

Meeting of:	CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date of Meeting:	25 SEPTEMBER 2026
Report Title:	EMERGING BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH 2040 TRANSFORMATION VISION
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	DANIEL TAYLOR, HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION AND DIGITAL
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy.
Executive Summary:	This report provides the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the development of the emerging Bridgend 2040 Transformation Vision. It sets out the emerging vision, core content and direction of travel; the engagement and consultation that has informed development to date; and the proposed steps and process for finalising the vision. The vision is intended to provide a long-term strategic direction and framework for the county borough and the Council to 2040, connecting civic renewal and organisational transformation. The Committee is invited to scrutinise the development process, consider whether the emerging content has the right ambition and focus, and provide feedback before the vision is finalised and submitted through the appropriate approval route.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) with an update on progress in developing the emerging Bridgend 2040 Transformation Vision, including its core content and direction of travel, the engagement and consultation that has informed its development thus far, and the steps and process for finalisation.
- 1.2 The report gives the Committee an opportunity to scrutinise the development process and provide feedback before the vision is finalised and presented through the appropriate decision-making route. The Chief Executive will

present a short series of slides at the meeting of 25 September 2026 to supplement this report.

- 1.3 The version described in this report remains emerging and will continue to be refined in response to further consultation, quality assurance and Member feedback.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council began work in November 2025 to develop a long-term transformation vision for Bridgend County Borough. The work responds to the need for a clearer long-term direction for change and to findings from the Panel Performance Assessment.
- 2.2 The transformation vision is intended to look beyond the next Corporate Plan and describe the county borough the Council, working with partners, want to help create by 2040. The core vision statement is: “A county borough where people thrive, places are vibrant and prosperity grows for everyone.”
- 2.3 The 2040 horizon is consistent with the Local Government Association’s LG2040 futures work, which encourages councils to look beyond immediate pressures and consider the forces likely to shape local government and places over the longer term. For Bridgend, 2040 is sufficiently far beyond current political, leadership and planning cycles to pursue significant transformational change - roughly the period from a child starting school to completing their education - while remaining close enough to provide a meaningful and practical focus for decisions taken now.
- 2.4 The vision is being developed as both a strategic direction for civic renewal, regeneration and a framework for organisational transformation. It is intended to set the long-term direction to influence and frame Corporate Plans, Directorate business plans and transformation programmes, rather than duplicate those plans or operate as a further short-term delivery plan.
- 2.5 Development has been iterative. The emerging content has been tested and refined through significant internal and external engagement, as set out in detail below. The broad structure was shaped in August 2026, following initial engagement and consultation, and has continued to evolve as further feedback has been received.

3. Current situation / proposal

Emerging vision and structure

- 3.1 The emerging vision is built around three connected long-term aims: People Thrive, Places are Vibrant and Prosperity Grows for Everyone. Together they provide a single framework for the Council’s long-term ambitions for people, place and prosperity.
- 3.2 The proposed planning “golden thread” places the Transformation Vision at the top of the Council’s planning framework. It would set the direction to 2040;

future Corporate Plans would define the Council's focus for each five-year period; the annual delivery plan would set out projects, milestones and resources; and Directorate business plans would translate these commitments into service activity. Securing approval of the vision in December 2026 is intended to allow it to inform development of the next Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy during 2027, alongside relevant statutory, partnership, regional and place-based plans.

- 3.3 The emerging Transformation Model identifies a set of priorities through which the vision would be pursued. These currently include Prevention First, Pride in Place, Digital and Data, Inequality and Opportunity, Financial Sustainability, Workforce for the Future, Community Empowerment and One Council. The priorities have evolved through engagement and will continue to be refined before final approval. Further detail on the emerging aims, themes and content of the vision is provided in **Appendix 1, Bridgend County Borough 2040: Key Emerging Themes and Content**.
- 3.4 The Council's proposed Corporate Transformation Governance and Operating Model will provide the mechanism through which significant transformation activity is considered as a single corporate portfolio. The model was considered by COSC on 7 September 2026 and is due to be presented to Cabinet for approval on 22 September 2026. Subject to Cabinet approval, it will support deliberate choices about which transformation proposals proceed, their relative priority and sequencing, and where the Council should stop, pause or reshape activity when demand exceeds available capacity. Corporate Management Team (CMT) will make decisions within its authority, with formal Member decisions continuing through the appropriate constitutional route. The advisory Transformation Board will provide political oversight, constructive challenge and assurance that portfolio choices remain aligned with Bridgend 2040, the Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Consultation and engagement

