

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

26th FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES
BRIDGEND REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2018-2033
DRAFT VISION & OBJECTIVES, GROWTH & SPATIAL OPTIONS

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report to Development Control Committee the draft vision and objectives, growth and spatial strategy options for the Bridgend Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP).

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priorities:-

1. Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all 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 its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

2.2 The Bridgend Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) is a high level strategy document which must be prepared by the Council. The LDP sets out in land-use terms the corporate priorities set out above. The future Replacement LDP will be required to express in land-use terms the wellbeing objectives and priorities of the Bridgend Public Services Board's Well-being Plan.

3. Background

3.1 The - technical reports (attached as appendices A, B & C) provide background information in respect of the draft vision & objectives; growth options and spatial strategy options proposed for the Replacement LDP.

3.2 It is intended that these technical reports will inform the ongoing pre-deposit engagement and participation and inform the preparation of the preferred strategy and subsequent stages of plan preparation:

- Technical Report 1: Draft Vision and Objectives (attached as Appendix A);

- Technical Report 2: Draft Strategic Growth Options (attached as Appendix B);
- Technical Report 3: Draft Spatial Strategy Options (attached as Appendix C).

4. CURRENT SITUATION -

4.1 An executive summary for each technical report is provided below:

4.2 **Technical Report 1: Draft Vision and Objectives (Appendix A)**

4.3 In order to tackle key issues and guide and manage future development, the existing LDP identified a clear vision of what the County Borough should look like in 2021 and the objectives to deliver that vision. Therefore, as part of the LDP review process its vision and objectives need to be revisited to ensure they remain relevant to local needs and aspirations up to 2033 (2033 is the Replacement LDP expiry date).

4.4 Vision

4.5 It is important to reiterate that the existing LDP has been broadly successful and delivered many significant benefits for the residents of the County Borough. Therefore, it is considered logical to build upon and update the existing LDP vision to ensure it complements the Local Well-being Plan and expresses in land use terms, those elements of the LWBP that relate to the development and use of land. However, it is important to recognise that the LDP cannot deliver all of the local wellbeing outcomes as many issues will extend beyond the direct influence of 'land-use planning'. Nevertheless, the LDP will contribute towards creating the right conditions to support their delivery.

4.6 The draft LDP vision is set out below and incorporates the 4 LWBP objectives (highlighted in **blue text**).

4.7 ***Bridgend County Borough will continue to be transformed to become a sustainable, safe, healthy and inclusive network of communities comprising strong, interdependent, connected and **cohesive** settlements that can offer **people:*****

- ***the best start in life by providing effective learning environments to secure the best possible outcomes for learners;***
- ***provide opportunities to reduce social and economic inequalities; and***
- ***an improved quality of life and a healthy environment for all people living, working, visiting and relaxing in the area.***

4.8 Objectives

4.9 The revised LDP Vision shall be delivered through 4 redrafted Strategic Objectives and which seek to reflect updated national policy and legislation and address the local issues and facing the County Borough. These four draft strategic objectives are central to the Replacement LDP: They are:

- SP1 To Produce High Quality Sustainable Places (Placemaking).

- SP2 To create active, healthy, cohesive and social communities.
- SP3 To create Productive and Enterprising Places.
- SP4 To Protect and enhance our Distinctive and Natural Places.

4.10 In addition 25 specific objectives have been formulated to create the right conditions to address the various social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being outcomes.

4.11 It is also important to note that future LDP policies will be cross-cutting in their nature and will cross-reference to the goals and objectives of the FWBG Act and LWBP. **The vision and objectives will continually be refined during the review process based on stakeholder engagement and the outcomes of a refreshed evidence base.**

4.12 **Technical Report 2: Strategic Growth Options (Appendix B)**

- 4.13 A range of evidence has been analysed to inform the basis for Bridgend's housing and economic growth from 2018-2033, including the Welsh Government Projections along with a number of alternative scenarios. This evidence has been used to devise a Low, Mid and High Growth Option to inform the Replacement LDP.
- 4.14 The Low Growth Option is based on a period of reduced growth and net migration flows to the area from 2009/10 to 2011/12, estimating a low build rate of 271 dwellings per annum. It would also restrict economic growth and development in the area, projecting a minimal change in employment per annum (+13).
- 4.15 The Mid Growth Option is grounded in post-recession trends, estimating residential growth of **505 dwellings per annum** and **employment growth of 266 per annum** over the plan period. This Option would induce similar levels of residential development to those witnessed in recent years and see more established working aged households remaining in the County Borough.
- 4.16 The High Growth Option would result in delivery of 570 dwellings per annum, based on long term trends that incorporate pre-recession migration levels. Not only would the High Growth Option result in an increase to recent build levels and associated employment growth of +380 per annum, it would be based partly on migration trends influenced by the unusual socio-economic conditions prior to the recession.
- 4.17 Overall, the Mid Growth Option therefore appears to be the most appropriate to align regeneration based growth aspirations with realistic levels of delivery. It balances both household formation and migration rates with planned growth in local employment and associated infrastructure in a manner that would see a continuation of recent average growth trends.
- 4.18 Background context: The importance of building new homes
- 4.19 As well as delivering new homes to meet the needs of newly forming households, increasing housing supply will provide the scale of growth needed to secure investment in infrastructure, facilities and additional benefits for local communities. Planning for such levels of development will also act as a key driver of economic growth across Bridgend and the wider region.
- 4.20 For one, housing growth provides scope to deliver **additional affordable housing** to offer safety and security for local families unable to meet their needs in the housing market. This can include social rent for those most in need and shared equity schemes for first time buyers struggling to get onto the property ladder. The levels of Social Housing Grant received by the Council in recent years are not guaranteed to be sustained over the life of the LDP, and, in any case, only meet an element of identified local need. Planning for growth therefore plays an important role in securing developer contributions to provide integrated affordable housing within new developments to foster sustainable, mixed tenure communities.

