

# REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

9 November 2017

## REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES BRIDGEND CBC LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY –

### ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2016-2017

#### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The 2017 Annual Performance Report (APR) has been completed and forwarded to the Welsh Government and is brought before Members for information. The report covers the period from July 2016 to June 2017.

#### 2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The delivery of the County Borough's statutory planning function has links to the Council's corporate priorities in particular number 1 – supporting a successful economy.

#### 3. Background

3.1 In line with Welsh Government requirements, Bridgend County Borough Council submitted its first APR in October 2015. The APR process was proposed by the Welsh Government as a result of the "Positive Planning" consultation in December, 2013.

3.2 This report provides members with an update on the direction of travel in terms of performance since last year. The APR, which is part narrative and part statistical, outlines the performance of Bridgend as a local planning authority over the period 2016-17 against a number of key national indicators and benchmarks and also includes the results of a customer satisfaction survey.

3.3 The data is derived from information supplied to Welsh Government and the Wales Data Unit, which in turn forms part of the national planning performance framework. Despite having one of the smallest planning teams in Wales, Bridgend continues to be one of the top performing planning authorities in Wales, providing an excellent service and value for money to its customers.

3.4 Whilst the number of planning staff has reduced by almost half in recent times the number of planning applications particularly major schemes has slightly increased.

Some of the key points arising from the APR are:-

- An increase in planning applications determined from 801 in 2016 to 933 in 2017.
- The same average determination time for all applications as last year (60 days) which is still below the Welsh average of 76 days.
- An increase in the percentage of applications determined within the required timescales from 77% to 81% (96% of householder applications were determined within the required timescales compared to 90% in 2016).
- The number of major applications has continued to grow from 30 in 2016 to 37 over the last year.
- Improved determination performance with regard to major applications from an average of 270 days in 2016 to 171 days in 2017 which is above the Welsh average of 250 days. 35% of the 37 major applications were determined within the required timescales compared to a Welsh average of 59%.
- The number of appeals received increased from 12 in 2016 to 26 in 2017 which equates to 2.5 appeals for every 100 applications (the fifth highest ratio of appeals in Wales) and the appeal success rate has increased from 69% to 73%.

- Slight drop in enforcement performance from an average of 36 days to investigate each enforcement case in 2016 to an average of 48 days in 2017 although the number of complaints increased from 247 cases in 2016 to 271 cases in 2017.
- Continuous and up to date Development Plan coverage.
- A 5.1 year supply of housing land as at 2016/2017 (Members will note that this figure has recently been revised to 4 years following the publication of the 2017 Joint Housing Land Availability Study).

3.5 There has been another change in customer satisfaction levels. In 2015, 74% of survey respondents thought that Bridgend gave good planning advice against a Welsh average of 57%. Last year, that figure reduced to 48% with a Welsh average of 58%. In 2017, 62% of respondents agreed that the Local Planning Authority gave good advice (against a Welsh average of 62%) and the increase in satisfaction can be attributed to a number of factors such as an efficient and valued pre-application advice process.

3.6 The APR provides a more detailed commentary on the figures highlighted above.

#### **4. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The well-being goals identified in the Act are:

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

The duty has been considered in the production of this report and the APR. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing goals/objectives as a result of the APR.

#### **5. Next Steps**

5.1 The Local Planning Authority's APR for 2016/2017 has been formally submitted to the Welsh Government.

#### **6. Recommendation**

6.1 That Members note the content of this report and the LPA's Annual Performance Report for 2016/2017.

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#### **Background documents**

BCBC's APR 2016-2017 (link to the report to be provided to Members w/c 6/11/17)