- 3.5 The vision has been developed through a broad, iterative programme of engagement. To date, the Council has held several sessions with communities across the county borough; all political groups have had the opportunity to consider the emerging direction; and CMT, managers and other staff have contributed. The current phase is extending engagement to trade unions, voluntary and community organisations, key formal partners, Town and Community Councils and young people.
- 3.6 The engagement has largely taken the form of facilitated discussions and workshops, enabling residents, Members, staff and partners to explore the emerging ideas, challenge assumptions and identify what matters most in their communities. This has provided qualitative insight that has directly influenced the shape, emphasis and priorities of the emerging Vision.
- 3.7 Resident engagement has been undertaken across a range of communities and settings within the county borough, including Ogmores Valley, Pencoed, Bridgend, Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Garw Valley. The sessions have been deliberately discussion-based, providing opportunities for residents to describe

their experience of living in their communities, identify what they value and want to protect, and discuss what they would like to see change by 2040. While the emphasis varied between places, the engagement has provided a broadly consistent picture of the issues that matter most to residents.

- 3.8 The local context matters to residents and different communities identified different priorities and concerns reflecting their distinctive circumstances, assets and challenges. For example, discussions in the valleys placed particular emphasis on transport and accessibility, retaining local identity and community facilities, opportunities for young people and employment, and the condition and use of existing buildings and community assets. In Porthcawl, there was a strong focus on protecting its identity as a seaside town, infrastructure and housing growth, green space, leisure provision and the future of the town centre. In Bridgend and Pencoed, residents particularly highlighted town centre vitality, cleaner communities, transport, community safety and the need to support local businesses and employment.
- 3.9 Alongside these local differences, several consistent themes emerged across the engagement. Residents want to live in communities that are clean, safe, attractive and well maintained, with good quality public spaces, access to green space, effective waste and recycling services and pride in the places where they live. The quality and reliability of roads, public transport and wider infrastructure was repeatedly raised, both as an everyday quality-of-life issue and as a barrier to accessing employment, education, healthcare and community life.
- 3.10 Children and young people and future opportunity were also recurring themes. Residents want young people to have access to good education, skills, apprenticeships, vocational training, employment and meaningful activities, alongside safe spaces and opportunities to participate in community life. There was a consistent desire for young people to be able to see a future for themselves within Bridgend County Borough. Residents also highlighted the importance of ensuring that growth in housing and population is matched by appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities.
- 3.11 The strength of local communities, identity and community assets was another consistent message. Residents across different areas described strong community spirit, supportive neighbours, local organisations, volunteering, leisure and cultural facilities and valued local heritage as important strengths to protect and build upon. At the same time, there was a strong desire for greater investment in existing places and assets, including town centres and community facilities, and for local communities to have a greater role in shaping their future.
- 3.12 Residents also consistently emphasised the importance of a Council that is visible, accessible, responsive and willing to listen. This included concerns about the responsiveness of services and communications, the importance of being able to contact the Council through non-digital as well as digital channels, and a desire to see how residents' views have influenced decisions. Across several sessions, residents expressed a wish for clearer communication about

plans and developments, and more meaningful and ongoing involvement in decisions affecting their communities.

- 3.13 Taken together, the engagement has therefore broadly reinforced the direction of the emerging Vision while helping to sharpen its emphasis. It has strengthened the focus on People, Place and Prosperity, with particular emphasis on young people and future opportunity, pride in place, transport and connectivity, community strength, housing and infrastructure, and responsive public services. It has also reinforced the importance of recognising the distinctive character and needs of different communities rather than applying a single approach across the county borough. These messages have informed the further development of the Vision, including greater emphasis on partnership working, the Council's role in leading and convening across the place, and a continuing relationship with communities beyond the development and formal adoption of the Vision.

