

Meeting of:	COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	13 JULY 2026
Report Title:	BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN UPDATE
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
Responsible Officer:	DELYTH WEBB GROUP MANAGER STRATEGIC REGENERATION
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	To provide an update on the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021), to include: Summary of the review and update of the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan Overview of individual project progress

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Committee on the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021), the projects resulting from it that have been delivered or are in course of being delivered, and the next steps proposed to update the Masterplan.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan was completed in December 2021, and outlines a vision for a liveable and vibrant place. The vision brings together enterprise, employment, education, in-town living, shopping, culture, tourism and well-being in the context of an historic setting.

- 2.2. The Masterplan's purpose is to be a dynamic long-term planning document that offers a theoretical layout, building on the Town's many strengths, to guide future regeneration and growth. It also provides analysis, recommendations, and proposals for the Town Centre. It complements the Replacement Local Development Plan ("RLDP" adopted March 2024), and ensures that the Masterplan accounts for national Planning Policy (**Future Wales**: the national plan 2040), in its recommendations.
- 2.3. Bridgend Town Centre consists of a variety of uses which form the basis of eight development zones within the existing Masterplan:
- The Railway Station Area
 - Brackla, Nolton and Oldcastle
 - The Retail Core
 - Café and Cultural Quarter
 - The Northern Gateway
 - Riverside
 - Newcastle
 - Sunnyside
- 2.4. A 12 week public consultation was held from 7th December 2020 to 1st March 2021. 1,402 responses and/or interactions were received from a combination of survey completions, social media engagements, emails and letters and engagement sessions. The Masterplan and consultation exercise were discussed at length at a combined meeting of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 and the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2021. Following this meeting a report was taken to Cabinet on 22 June 2021, to review the outcome of the public consultation process and endorse the finalisation of the Masterplan.
- 2.5. The Masterplan is a combined response to the regeneration and development potential for Bridgend Town Centre, from both Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and partner organisations operating within the Town Centre.

3. **Current Situation / proposal**

Project Update – Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021)

3.1 Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021) Review

The Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan is now five years old. While it does retain some relevance and continues to provide an effective strategic framework for guiding investment, development, regeneration, and economic growth, a review is required to reflect changes since it was published. Changes include the significant increase in online retail activity and changes in public lifestyle and behaviours, such as hybrid working, since the pandemic. These changes have had an impact on the Town Centre but may support a move to a more mixed- use economy.

Several projects identified within the accompanying *Action Plan* have now been completed or are nearing completion. A review is therefore needed to assess their impact on adjacent sites and wider Town Centre opportunities.

The key changes since the Masterplan was prepared include:

- Delivery of several priority projects
- Changes in ownership of key development sites
- Emergence of new development opportunities
- Adoption of the Bridgend County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) 2018–2033, operative from 13 March 2024

In light of these changes, the Masterplan requires updating to ensure that it remains relevant, deliverable and aligned with current policies and priorities.

3.2 Masterplan Review Commission

A multidisciplinary consultancy team with expertise in planning, urban design, regeneration, transportation and stakeholder engagement has been appointed to review the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021), and prepare an Addendum and updated Action Plan.

The review will:

- Reflect significant changes since the original Masterplan was adopted
- Align with current and committed development proposals
- Strengthen and consolidate the Town Centre core
- Improve connectivity and support long-term regeneration objectives
- Ensure consistency with the Bridgend County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP for period 2018–2033), and the Retail and Commercial Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted 24 September 2025 (Retail SPG).

3.3 Development Zone B - Review and Options Analysis

As part of the Commission, a high-level review and options appraisal of *Development Zone B* (Brackla, Nolton & Oldcastle) will be undertaken, including consideration of its relationship with Development Zone C (Retail Core). This work will also ensure alignment with the RLDP and the Retail SPG.

