement of 9,690 homes. However, 1537 units were built between 2006 and 2009 which equates to 3 years of the plan period leaving a residual requirement of 8,153 over the remaining 12 years.

In terms of housing provision, the LDP's (Cambridge Econometrics) 2021 household projection was 66,402 households for Bridgend. The latest Welsh Government Household Projection predicts that there will be 63,000 by 2021.

As such, by 2021 there is a substantial variance built into the LDP household and dwelling projection of 3402 additional households, that the LDP is theoretically catering for in terms of accommodating its LDP housing requirement.

In terms of housing delivery between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016, 520 new dwellings were completed on large and small sites.

The Local Planning Authority is able to demonstrate that it has a 2016 five year housing land supply of 5.1 years. The housing land supply of 5.1 years is in excess of the 5 year minimum required by TAN1. This compares to the 2015 Joint Housing Land Availability Study five year housing land supply of 5.4 years.

3. PLANNING SERVICE

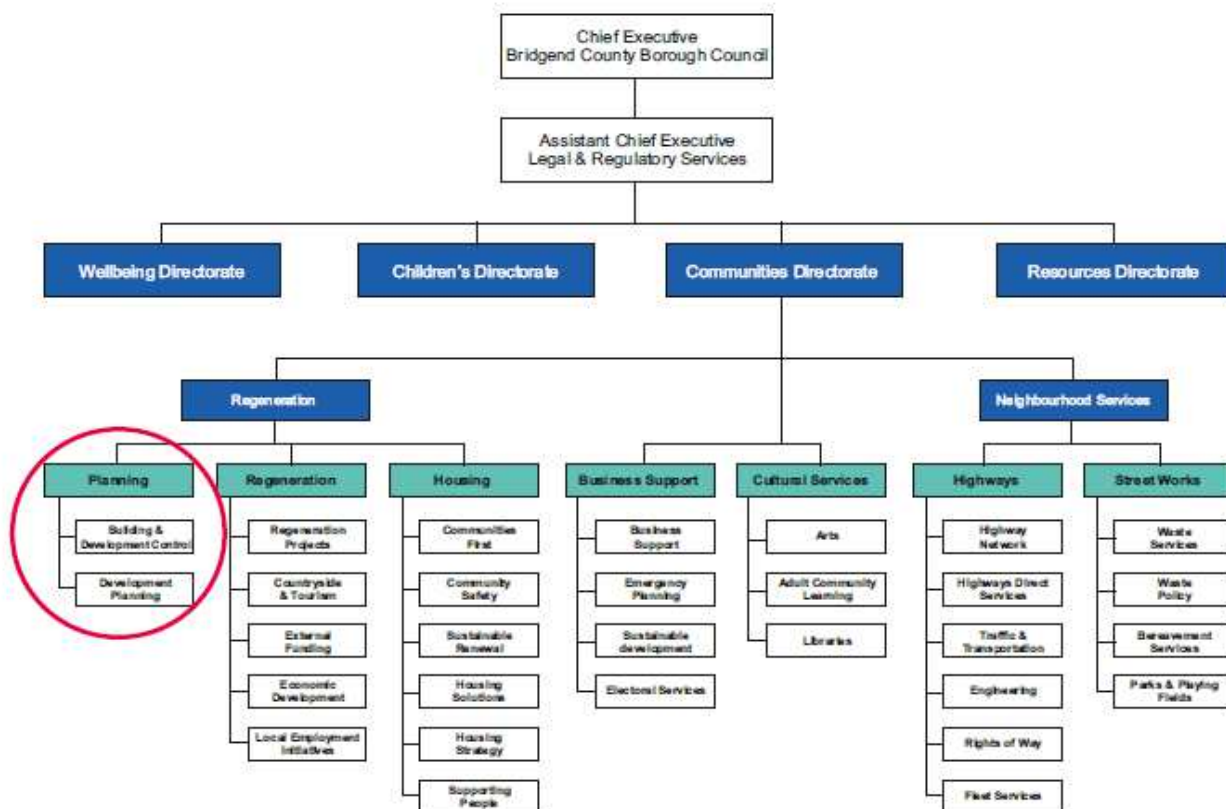
Overview

Bridgend’s Planning Service sits within the Communities Directorate and forms part of the Development and Regeneration service area. Planning functions are grouped under the Development section and covers Development & Building Control, Development Planning and Technical Support. The Group Manager Development is the Lead Planning Officer and reports to the Head of Development & Regeneration who, in turn, reports to the Corporate Director Communities and the Chief Executive Officer. The Planning Service is able to draw considerable support from other service areas within the Directorate including highways, land drainage, ecology and building conservation.

Bridgend was one of the first authorities in Wales to introduce public speaking at Planning Committee in 2005 as well as forming a smaller more specialist Development Control Committee in 2008, which coincided with the adoption of comprehensive delegated powers. A paid preliminary enquiry service became operational in 2011 and a digital document management system has been in operation since 2006, with the back scanning of historical files secured through a Planning Improvement Fund (PIF) grant.

Bridgend has a long standing association with Planning excellence. There has been continuous and consistent Development Plan coverage and top quartile performance in speed of determining planning applications.

BCBC Structure Chart



The Development section underwent a major re-structure in 2013 and a number of posts were lost through retirement. The Building Control and Development Control Sections were amalgamated and the Technical Support Team was incorporated in the Development Planning Section. A subsequent cost-saving re-structure in 2015 resulted in further staff reductions facilitated through a combination of early retirement and voluntary redundancy. The LPA has remained relatively stable since the re-structure and recruitment of a Development and Building Control Manager and a Development Planning Team Leader in 2015.

The Development & Building Control and Development Planning Sections are respectively headed by 2 managers who between them have responsibility for 11 professional planners, 1 enforcement officer, 4 professional building control officers and associated technical officers (who cover finance, administration, GIS, graphic design, data capture and planning appeals). Planning also has responsibility for the Council wide digital mapping service. As well as providing critical technical and administrative support, technical staff also undertake preliminary enquiries, householder planning applications and plan vetting.

Going forward, it is likely that the LPA will need to increase staff resources in the Development Planning section to cope with the extra work required to carry out a review of the LDP in 2017. It is also likely that there will be a requirement to resource the Enforcement section in the near future (currently 1 officer) to administer the new WG regulations, to process an increased number of complaints and to cope with an increased number of Enforcement Notices, appeals and prosecutions.

There is also the opportunity of regional working brought about by City Deal and the possibility of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP), which will require considerable individual input. It is hoped that an SDP will result in a 'light touch LDP going forward. Bridgend is already discussion with its neighbours with regard to potential collaborative working initiatives and sharing resources.

In terms of Building Control, it is acknowledged that this important fee earning and statutory service will shortly be under pressure to seek a trainee or graduate Building Control Officer and train them up "on the job" to ensure a degree of resilience at a time when the average age of the team is circa 55. The section has also had to take on additional duties in the wake of the introduction of shared regulatory service with Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, whereby some functions were not transferred across such as implementing safety at sports grounds and public event legislation. It is apparent that most Welsh Unitary Authorities are finding it difficult to recruit qualified and experienced BC Officers in the face of growing competition from Approved Inspectors and this may be influencing the resilience of teams. The significant fee earning potential for a building control service is important to offset the other non fee-earning work such as dangerous structures. If competition is lost to approved inspectors due to a lack of capacity to take on work then it will result in a loss of fee income and inevitability lead to budget pressures on other service areas. In light of this Bridgend is also considering the possibility of a shared service for building control and is discussing this potential with neighbouring authorities.