How the emerging vision is different

- 3.14 The intended approach differs from a conventional council strategy in four main respects: it takes a long-term view to 2040; combines civic renewal with organisational transformation; establishes one framework linking the vision, transformation priorities, investment and delivery; and gives greater prominence to listening, trust, partnership and co-production with communities.

Governance, ownership and delivery

- 3.15 CMT will own Bridgend 2040 corporately and be accountable for maintaining its strategic coherence and ensuring that it informs Council priorities, resources and organisational activity. Cabinet and the advisory Transformation Board will provide political oversight, challenge and assurance, while formal decisions will remain with Cabinet, Council, CMT, statutory officers or authorised officers in accordance with the Council's constitutional arrangements. Senior Responsible Owners will be accountable for the major programmes and other key pieces of work through which the vision is delivered, supported by programme and project boards and service-led delivery arrangements. COSC will provide independent scrutiny and make recommendations through the normal committee cycle.
- 3.16 The vision will not contain the full detail of every programme or project. Subject to approval, delivery will be taken forward through future corporate plans, the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the corporate transformation portfolio, annual delivery arrangements, statutory and partnership plans, and directorate business plans. The governance model will connect these arrangements by providing a corporate view of strategic fit, resources, capacity, risks, dependencies, delivery confidence and benefits. This is intended to keep Bridgend 2040 long term and strategic while creating a clear route from ambition to decisions, delivery and accountability.
- 3.17 Progress will be assessed through a focused set of approximately 10 to 15 top-level, long-term strategic outcomes covering People, Place and Prosperity. These outcomes will describe the changes the Council and its partners want to see by 2040 and will inform the Council's corporate performance framework.

More detailed measures, baselines, milestones and benefits will sit within successive Corporate Plans, the transformation portfolio and relevant service and partnership plans. Performance reporting will provide CMT, Cabinet, the Transformation Board and scrutiny with evidence of progress and support changes in priority or approach where outcomes are not moving as intended.

Finalisation, success measures and approval process

- 3.18 The remaining work is planned in phases. During the remainder of September 2026, consultation and scrutiny feedback will continue to be gathered and reviewed. During October 2026, the main vision will be rewritten and refined, incorporating consultation feedback and final quality assurance. The emerging vision and response to feedback will return to COSC on 22 October 2026. During November 2026, translation, graphic design, communications planning and governance checks are planned. Final consideration and approval are planned for December 2026 through CMT, Cabinet and Council.
- 3.19 The main vision is the immediate priority. Following approval, the Council intends to develop more accessible supporting communications, potentially including an executive summary, a plan on a page or short-form summary, and multi-channel storytelling such as video or animation.
- 3.20 The timetable is demanding and will require consultation and scrutiny feedback to be incorporated while drafting and assurance continue. The quality of the final vision, clarity about delivery and ownership. A credible set of long-term outcomes, and a demonstrable link between consultation and the final content will therefore be important tests before approval.

Matters for the Committee's consideration

- 3.21 The Committee is invited to consider whether:
- the emerging vision, thematic areas and priorities provide a clear, appropriate and sufficiently ambitious direction for Bridgend County Borough to 2040;
 - the relationship between the long-term vision, future Corporate Plans, delivery plans and directorate business plans is sufficiently clear;
 - the engagement and consultation undertaken and planned provide an credible and inclusive basis for producing the final vision;
 - the proposed governance, ownership and delivery arrangements provide sufficient clarity about who owns, oversees, decides, assures and delivers the vision;
 - the proposed approach to long-term outcomes and performance provides a credible basis for measuring success and adapting delivery;
 - the proposed finalisation and approval process provides sufficient opportunity for Member scrutiny, quality assurance and transparent consideration of feedback.

Risks and mitigations

- 3.21 The principal risks at this stage are that the vision becomes too broad to guide choices; that it lacks clear delivery mechanisms or measurable outcomes; that governance and accountability are not sufficiently understood; that the relationship between long-term ambition and successive plans and budgets is

not clear; that consultation does not reach or adequately reflect all relevant communities; or that the timetable limits the opportunity to respond meaningfully to feedback.

- 3.22 Mitigations include maintaining a clear purpose for the vision; testing the proposals with a wide range of internal and external audiences; defining the governance, ownership, performance and delivery arrangements; linking Bridgend 2040 to the Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and corporate transformation portfolio; tracking feedback against the emerging themes; retaining an iterative drafting process; returning to scrutiny on 22 October 2026; and undertaking final quality, equality, financial and governance assurance before approval.