- 4.21 Building new homes also helps to ease some of the pressure on the housing market by boosting supply and preventing house prices rising uncontrollably in an otherwise constrained housing market. This helps to improve general market affordability and provide sufficient properties for **future generations** to live in Bridgend County Borough.
- 4.22 Building new homes also has a huge impact on the labour market by generating **new employment opportunities**. Residential development initially creates jobs for construction workers along with those in associated occupations and supplier companies. This induces a multiplier effect, as new residents move into the vicinity and local business and services benefit from increased revenue. Longer term economic growth then becomes sustainable as investors, a skilled workforce and major employers are attracted into the area, leading to further revenue being recycled throughout the local economy. This can improve community job prospects and reduce the need for residents to commute out of the County Borough for employment purposes.
- 4.23 Growth in house building also brings new opportunities to **secure accompanying infrastructure** such as improved **education provision**, leisure facilities and transport links. The occupiers of the new homes ultimately place more demand on existing infrastructure, which is already at capacity in some areas. Planning for growth therefore provides a key opportunity to appraise the impacts on existing infrastructure, identify delivery requirements and then address deficiencies through planning obligations.
- 4.24 For example, significant housing growth will give rise to demand for school places in the future. If there is limited or no spare capacity in the existing school(s), the proposed development places a burden on the community which can be resolved through developer contributions. Small levels of growth may only support interim solutions such as extensions, although sustainable growth at a strategic scale would be supported by new school provision and the other necessary infrastructure.
- 4.25 Equally, capacity issues at major road junctions (that may be further exacerbated by new development) can be addressed by requiring new traffic management provision, new roads, and improved public transport links to accommodate the levels of growth required. The scale of the improvements are necessarily dictated by the scale of any new development within the vicinity and comprehensively planned developments provide greater opportunities for major infrastructure upgrades.
- 4.26 Sustainable levels of growth can therefore be planned for in a manner that will enable significant improvements to physical and social infrastructure to increase the functionality and attractiveness of Bridgend County Borough for residents, investors and businesses.

4.27 **Technical Report 3: Draft Spatial Strategy Options (Appendix C)**

4.28 In addition to setting out the level of growth needed over the plan period, the Replacement LDP (2018-2033) must put forward a clear spatial strategy for where this development should take place within the County Borough. The consideration of 'realistic' growth and spatial options is an important part in the preparation of the LDP and are intended to facilitate discussion and inform the 'Preferred Strategy' consultation document.

4.29 Therefore, Technical Report 3, puts forward 4 possible Spatial Strategy Options for accommodating the distribution of housing and employment growth anticipated over the Revised LDP plan period (2018-2033):

- **Option 1: Continuation of the existing LDP Regeneration Strategy** - Prioritise the re-use of previously developed land and direct growth to sites within the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (SRGA's) and existing settlement boundaries (SDB).
- **Option 2: Public Transport Hubs and Strategic Road Corridors Strategy** – growth is directed to major public transport hubs and the strategic highway network (M4).
- **Option 3: Prioritise growth to the North of the M4 (Valleys Strategy)** - new development would focus on the existing SRGAs of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and the Valleys Gateway, with the delivery of existing commitments on brownfield sites being the focus in settlements outside of these areas. The strategy would also identify a Strategic Hub in the north of the Borough in accordance with the Welsh Government's Ministerial Valleys Taskforce.
- **Option 4: Regeneration and Sustainable Urban Growth-led Strategy** – this is hybrid of options 1, 2 and 3 which would balance the requirement to deliver the County Borough's housing requirement and Council's regeneration objectives.

4.30 **Preferred Spatial Strategy Option**

4.31 Based on current evidence and the options appraisal set out in Technical Report 3 (Appendix C); Option 4 is likely to be identified as the preferred spatial strategy that will enable the Council to achieve the most sustainable form of development and address existing capacity issues in the County Borough.

5. **Effect Upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules**

5.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and regulations of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales Regulations 2005) requires that a Local Planning Authority must commence a full Review of its LDP every 4 years.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no direct implications associated with this report. However the policies contained within any Replacement LDP will require an equalities impact assessment to be carried out.

7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 7.1 The Replacement LDP will be prepared in accordance with the 7 Wellbeing goals and the 5 ways of working as identified in the Act.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The cost of the LDP Review will be met from the Development Planning budget and carried out by development planning staff with expert advice and evidence procured from consultants and through collaboration with neighbouring authorities as required.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 That the Town and Community Council Forum note the contents of Technical Reports 1, 2 and 3 (attached as appendices A, B & C) as the basis for preparing the Preferred Strategy document that will be published for formal public consultation in October / November 2019.

Jonathan Parsons

Group Manager – Planning and Development

26th February 2019

Contact Officer: Richard Matthams - Development Planning Manager

Telephone: (01656) 643162

E-mail: richard.matthams@bridgend.gov.uk