Links with other Departments

The Planning Service has a vital role as a contributor to a number of key cross-directorate projects, including grant funded regeneration and land reclamation projects in Bridgend (Vibrant and Viable Places) and Maesteg as well as the ongoing Porthcawl Regeneration Strategy in terms of bringing

forward master plans and development briefs. Other inputs include potential tourism related and Visit Wales projects.

There is also a major officer input to the Schools Modernisation Programme and the land disposal agenda, many of which include key development sites in the Local Development Plan (LDP). A development team approach is adopted for these projects with the Planning Service providing professional support and guidance in the form of development briefs, planning statements and pre-application advice.

The Development Planning Section also works jointly with the Council's Housing Section in the preparation of the Housing Strategy, Local Housing Market Assessments and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments.

The planning service also acts as a driver in promoting other regeneration schemes and developments by providing expert advice on development matters. Recent examples of this include work on a masterplan for the first phase of the Porthcawl regeneration and updating flood risk assessments and investigation potential mitigation measures for Bridgend Town Centre.

The continued input into these projects may be affected by staffing and other resource issues, although it is recognised that planning advice is a key factor in successful development. This must also be balanced against the need to deliver sites in accordance with the aims of the LDP and in the wider corporate interest.

Budget

The Planning Service operational budget, i.e. what it costs the Council to fund, has reduced from £565,000 to around £300,000 over the last three years. Planning fee income is retained and forms part of the overall budget. As estimated, Planning fee income fell during 2015-16. Notwithstanding the increase in Planning fees from 1st October, 2015, which was offered as part of the medium term financial settlement, it is expected that fee income will rise again from mid-2016 onwards due to the implementation of a national statutory pre-application advice service and an updated set of charges for a non-statutory comprehensive pre-application advice service. It was also expected that a number of major applications would be submitted prior to the 1st August, 2016 to avoid having to complete a pre-application consultation exercise. As it stands it is expected that fee income will exceed targets for this year, which whilst not resulting in any significant investment in the resilience of the service, will it is hoped bolster the impacts of further corporate cuts.

Bridgend Planning Fee income 2012-2016					Bridgend Preliminary Enquiry Fee income 2012-2016			
	2012- 2013	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016	2012- 2013	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016
Projected	683350	640775	495780	495780	15000	20000	20000	20000
Actual	510162	414456	596245	522234	18775	15030	23061	17240

Preliminary enquiry fee income also fell in 2015-2016 although the income achieved in 2014-2015 was an exception rather than the rule and was the result of a number of LDP allocated sites and renewable energy schemes coming forward. The pre-application process has been the subject of a

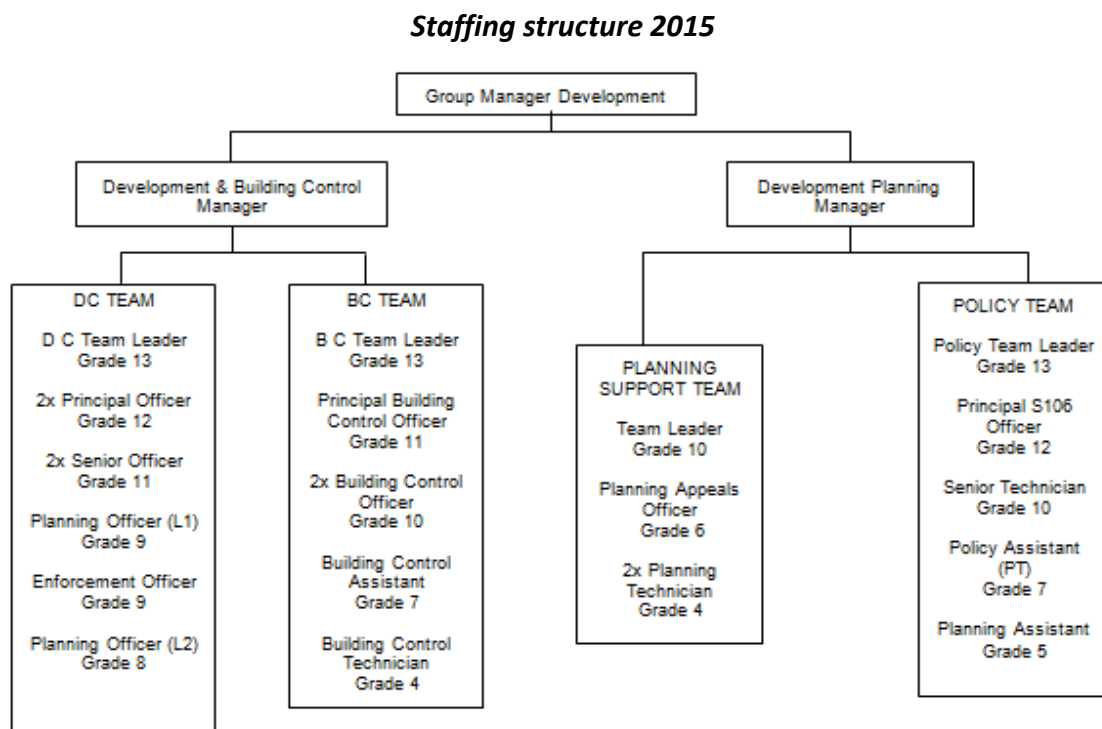
review and, together with a statutory pre-app service from 16th March, 2016, an updated charging regime will be in place from the Summer of 2016. It is envisaged that fees will increase from there on in.

The LDP was adopted in 2013 and, if the SDP process is not at an advanced stage before then, it will need be reviewed in 2017. There also remains considerable work in the ongoing review and adoption of supplementary planning guidance (SPG) such as Affordable Housing, Retail Frontages and Open Space and the production of Development Briefs such as Porthcawl Harbourside Regeneration Area. This has been identified as a work pressure and alternative methods of delivering the service will be considered.

The impact of further financial constraints will be influenced by the corporate spending plans for the next 4 year period, which will aim to take £49m out of the overall Council budget up to 2020. It is not anticipated that there will be any further reductions in the planning service in the short term as the rise in fee income, which could be as much as £79000 per year will at least help maintain the *status quo*. Nevertheless, as with any other Council service, much will depend upon future corporate spending priorities.

Staffing

The Service is proud of the commitment and professionalism of its officers, which is considered as an important asset. As of April 2015, the planning service is the second smallest section in the Directorate ahead of Business Support. The Development Section now comprises 26 members of staff including the Group Manager, which is around half the size it was in 2010. There has been a corresponding loss of expertise particularly with regard to development planning, minerals, GIS and trees. The current staffing structure chart is illustrated below:



The Planning Service had a stable and complete establishment in 2015/2016 and there were no vacancies to back fill.

Historically, Bridgend has encouraged advancement/promotion amongst its planning staff and many of its senior officers started out in more junior positions. The Council has recently implemented a comprehensive job evaluation scheme, which has replaced the national local government pay and grading structure. Staff are mentored and actively supported to undertake and experience more diverse tasks. This is also borne out of necessity as the reduction in overall staffing levels has resulted in some officers having to take on additional duties. Nevertheless the aim remains to develop a well-trained, knowledgeable staff base, capable of multiple tasks and able to operate in an agile capacity. There is also an imperative to move towards a different model of service provision and a review is currently being undertaken as to the level of service that can realistically be provided in the future and what impact there will be on staffing structures.