3.4 As part of the Masterplan review there will proportionate engagement with key stakeholders, including:

- Landowners
- Statutory bodies
- Internal BCBC officers
- BCBC Cabinet Members and Bridgend Town Members
- Bridgend Town Centre Steering Group

Bridgend Town Centre Master Plan (2021) – Update on Delivery

- 3.5 Since creation of the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021), a number of projects have been completed or are in development. The Masterplan was, at that time, a comprehensive plan covering projects of various scale and value; the details below provide an overview of the variety of projects which have been completed or are in progress:

Bridgend College Campus – Bridgend Town Centre

- 3.6 The relocation of Bridgend College's Learning and Skills Campus to Cheapside is one of the first projects to be delivered under the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021). As a strategic partner, Bridgend College committed to take a Town Centre first approach to support their own changing requirements in addition to supporting investment into the Town Centre. The project has been supported by BCBC funding of (£358,608.00) and '*Transforming Towns*' (£705,997.10) to acquire the site. The total investment in the 13,000 sqm project totals circa £80m and, whilst progress is visible, the project will complete in Autumn 2026 and open to students in January 2027. The building will include a 200-seat theatre and professional-grade dance studios, cutting-edge design workshops and salons.
- 3.7 This project will act as an anchor project for investment in the Town, supporting further investment, redevelopment and driving footfall with 1,000 staff and students expected to come into the Town Centre daily.

Property Improvements/ Vacant Properties

- 3.8 A number of opportunities for empty properties in Bridgend Town Centre were identified through the Masterplan. Within existing resource limits, derelict empty properties are being prioritised for action through inclusion on the Welsh Government (WG) action plan, which is monitored by the *BCBC Empty Properties Working Group*. This Group has been successful in removing three empty commercial properties located in Bridgend Town Centre from the WG action plan.
- 3.9 A review of empty commercial properties in the County Borough is currently underway to replace these former priorities on the WG action plan. The purpose of the WG action plan is to monitor condition of the properties included and to take any necessary steps for enforcement action as a last resort.
- 3.10 The '*Transforming Towns*' grant programme funded by Welsh Government, has supported businesses and organisations in Bridgend Town Centre to redevelop their properties (Please see 'Private Grant Recipients' in the table under 8.3 for financial information). An essential requirement of the *Transforming Towns* funding is alignment with the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021), and all projects so funded have been clearly aligned with the aims of delivering the priorities and aspirations of the Masterplan.

Wyndham House Redevelopment

- 3.11 The Wyndham House scheme is a project identified within the *Café and Cultural Zone* of the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan. Valleys to Coast ("V2C" housing association), have committed to relocating their head office to the Town Centre, and

late last year 2025 acquired Wyndham House with investment from the Transforming Towns programme. Valleys to Coast have worked in collaboration with the BCBC Regeneration team to source and draw down this grant funding from Welsh Government.

- 3.12 The works involve a programme of refurbishment and conversion, combining modern design standards with heritage-led conservation principles. The new Valleys to Coast office space will provide a flexible and collaborative environment designed to meet future working practices while the ground floor will feature a high quality cafe alongside two small kiosk units enhancing the Town's cultural leisure and retail offer. The residential element will deliver much needed affordable apartments designed to modern standards.
- 3.13 The project will provide new employment, and housing uses and actively contribute to the long-term sustainability, vibrancy and well-being of the Town.

Sunnyside Health and Wellness Development

- 3.14 Sunnyside Health and Wellness Village is an approved housing and healthcare development scheme which will provide 59 homes on Glan-Y-Parc to the west of the Town Centre, and forms part of the Masterplan's *Sunnyside Development Zone*. In addition to the housing, a healthcare centre will include a GP practice, a pharmacy, specialist dentist unit and other specialist services.
- 3.15 Steady progress at Sunnyside Health and Wellness Village is being made, with the first 18 houses and health centre due for completion this summer (2026). The final houses, bungalows and apartments will be completed later in 2026.
- 3.16 The Welsh Government's Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) programme has supported the infrastructure element of the scheme with a grant totalling £315,268.

The Rhiw Shopping Centre

- 3.17 BCBC purchased the Rhiw Shopping Centre in March 2026 with the support of Welsh Governments *Transforming Towns* strategic acquisition funding. This has given a new opportunity for BCBC to lead in the re-development of a major flagship strategic site in the Town Centre.
- 3.18 The property, originally built in 1972 and refurbished in 1994, sits at the heart of Bridgend's retail core and is identified in the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021) as a key site for regeneration. The vision for Bridgend is to create a vibrant, mixed-use environment that promotes growth, resilience, well-being, and identity, while strengthening its role as a hub for shopping, leisure, culture and employment. There is significant momentum surrounding the Town Centre, driven by the Local Authority's commitment to developing strategic assets.
- 3.19 A RIBA Stages 0–1 optioneering exercise has been commissioned to focus on developing a strategic definition for redevelopment. This will be used to inform future discussions with key stakeholders and will also support the development of funding bids.