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

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act 2010, the Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the Welsh language have been considered in preparing this report. The vision is still emerging and these implications will continue to be assessed as its content is refined.
- 4.2 The consultation approach includes staff, Members, partners, communities and young people. The remaining consultation and assurance stages will seek to ensure that the final vision is informed by diverse experiences, including people and communities who may be less likely to engage through conventional methods; is available through accessible and Welsh-language routes; considers inequalities of outcome; and supports opportunities to use Welsh. An Equality Impact Assessment will accompany the final vision through the decision-making process.

5. Wellbeing of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Wellbeing Objectives

- 5.1 The emerging vision is explicitly long term and is intended to provide a coherent direction for how the Council invests, transforms and works with communities to 2040. Its development reflects the sustainable development principle and the five ways of working as follows:
 - 5.1.1 Long term: The vision looks beyond the next planning cycle to the outcomes the Council and its partners want to help achieve by 2040. It is intended to guide future Corporate Plans, investment decisions and transformation programmes while recognising future demand, financial sustainability and the interests of future generations.
 - 5.1.2 Prevention: Prevention First is an emerging transformation priority. The vision seeks to shift emphasis from responding when problems reach crisis point towards earlier action, support and investment that can reduce avoidable demand and improve long-term outcomes.
 - 5.1.3 Integration: The three aims of People, Place and Prosperity are deliberately connected. The vision is intended to align civic, organisational, service,

- financial, workforce, digital and community considerations within one framework and connect them to future corporate and service planning.
- 5.1.4 Collaboration: The emerging vision recognises that many long-term challenges lie beyond the Council's direct control. Its development involves staff, Members, partners, Town and Community Councils and communities, and its delivery will require sustained partnership working.
- 5.1.5 Involvement: The vision has been developed iteratively through workshops, focus groups and consultation. The remaining process includes further involvement of communities, young people, staff, trade unions and partners, with feedback tracked and used to refine the content.
- 5.2 Taken together, these arrangements will support the Council's well-being objectives and corporate priorities by helping it direct limited capacity towards change that delivers better and more sustainable outcomes for People, Place and Prosperity.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 This progress report has no significant direct climate or nature implications. The emerging vision's long-term focus, place-based ambition and proposed connection to future plans provide a route for climate resilience, decarbonisation, biodiversity and nature recovery to be considered as the vision is finalised and translated into delivery.
- 6.2 The final vision and subsequent programmes will need to identify relevant environmental outcomes, impacts and mitigations at the appropriate level, supported by proportionate assessment through the normal governance process.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 This report does not directly change safeguarding responsibilities, services or procedures. The emerging People Thrive aim and the emphasis on prevention and young people are relevant to the Council's safeguarding and Corporate Parent responsibilities. These implications will need to remain visible as the final vision and subsequent delivery arrangements are developed.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no additional funding decisions arising directly from this report. The Committee is being asked to consider the emerging vision and its development process, not to approve expenditure.
- 8.2 The vision is intended to guide future choices about transformation and investment. Any proposals requiring additional resources or creating financial commitments will be subject to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, budget process, business case requirements and normal decision-making and financial procedure rules.
- 8.3 Financial sustainability is an emerging transformation priority. The proposed governance model will support corporate consideration of affordability, capacity, relative priority, dependencies and the cumulative resource demands

of the transformation portfolio. The final vision will need to be clear that long-term ambition will be translated into deliverable priorities through the Medium Term Financial Strategy, budget process, Corporate Plan and properly assessed business cases.

9. Recommendations

9.1 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- a) consider the progress made in developing the emerging Bridgend 2040 Transformation Vision, its core content and direction of travel;
- b) consider the engagement and consultation undertaken and planned, and whether it provides a sound and inclusive basis for finalising the vision;
- c) provide observations on the emerging vision, aims, transformation priorities, governance, delivery and proposed approach to measuring success, including the matters identified at paragraph 3.21;
- d) consider the proposed steps and process for finalisation and
- e) make any recommendations it considers appropriate before the vision is finalised and presented to Cabinet and Council.

Background documents

- None.