The Planning Service will continue to look outside for assistance on more specialist types of applications such as mineral schemes and renewable energy projects including the alternative Margam Mine restoration plans.

In terms of succession planning, the age demographic of the section suggests that more members of staff will retire up to 2020 although, given the financial situation currently faced by the Council, it is difficult to accurately predict the size and nature of the service in the coming years and to effectively plan for change or to train officers accordingly.

4. YOUR LOCAL STORY

Bridgend has a long standing association with Planning excellence. There has been continuous and consistent Development Plan coverage and top quartile performance in speed of determining planning applications. As referred to previously, Bridgend was one of the first authorities in Wales to introduce public speaking at their Planning Committees in 2005 as well as forming a smaller more specialist Development Control Committee in 2008. A paid preliminary enquiry service became operational in 2011.

Planning applications may be submitted electronically and are available to view on line as are all planning documents and reports. The vast majority of communication is now carried out electronically.

Performance as measured against the Welsh Government's (WG) development control performance indicators was maintained at a consistently high level during the financial year 2015-2016. For example, the four quarterly returns for the LPA's 8 week performance produced an average of 77% across the year as follows:

Q1 (Apr-June 2015)	–	73%
Q2 (July-Sept 2015)	–	64%
Q3 (Oct-Dec 2015)	–	82%
Q4 (Jan-Mar 2016)	–	87%

The BCBC Local Development Plan was adopted on 18th September 2013. The second Annual Monitoring Report has been issued to Welsh Government and can be found online at – <http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/services/planning/ldp-adoption-page.aspx>

During 2015/16 Development Control Officers each held an average caseload of approximately 45 planning applications at any one time. In addition to the standard application caseload, officers also process a range of preliminary enquiries as part of the formal and charged for pre-application advice service. The loss of an Enforcement Officer has also placed greater pressure on officers' workloads, as they are now required to contribute to enforcement work.

Bridgend has a comprehensive scheme of delegation, which results in around 90% of applications being determined by Officers. The Development Control Committee comprises 18 elected members and has delegated powers to determine all planning applications other than those which depart from the development plan. Site visits are carried out the day before the committee meeting and officers identify, which applications are most likely to be of concern to members. This reduces the number of deferrals at committee where members call for a site visit. Site visits may be in the form of a 'Panel' which is made up of the Chair, Vice Chair and two other members or a 'Full', where all committee members attend. The Committee Protocol dictates that where members are minded to refuse planning permission contrary to officer advice then the application is automatically deferred to the next meeting. This 'cooling off' period allows for refusal reasons to be drafted and for the applicant to consider amendments or provide additional information that may overcome the concerns. Members very rarely vote against an officer recommendation and this is attributable at least in part to the continuous Member training programme and providing comprehensive and relevant planning advice.

The standardisation of Planning Committee Protocols and a National Scheme of Delegation will be brought forward as part of the Wales Planning Act, the full consequences of which are not yet known. It is however, hoped that any national requirement will at least match the schemes already in operation in Bridgend. Any attempt to restrict the flexibility of the Authority to determine planning applications will have a detrimental impact on performance and the ability to bring forward development.

In 2015 the committee moved from a 4 week to a 6 weekly cycle. However, this has resulted in longer agendas and increased determination times and has not proved popular with members or developers and it is proposed to return to a 4 weekly cycle. This move brings with it cost and resource issues and a wider cross directorate review of the scheme of delegation and protocols is required to inform a decision on the most effective committee arrangements. However, it is not likely that this will take place until early 2017 prior to the local government elections.

Webcasting of Council meetings including the Development Control Committee commenced in early 2016. Whilst there was some initial concern over webcasting it has not presented any significant technical issues and has proved popular with developers and agents who now no longer need to make the journey to the Council Chamber to observe meetings. The Development Control Committee enjoys the highest 'watched' figures for the authority.

Bridgend has also implemented a series of ongoing interactive member training sessions on relevant subjects in 2015/2016. Sessions included Basic Planning Principles, Enforcement, Development Control Procedures and Protocols, CIL, the Future of the Planning Service and a workshop of Pre-application advice charging. Occasionally outside speakers are used. For 2016-2017 it is planned that Members will receive presentations from Tony Thickett of PINS relating to Developments of National Significance, Mike Harvey the Secure by Design Officer at South Wales Police regarding Designing Out Crime and Wayne Crocker of MENCAP regarding Changing Places. Training usually consists of an hour long session immediately prior to a committee meeting.

It is considered that actively involving elected members in formulating procedures and policy promotes a greater understanding of planning and allows them to 'take ownership' of the service they represent.

An internal audit of the processing of applications including decision making, the notification of decisions, the appeals process and enforcement actions was carried out during the review period. The final report was issued in February, 2016 and it concluded that the effectiveness of the internal control environment was sound and therefore substantial assurance can be placed upon the management of risks. This overall conclusion was supported by the identification of a well-controlled system where only minor recommendations were made to enhance control and improve value for money.

A new Planning Application back office IT system has been procured for implementation in Summer 2016 which it is anticipated will contribute to improvements in service delivery. It is expected that there will be an element of disruption during the cross-over period and there is also a requirement for staff training before it becomes fully operational. The new system will incorporate an improved 'public-facing' element, which will provide a better service to users. In tandem with this the use of technology to improve service delivery will be explored as well as greater use of on-line services in accord with Corporate priorities. It is likely that the current planning web-pages will be updated, although new constraints on imposed by the national Welsh Language Standards will result in a

reduction of available information due to the cost of translation and the fragmented supply of translating companies.

The planning service holds the highest amount of public documents of all of Council functions on the website. This includes the LDP and all background as well as SPGs, development briefs and design guides. These documents are graphic intensive and highly technical. It is yet not clear as to whether the standards apply to these documents (legal advice is being sought), if so then the potential cost of translation is likely to exceed the funds available and they may have to be removed from the website or risk a fine. Similarly with regard to new SPG and LDP documents the cost of translation will need to be factored into any preparation costs and this could be quite significant but out of proportion to the likely public benefit as there are very few recorded hits on translated versions of web published documents. The decision to remove essential SPG and development plan documents from the public website will be a retrograde step and will require careful consideration and the cost of translation must be balanced against the risk of a fine imposed by the Welsh Language Commissioner and the wider public benefit.

Following the disposal of building assets, the Council is committed, through its transformation agenda, to adopting an agile working environment. The expected rationalisation of office space in 2016 will result in the need to desk share on a 3:2 ratio and operate a formal working from home regime. This could have a negative impact on performance if the necessary IT support is not available or properly managed as planning work can be highly technical in nature and requires access to specialist software such as the back office IT system, digital mapping and archives. Managers are actively investigating how the service will be operated in conjunction with colleagues in other sections. The full impact of the Council's corporate accommodation agenda on the work of the Planning Service is yet to be fully realised although it is expected that new models of working will need to be adopted and this will be reported in the next APR.

Although the planning service does not have a specific Service Improvement Plan, the Council has a Corporate Improvement Plan and a Medium Term Financial Strategy (see documents [here](#)). The Corporate Plan sets out the vision of the Authority, the outcomes wished to achieve, improvement priorities and defines the commitments for the coming year to achieve those priorities. The commitments in the Corporate Plan are delivered through specific actions and measures that are detailed in each directorate/service business plan and performance plans for individual members of staff. This ensures improvement priorities are embedded into delivery at every level of the organisation.