- 3.20 Proposals will explore opportunities for a mixed-use scheme incorporating retail, leisure, office and residential elements, while respecting the Bridgend Town Centre Conservation Area and enhancing the architectural character of the Town Centre. Once plans are available Cabinet members will be consulted prior to wider consultation.
- 3.21 Further development funding is now required to appoint a multi-disciplinary team to undertake concept stage design development that align with the site analysis, project brief, and spatial requirements. A funding bid is currently being prepared to submit to Welsh Government to support this phase.
- 3.22 Alongside the future design work, a number of other supportive workstreams are underway which include:
- an assessment of the economic, social and community benefits of a proposed development
 - discussions with potential future users of the redevelopment (e.g. education providers, housing, police, health services), and developers
 - Preparation of a Demolition Plan

Bridgend Town Centre Access

- 3.23 The Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan (2021) assessed the findings from previous Bridgend Town Centre access studies and suggested that options for improved Town Centre access should be explored further through a feasibility study.
- 3.24 A number of studies have been undertaken and the implementation of an 18-month Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) has been put in place since April 2026, which includes:
- the extension of loading and unloading hours to 11:00 hours and recommencement after 16:00 hours
 - the conversion of underutilised taxi bays on Derwen Road to Blue Badge parking bays

Work is continuing to finalise the completion of the safety risk assessments to permit cycling within the pedestrianised zone. This is expected to be completed by July 2026.

Future reports will be presented to Cabinet proposing a permanent position in respect of the ETRO.

- 3.25 Funding for the above has been supported through a number of funding streams, including the Transforming Towns programme, Shared Property Fund (SPF) and BCBC.

Town Centre Parking

- 3.26 Parking surveys have been commissioned to understand the parking needs for the Town Centre and to provide supporting data which will help us understand current parking levels across the Town. The surveys will look at location, capacity and turnover. This will help inform how the Council balances new development in the Town with the required parking needs going forward. In turn this work will form the basis of a new parking plan for the Town Centre.

Bridgend Town Centre Café and Cultural Quarter Options Appraisal

- 3.27 The *Café and Culture Quarter* is a priority project identified through the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021). Identified as *Development Zone D* in the Masterplan; it includes the areas of Dunraven Place, the western part of Wyndham Street and Elder Street. An options appraisal was commissioned to identify and test regeneration options in order to progress the creation of a *Café and Culture Quarter*, which aims to re-establish the heart of Bridgend Town Centre. This was funded through the WG *Transforming Towns* funding. Four concept designs were developed through stakeholder consultation and extensive baseline research. The report findings, together with the Town Centre Access Study, inform the next steps for Zone D's development.
- 3.28 V2C's Wyndham House development forms part of the Café and Cultural quarter options and will have a significant impact on Zone D as the Masterplan review progresses.
- 3.29 A small intervention within this Zone D was the installation of a new suite of events lighting in Dunraven Place funding by the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) . The lights contribute to the key public realm location of the War Memorial. The new lighting is an up-to-date, eco-friendly option that allows for a range of lighting displays to be programmed that will enhance numerous celebrations and awareness campaigns throughout the calendar year.
- 3.30 A new collaborative project is currently being developed by BCBC Regeneration in Zone D, in partnership with Bridgend College and Cambria House's leaseholder. The project will see Bridgend College student's artwork displayed along the vacant row of units on Wyndham Street. This will improve the look of the high street and bring public art to Zone D, aligning with the cultural history and ambition of the area.

Bridgend Town Centre Green Infrastructure Strategy

- 3.31 Green Infrastructure (GI) is highlighted as one of the ten key objectives in the Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan (2021), with a recommendation to create a *Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy* for the Town Centre. The GI Strategy was completed in April 2025, and sets out clearly next steps for the implementation of the GI Strategy within the Town Centre, through Nature Based solutions at specifically targeted Action / Project Areas.
- 3.32 A Green Infrastructure project is currently underway. The aim of the project is to bring life, growth and colour to the Town Centre as part of its regeneration and renewal.