The 2015-16 Communities budget was prepared against a background of further significant cuts in funding for public services, with the Directorate facing a net cash reduction over the previous year's budget. Achieving this level of savings has been a challenging undertaking, with all efforts being made to protect front line services. Further financial challenges are expected and will be compounded by the requirements of the Welsh Language Act, as described above.

Despite having one of the smallest planning teams in Wales, Bridgend has been one of the top performing planning authorities in Wales providing an excellent and value for money service to its customers. Whilst the number of planning staff has reduced by almost half in recent times the number of planning applications, particularly major schemes (over 30) has slightly increased.

For the period 2015-2016, 80% of appeals were dismissed (the Wales Average is 66%) compared to 62% for 2014/2015. 2015-2016 appeals dismissed = 11 , allowed = 4 – % dismissed = 69%

There has been a change in customer satisfaction. In 2014/2015, 74% of survey respondents thought that Bridgend gave good planning advice against a Welsh average of 57%. This year that figure has reduced to 48% with a Welsh average of 58%. This is likely to be the result of a smaller pool of respondents compared to 2014/2015 and the increase in staff workloads.

This situation has been further influenced by a reduction in technical support staff. A large volume of public telephone calls on general planning matters is having a significant impact on the ability to register and administer planning applications and consequently this is affecting performance and the ability to deliver a statutory service. To address the need to focus work on essential support roles, alternative ways of handling public calls is being investigated. Bridgend's planning service had already lost its public facing information function when a corporate customer service centre was established in 2009. This 'one stop shop' required the transfer of one full time employee equivalent from the planning budget but has been largely successful in providing face to face customer contact and the support structure of the section has evolved to reflect this corporate position although disruption caused by large volumes of telephone calls remains a concern. It is proposed to trial the use of an automated message directing members of the public calling the general number to the website for more information or to email their query, which is more manageable. This system would be used at times of heavy workload although applicants continue to have access to case officer's direct lines and urgent calls can still be directed via the call centre. It is hoped that the system will be successful in improving work flow but will require careful monitoring.

Notwithstanding previous good performance in Bridgend, there are serious concerns over maintaining a comprehensive, efficient service and improving performance in light of the wider public sector and local government budget cuts as evidenced in the recent reduction in staffing levels (particularly in the admin/technical support team). There is also increasing concern regarding the timely responses from statutory consultees such as the Highway Authority and NRW etc..

Individual workloads have increased and there are additional pressures in adapting to new secondary legislation as a result of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the imminent changes to Development Management procedures and the continual need to provide statistics on the performance of the LPA, the amount of time expended on responding to WG Consultations and the reliance on timely statutory consultee responses. There is also the requirement to review and adapt aspects of service delivery as necessary to reflect current staff and resources. This in turn deflects efforts that would otherwise be directed to operational areas of work.

The introduction of a requirement to refund planning application fees, under Regulation 9 of the updated fees Regulations, is likely to place further pressure on the LPA to determine substandard applications within set time frames. Due to having only one Enforcement Officer in the Section, the scope for the LPA to investigate proactive methods of monitoring development and permissions is severely restricted, which inevitably leads to a greater number of unauthorised developments and complaints to investigate and resolve. This usually involves intensive monitoring often at unsocial hours, collation of evidence and court appearances. It is becoming increasingly apparent that there is difficulty in managing the expectations of the public and elected officials where breaches of consent or conditions occur. The planning service is expected to be able to act quickly or to immediately intervene to stop operations, whereas the reality is that the enforcement process can be slow, heavily evidence based, open to challenge and does not always result in significant

penalty. This tends to garner a public perception that the authority is ineffective. And this places greater pressure on the service to deliver results

In 2016 the planning service updated its paid pre-application service first introduced in 2011 to coincide with the implementation of the Welsh Government national statutory scheme. For the first time a charge is now levied for householder enquires and the scale of charges was amended to reflect the WG scheme. Under the new scheme, Bridgend offers a free scoping meeting for major development, where a potential developer can present their scheme to officers. No formal opinion is offered at this stage, but a developer will be provided with quote for a detailed pre-application response tailored to suit the proposal with full costing and timescale. The developer may either chose to take up the Council service or instead use the statutory scheme. So far the response from developers has been positive. The service will continue to be promoted and reviewed later in the year.

As described above, the priorities for the planning service in the coming year will be :-

- To continue to investigate the rationalisation and streamlining of the services provided to the public as a result of restructuring and ongoing budget constraints.
- To continue to investigate alternative means of service delivery including the greater use of technology and collaborative working.
- To continue to review, update and implement Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- To promote and review the non-statutory paid pre-application advice service
- To meet the challenge of adapting to an agile working environment.
- To implement the changes to DM Procedures from March 2016 onwards.
- To successfully implement a new back office Planning Applications system.
- To meet challenges imposed by other legislation that may have an impact on service delivery.

5. WHAT SERVICE USERS THINK

In 2015-16 we conducted a customer satisfaction survey aimed at assessing the views of people that had received a planning application decision during the year.

The survey was sent to 393 people, 9% of whom submitted a whole or partial response. The majority of responses (53%) were from members of the public. 9% of respondents had their most recent planning application refused.

We asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the planning service. They were given the following answer options:

- Strongly agree;
- Tend to agree;
- Neither agree nor disagree;
- Tend to disagree; and
- Strongly disagree.

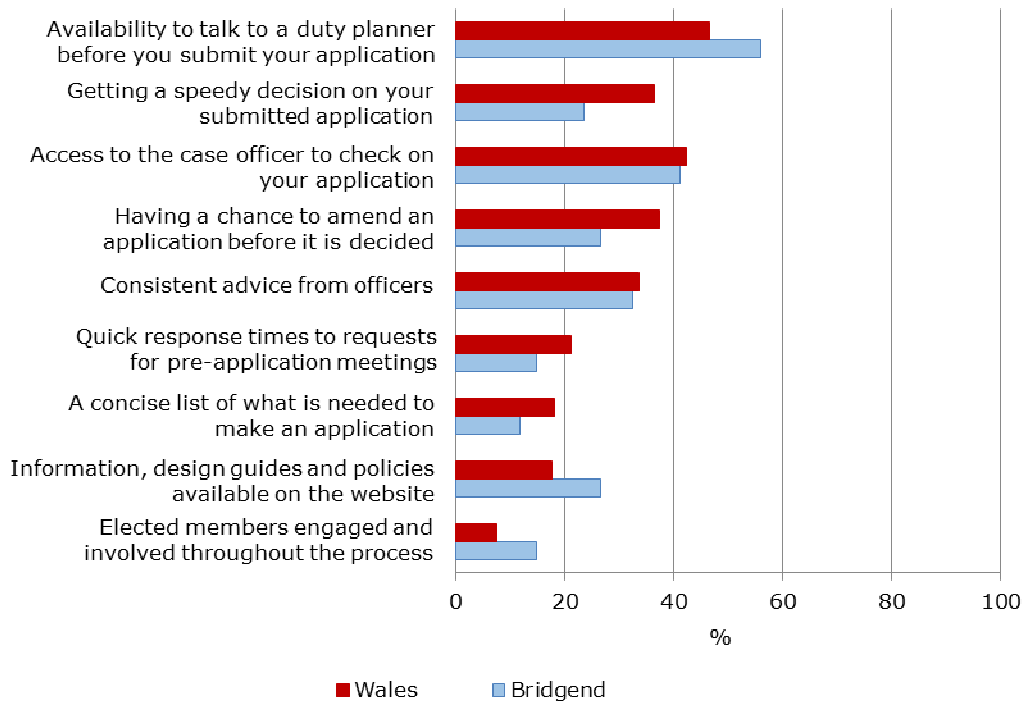
Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents that selected either 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' for each statement for both our planning authority and Wales.