The proposals include integrating trees, shrubs and flowers into the streetscape, including:

- Brackla Street gardens - This project was proposed to enhance a 'gateway' entrance to the Town Centre. It is sited directly opposite the new Bridgend College campus and is a focal point for many people visiting and walking across Town. The planting beds have declined due to self-seeded invasives taking over. The beds will be renewed as an area of visual appeal that will benefit pollinators, bring colour and be easy to maintain.
- Caroline Street and Adare Street – planters with trees and shrubs along the shopping streets which will add colour and vibrancy to the streets, as well as enhance biodiversity and act as traffic calmers.

3.33 The UK Governments *Pride in Place Impact Fund* (PiPIF) is funding these works to An estimated total value of £200,000.

Bridgend Town Centre Railway Station Options Appraisal and Feasibility Study

3.34 The Bridgend Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan (December 2021) also identified the following projects within the *Railway Station Development Zone* as:

- Project 1: New Station Entrance from the East
- Project 4: Station Link
- Project 5: Station Hill and Court Road Development

3.35 These projects alongside the Masterplan development were considered further in *Bridgend Railway Station Area Options Appraisal* (December 2021), and the *Station Link* proposal was designed to RIBA Stage 3 in partnership with Transport for Wales. The options within the report need further review and funding to be able to be taken forward.

Bridgend Town Centre Night Time Economy

3.36 The Masterplan highlighted the opportunities for Bridgend Town Centre's night time economy, which has grown over the past 4 years and is gaining a reputation for the number and quality of its destination restaurants. These restaurants draw people from outside the local area into the Town Centre to enjoy a unique culinary experience. Within Bridgend Town Centre there are now over ten destination restaurants which serve a wide range of cuisine including: Italian, Portuguese, French, Greek, Spanish and Japanese. The support offered through the Council's various grant schemes, including the *Transforming Towns* property improvement grant (Please see 'Private Grant Recipients' in the table under 8.3 for financial information), BCBC Start Up Grant and UK Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) Business Development Fund have helped grow a vibrant hospitality sector in Bridgend Town Centre.

Bridgend Town Centre Heritage

- 3.37 The Masterplan also identified the need for a heritage trail within and around the Town Centre of Bridgend, a designated Conservation Area. Following the completion of the Masterplan, BCBC commissioned a *Heritage Scoping Study* to review the current heritage information and resources that BCBC had developed, both digitally and physically over the previous ten years. In 2023, BCBC commissioned the design of a self-guided heritage trail around the Town Centre, linking key points of interest and providing physical interpretation to raise awareness of the heritage trail at various points throughout the Town Centre. Working in collaboration with the BCBC *Destination Management/Tourism* team, a digital version of the heritage trail was also commissioned. The heritage trail was launched in 2024 and funded by Transforming Towns (£15,000 (*included in the total BCBC project figure in the table under paragraph 8.3*)) and BCBC (£10,000). Paper versions of the heritage trail are available at key locations including Civic Offices, Bridgend Library, Carnegie House and Bridgend Town Hall. Bridgend Town Council collaborated on this project and agreed to take on the maintenance of the panels, once all legal agreements were arranged.
- 3.38 The Red Telephone Boxes on Court Road: BCBC identified the pair of Grade II Listed (11365) K6 Red Telephone Boxes, Court Road CF31 1BD as significant heritage structures requiring sympathetic repair. Their location, historical significance and community value make their condition, safety, security and potential reuse a priority. In 2024, the BCBC *Regeneration Team* funded a condition survey and design concepts study which paved the way to successfully applying to the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) for their restoration. The kiosks were removed from site and repaired by a specialist company. Recently returned, the paving in the curtilage of the Red Telephone Boxes has been sympathetically restored by BCBC Highways.

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

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, 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. This is an information report, therefore it is not necessary to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in the production of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (2021)

- 4.2 A full EIA was carried out as part of the development of this strategy, policy or proposal. The full EIA considers the impact of the strategy, policy or proposal on the nine protected characteristics, the Socio-economic Duty and the use of the Welsh language.
- 4.3 In summary the EIA assessment has determined that;

- There would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, no socio-economic disadvantage or negative impact on the use or promotion of the Welsh language.
- The projects emerging from the Masterplan will provide the opportunity to ensure that all new development is designed to be better integrated into the environment and have been highlighted to ensure they are designed in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- For the first time the Masterplan has engaged with children and young people in its development, and will ensure that projects positively encourage their engagement in the detail development and design.