Table 1: Percentage of respondents who agreed with each statement, 2015-16

	%	
	Bridgend LPA	Wales
Percentage of respondents who agreed that:		
The LPA enforces its planning rules fairly and consistently	50	47
The LPA gave good advice to help them make a successful application	48	58
The LPA gives help throughout, including with conditions	42	49
The LPA responded promptly when they had questions	48	58
They were listened to about their application	54	57
They were kept informed about their application	47	49
They were satisfied overall with how the LPA handled their application	55	61

We also asked respondents to select three planning service characteristics from a list that they thought would most help them achieve successful developments. Figure 1 shows how often each characteristic was selected as a percentage of the total number of selections. For us, 'the availability to talk to a duty planner before submitting an application' was the most popular choice.

Figure 1: Characteristics of a good planning service, Bridgend LPA, 2015-16



Comments received include:

“Very good”

“I found the whole process easy and my officer very helpful with advice and the guidelines”

“The terminology used by some planning officers was complicated and ambiguous for the lay public. The process needs to be much clearer and should be incremental in its application.”

6. OUR PERFORMANCE 2015-16

This section details our performance in 2015-16. It considers both the Planning Performance Framework indicators and other available data to help paint a comprehensive picture of performance. Where appropriate we make comparisons between our performance and the all Wales picture.

Performance is analysed across the five key aspects of planning service delivery as set out in the Planning Performance Framework:

- Plan making;
- Efficiency;
- Quality;
- Engagement; and
- Enforcement.

Plan making

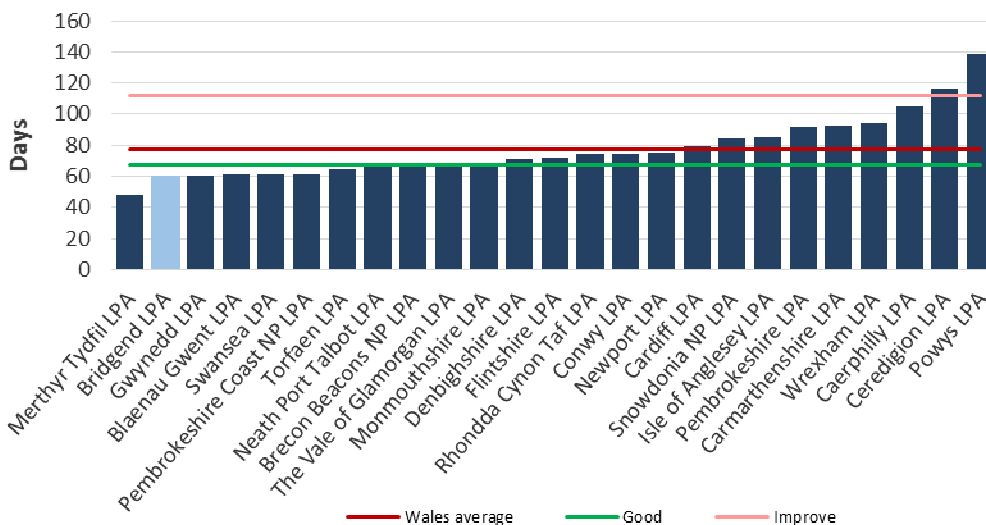
As at 31 March 2016, we were one of 22 LPAs that had a current development plan in place. We are required to submit an Annual Monitoring Report in October 2016. This document has been prepared.

During the APR period we had 5.4 years of housing land supply identified, making us one of 8 Welsh LPAs with the required 5 years supply.

Efficiency

In 2015-16 we determined 801 planning applications, each taking, on average, 60 days (9 weeks) to determine. This compares to an average of 77 days (11 weeks) across Wales. Figure 2 shows the average time taken by each LPA to determine an application during the year.

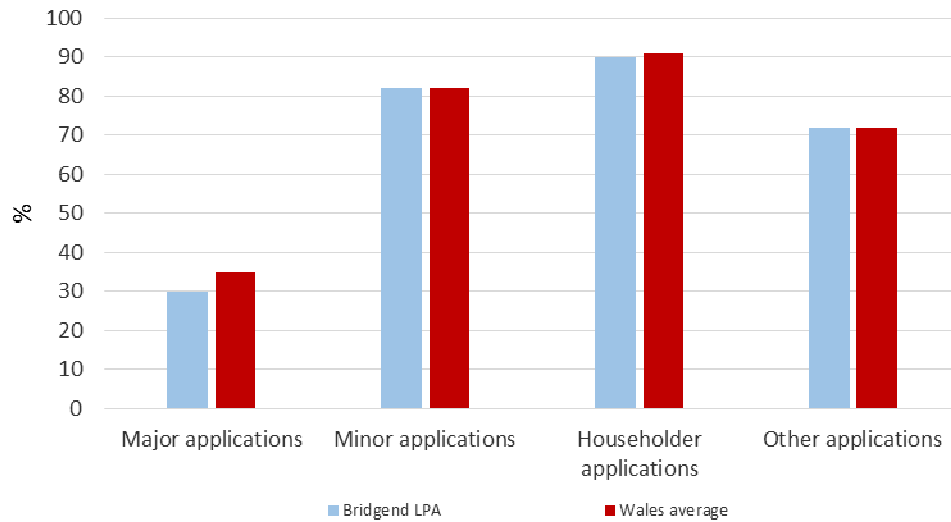
Figure 2: Average time taken (days) to determine applications, 2015-16



77% of all planning applications were determined within the required timescales. This compared to 77% across Wales, but was below the 80% target. Only 8 out of 25 LPAs met the 80% target.

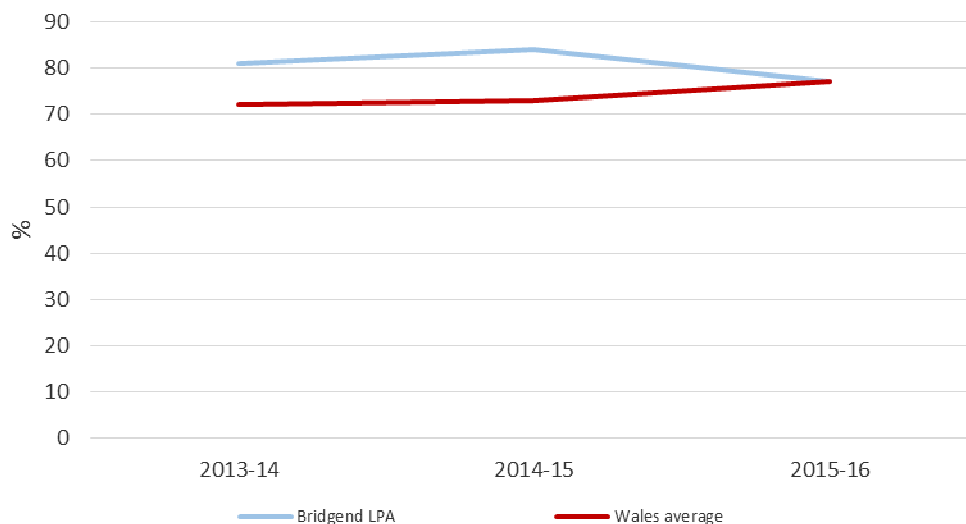
Figure 3 shows the percentage of planning applications determined within the required timescales across the four main types of application for our LPA and Wales. It shows that we determined 90% of householder applications within the required timescales.