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

5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment based on the 5 ways of working has been considered:

- Long Term: The regeneration of Bridgend Town Centre will drive local prosperity, providing local employment opportunities and offering better environments to promote the health and well-being of those who live, work and visit the Town Centre in the long term.
- Prevention: Converting underutilised commercial space into economically productive property will help boost the profitability of the Town Centre.
- Integration: The regeneration project proposals identified will generate employment opportunities, and increase Town Centre footfall.
- Collaboration: BCBC will work in partnership with local businesses and key stakeholders in the area, undertaking consultations regarding the project proposals going forward, ensuring that the outcomes benefit the community of Bridgend and beyond.
- Involvement: Investing in a community offers a means to connect with local stakeholders. Strong, resilient communities will reinforce the regional and Welsh culture which is a key feature in promoting visitors and tourists to the area. Increased visitor numbers to the Town Centre will help the County Borough and wider region.

5.2 The proposed town-centre interventions will assist in delivering the Council's Corporate Plan well-being objectives 2025-26. In particular, contributing towards well-being objective One: A prosperous place with thriving communities.

- Promote the conditions for economic growth and prosperity, by Improve sustainable and active travel choices.
- Regenerate our town centres and Valleys.

6 Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 Any future projects progressed from the RLDP will be developed to ensure that there is no negative impact on the environment and are in line with the commitment to achieve the Council's Net Zero Carbon 2030 target.

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 direct financial implications arising from this information report.
- 8.2 However it should be noted, as referred to in the body of this report, the significant match funding that BCBC has secured and invested, not only in some of the larger schemes but those smaller visible improvements which have been referenced.
- 8.3 The following table specifically relates to the value of *Transforming Towns* funding referred to in section 3 above, which has been levered by BCBC to support the delivery of projects within the Masterplan.

Transforming Towns Grant Programme 2022-2027 - Bridgend Town Centre			
Project	Funding received 2022-2026	Funding Committed 2026-2027	TOTAL
Placemaking Grant			
BCBC Projects	£71,074.42	£140,065.04	£211,139.46
Private Grant Recipients	£908,742.39	£237,230.28	£1,145,972.67
TOTAL	£979,816.81	£377,295.32	£1,357,112.13
Strategic Funding			
Police Station acquisition & demolition – Bridgend College Campus	£705,997.05		£705,997.05
The Rhiw acquisition	£2,450,000.00		£2,450,000.00
V2C Wyndham House	£1,386,922.57	£399,402.43	£1,786,325.00
TOTAL	£4,542,919.62	£399,402.43	£4,942,322.05
Development Funding			
Café and Cultural Quarter Appraisal	£29,995.00		£29,995.00
The Rhiw feasibility	£35,000.00		£35,000.00
V2C Bridgend Shopping Centre Feasibility	£112,998.53		£112,998.53

Wayfinding	£13,298.68		£13,298.68
TOTAL	£191,292.21		£191,292.21

- 8.4 In addition to *Transforming Towns* funding, a further £186,500 of Shared Prosperity Fund money was awarded to private schemes within the Town Centre, specifically those supporting the night time economy (as referenced in paragraph 3.36), the Red Telephone Boxes (as referenced in paragraph 3.38), and Lighting in Dunraven Place (as referenced in paragraph 3.29).
- 8.5 The Welsh Government's Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) programme supported the infrastructure element of the Sunnyside Health and Wellness Village scheme with a grant totalling £315,268 as referenced in paragraph 3.16.
- 8.6 The UK Government's *Pride in Place Impact Fund* (PiPIF) is supporting the Green Infrastructure scheme to an estimated total value of £200,000 as referenced in paragraph 3.32.
- 8.7 BCBC revenue and capital budgets have also supported feasibility studies, capital works and acquisition, primarily through the provision of match funding for external funding streams. As noted in 3.6, the Bridgend College Campus – Bridgend Town Centre scheme
has been supported by BCBC funding of (£358,608.00). In addition, BCBC has solely funded certain feasibility projects, including the parking survey currently being undertaken, as outlined in paragraph 3.26.
- 8.8 Match funding has also been provided through private investment from grant applicants.
- 8.9 Any future scheme which has been reported on or described and which has any future financial implications for BCBC will be subject to its own Cabinet or Council report setting out any financial requirements or implications to support its development.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the report.
- 9.2 That the Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee will stand ready to accept a report on the Masterplan review and draft Masterplan addendum at a later date.

Background Documents:

None