Figure 3: Percentage of planning applications determined within the required timescales, by type, 2015-16



Between 2014-15 and 2015-16, as Figure 4 shows, the percentage of planning applications we determined within the required timescales decreased from 84%. Wales saw an increase this year.

Figure 4: Percentage of planning applications determined within the required timescales



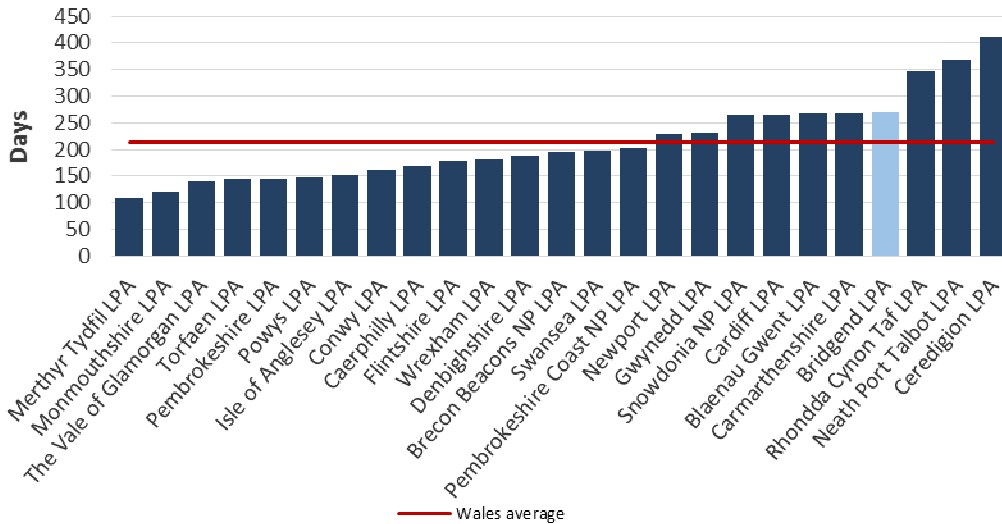
Over the same period:

- The number of applications we received increased;
- The number of applications we determined increased; and
- The number of applications we approved decreased.

Major applications

We determined 30 major planning applications in 2015-16, none of which were subject to an EIA. Each application took, on average, 270 days (39 weeks) to determine. As Figure 5 shows, this was the fourth longest average time taken of all Welsh LPAs

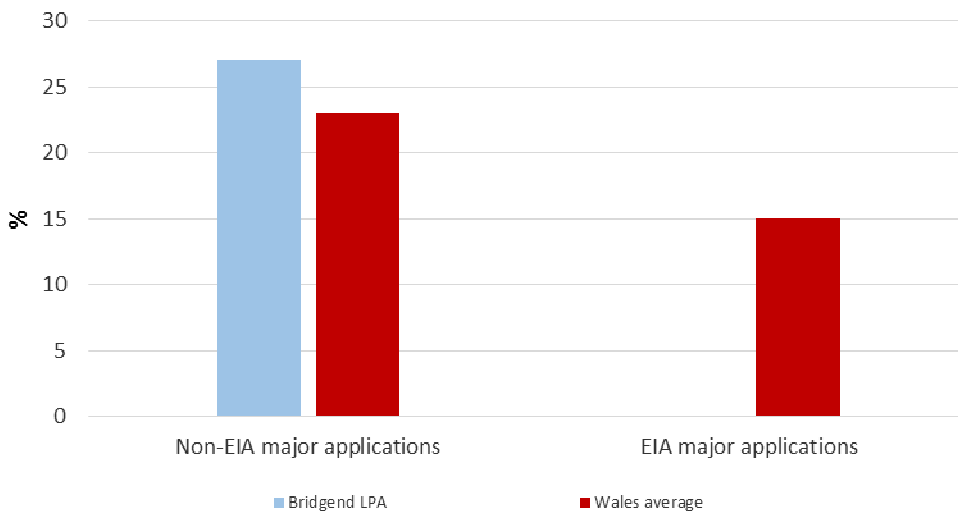
Figure 5: Average time (days) taken to determine a major application, 2015-16



30% of these major applications were determined within the required timescales, compared to 35% across Wales.

Figure 6 shows the percentage of major applications determined within the required timescales by the type of major application. 27% of our 'standard' major applications i.e. those not requiring an EIA, were determined within the required timescales during the year.

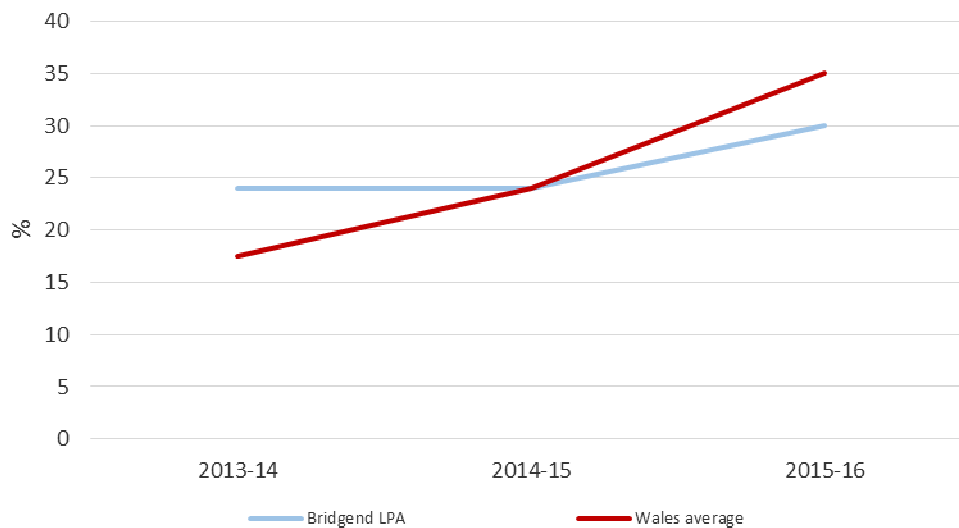
Figure 6: Percentage of Major applications determined within the required timescales during the year, by type, 2015-16



Since 2014-15 the percentage of major applications determined within the required timescales had increased from 24%. Similarly, the number of major applications determined increased while the number of applications subject to an EIA determined during the year stayed the same.

Figure 7 shows the trend in the percentage of major planning applications determined within the required timescales in recent years and how this compares to Wales.

Figure 7: Percentage of major planning applications determined within the required timescales



Over the same period:

- The percentage of minor applications determined within the required timescales decreased from 87% to 82%;
- The percentage of householder applications determined within the required timescales decreased from 94% to 90%; and
- The percentage of other applications determined within required timescales decreased from 78% to 72%.

Quality

In 2015-16, our Planning Committee made 69 planning application decisions during the year, which equated to 9% of all planning applications determined. Across Wales 7% of all planning application decisions were made by planning committee.

1% of these member-made decisions went against officer advice. This compared to 9% of member-made decisions across Wales. This equated to 0.1% of all planning application decisions going against officer advice; 0.6% across Wales.

In 2015-16 we received 12 appeals against our planning decisions, which equated to 1.3 appeals for every 100 applications received. This was the fourth lowest ratio of appeals to applications in Wales. Figure 8 shows how the volume of appeals received has changed since 2014-15 and how this compares to Wales.

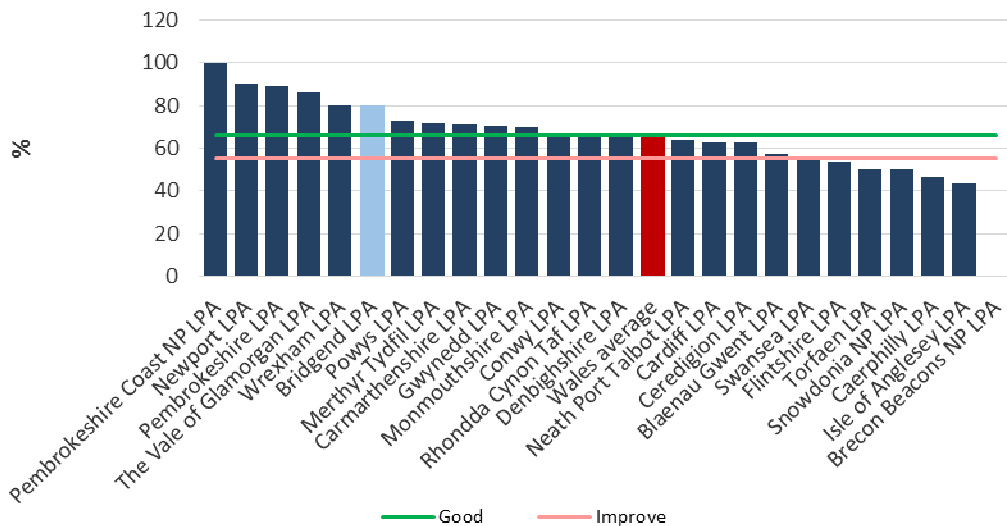
Figure 8: Number of appeals received per 100 planning applications



Over the same period the percentage of planning applications approved decreased from 91% to 88%.

Of the 10 appeals that were decided during the year, 69% were dismissed. As Figure 9 shows, this was the fifth highest percentage of appeals dismissed in Wales and we were one of 14 LPAs that reached the 66% target.

Figure 9: Percentage of appeals dismissed, 2015-16



During 2015-16 we had no applications for costs at a section 78 appeal upheld.

Engagement

We are:

- one of 24 LPAs that allowed members of the public to address the Planning Committee; and
- one of 20 LPAs that had an online register of planning applications.

As Table 2 shows, 48% of respondents to our 2015-16 customer satisfaction survey agreed that the LPA gave good advice to help them make a successful application.

Table 2: Feedback from our 2015-16 customer satisfaction survey

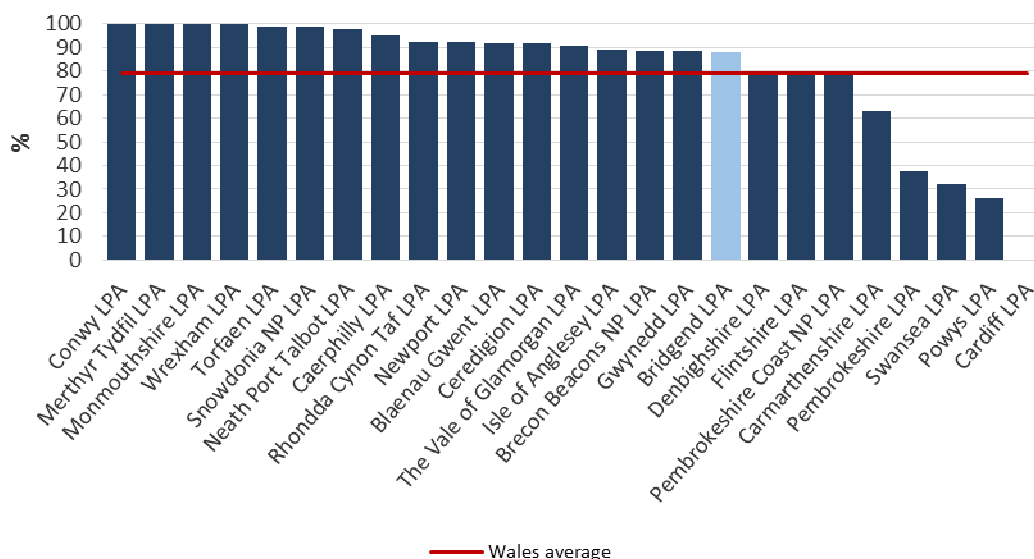
	%	
Percentage of respondents who agreed that:	Bridgend LPA	Wales
The LPA gave good advice to help them make a successful application	48	58
They were listened to about their application	54	57

Enforcement

In 2015-16 we investigated 247 enforcement cases, which equated to 1.7 per 1,000 population. This compared to 1.9 enforcement cases investigated per 1,000 population across Wales. We took, on average, 36 days to investigate each enforcement case.

We investigated 88% of these enforcement cases within 84 days. Across Wales 79% were investigated within 84 days. Figure 10 shows the percentage of enforcement cases that were investigated within 84 days across all Welsh LPAs.

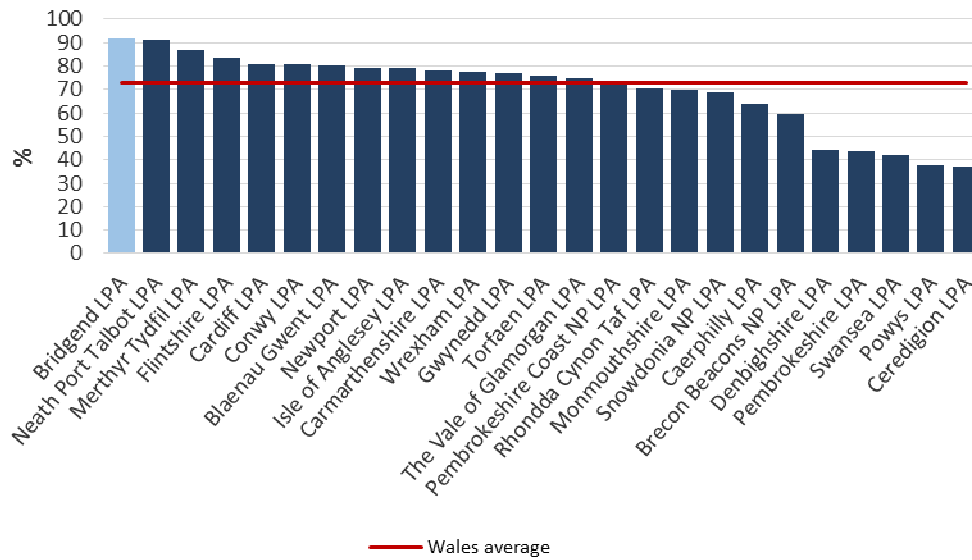
Figure 10: Percentage of enforcement cases investigated within 84 days, 2015-16



Over the same period, we resolved 302 enforcement cases, taking, on average, 68 days to resolve each case.

92% of this enforcement action was taken within 180 days from the start of the case. As Figure 11 shows this was the highest percentage in Wales

Figure 11: Percentage of enforcement cases resolved in 180 days, 2015-16



ANNEX A - PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Plan making			
Is there a current Development Plan in place that is within the plan period?	Yes		No
LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	<12	13-17	18+
Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	Yes		No
The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	>5		<5
Efficiency			
Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	Not set	Not set	Not set
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	Not set	Not set	Not set
Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	>80	60.1-79.9	<60
Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<67	67-111	112+
Quality			
Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<5	4.9-8.9	9+
Percentage of appeals dismissed	>66	55.1-65.9	<55
Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	0	1	2
Engagement			
Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Yes		No

WALES AVERAGE	Bridgend LPA LAST YEAR	Bridgend LPA THIS YEAR
Yes	Yes	Yes
47	N/A	N/A
Yes	N/A	Yes
3.9	6	5.4
35	24	30
213	89	270
77	84	77
77	30	60
9	0	1
66	62	80
0	0	0
Yes	Yes	Yes

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Yes		No
Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	Yes	Partial	No
Enforcement			
Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	Not set	Not set	Not set
Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases	Not set	Not set	Not set
Percentage of enforcement cases where enforcement action is taken or a retrospective application granted within 180 days from the start of the case (in those cases where it was expedient to enforce)?	Not set	Not set	Not set
Average time taken to take enforcement action	Not set	Not set	Not set

WALES AVERAGE	Bridgend LPA LAST YEAR	Bridgend LPA THIS YEAR
Yes	-	No
Yes	Yes	Yes
Enforcement		
79	85	88
88	24	36
73	94	92
210	43	68

SECTION 1 – PLAN MAKING

Indicator	01. Is there a current Development Plan in place that is within the plan period?	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
A development plan (LDP or UDP) is in place and within the plan period	N/A	No development plan is in place (including where the plan has expired)

Authority's performance	Yes
The Bridgend Local Development Plan was adopted on 18 September 2013	

Indicator	02. LDP preparation deviation from the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement, in months	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
The LDP is being progressed within 12 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed within between 12 and 18 months of the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement	The LDP is being progressed more than 18 months later than the dates specified in the original Delivery Agreement

Authority's performance	N/A

Indicator	03. Annual Monitoring Reports produced following LDP adoption	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
An AMR is due, and has been prepared		An AMR is due, and has not been prepared

Authority's performance	Yes
AMR has been prepared and submitted.	

Indicator	04. The local planning authority's current housing land supply in years	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
The authority has a housing land supply of more than 5 years		The authority has a housing land supply of less than 5 years

Authority's performance	5.4

SECTION 2 - EFFICIENCY

Indicator	05. Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority's performance	30
Several of the major applications were subject to Section 106 agreements and improvements to schemes were negotiated.	

Indicator	06. Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority's performance	270
Several of the major applications were subject to Section 106 agreements and improvements to schemes were negotiated.	

Indicator	07. Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
More than 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 60% and 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 60% of applications are determined within the statutory time period

Authority's performance	77

Indicator	08. Average time taken to determine all applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Less than 67 days	Between 67 and 111 days	112 days or more

Authority's performance	60

SECTION 3 - QUALITY

Indicator	09. Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Less than 5% of decisions	Between 5% and 9% of decisions	9% or more of decisions

Authority's performance	1

Indicator	10. Percentage of appeals dismissed	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
More than 66% (two thirds) of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Between 55% and 66% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Less than 55% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal

Authority's performance	69

Indicator	11. Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
The authority has not had costs awarded against it at appeal	The authority has had costs awarded against it in one appeal case	The authority has had costs awarded against it in two or more appeal cases

Authority's performance	0

SECTION 4 – ENGAGEMENT

Indicator	12. Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	
"Good"		"Improvement needed"
Members of the public are able to address the Planning Committee		Members of the public are not able to address the Planning Committee

Authority's performance	Yes

Indicator	13. Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	
“Good”		“Improvement needed”
Members of the public can seek advice from a duty planning officer		There is no duty planning officer available

Authority’s performance	No
<p>The Planning Service Public Enquiry desk was incorporated into the Corporate Customer Services Centre in 2010 along with the budget for a full time member of staff. Members of the Public visiting the office will be seen by a Customer Service Representative who is trained to provide general planning advice. The Customer Service Centre operates normal officer hours. Queries relating to specific applications or projects will require prior arrangement with the relevant case officer. A telephone messaging service is also available. The ongoing provision of a ‘duty officer’ system is subject to review given reductions in staff and financial resources.</p>	

Indicator	14. Does the local planning authority’s web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access track their progress (and view their content)?	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
All documents are available online	Only the planning application details are available online, and access to other documents must be sought directly	No planning application information is published online

Authority’s performance	Yes

SECTION 5 – ENFORCEMENT

Indicator	15. Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority’s performance	88

Indicator	16. Average time taken to investigate enforcement cases	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority’s performance	36

Indicator	17. Percentage of enforcement cases where enforcement action is taken or a retrospective application granted within 180 days from the start of the case (in those cases where it was expedient to enforce)	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority’s performance	92

Indicator	18. Average time taken to take enforcement action	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority’s performance	68

SECTION 6 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

The purpose of the Sustainable Development Indicators is to measure the contribution the planning system makes to sustainable development in Wales.

The Sustainable Development Indicators will be used to measure the progress against national planning sustainability objectives, set out in Planning Policy Wales, and can be used to demonstrate to our stakeholders the role and scope of the planning system in delivering wider objectives. The information will also be useful to local planning authorities to understand more about the outcomes of the planning system and help inform future decisions.

Authority’s returns	We consistently provide a full response to the SD Indicators

Indicator	SD1. The floorspace (square metres) granted and refused planning permission for new economic development on allocated employment sites during the year.
------------------	--

Granted (square metres)	
Authority’s data	53,245

Refused (square metres)	
Authority’s data	0

Indicator	SD2. Planning permission granted for renewable and low carbon energy development during the year.
------------------	--

Granted permission (number of applications)	
Authority's data	5

Granted permission (MW energy generation)	
Authority's data	78

Indicator	SD3. The number of dwellings granted planning permission during the year.
------------------	--

Market housing (number of units)	
Authority's data	417

Affordable housing (number of units)	
Authority's data	118

Indicator	SD4. Planning permission granted and refused for development in C1 and C2 floodplain areas during the year.
------------------	--

Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) that DID NOT meet all TAN 15 tests which were GRANTED permission	
Authority's data	0

Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) that did not meet all TAN 15 tests which were REFUSED permission on flood risk grounds	
Authority's data	0

Number of residential units (and also hectares of non-residential units) that MET all TAN 15 tests which were GRANTED permission	
Authority's data	37

Indicator	SD5. The area of land (ha) granted planning permission for new development on previously developed land and greenfield land during the year.
------------------	---

Previously developed land (hectares)	
Authority's data	15

Greenfield land (hectares)	
Authority's data	15

Indicator	SD6. The area of public open space (ha) that would be lost and gained as a result of development granted planning permission during the quarter.
------------------	---

Open space lost (hectares)	
Authority's data	0

Open space gained (hectares)	
Authority's data	0

Indicator	SD7. The total financial contributions (£) agreed from new development granted planning permission during the quarter for the provision of community infrastructure.
------------------	---

Gained via Section 106 agreements (£)	
Authority's data	2,224,796

Gained via Community Infrastructure Levy (£)	
Authority's data	0