

Bridgend County Borough 2040

Our Vision for the Future – Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Discussion Version

OUR VISION

A county borough where people thrive, places are vibrant and prosperity grows for everyone

Purpose

This short version of the Vision has been prepared to support discussion and scrutiny by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It sets out the long-term future we want for Bridgend County Borough, why change is needed, and the framework through which the Council will help make that future possible.

The Vision is deliberately a long-term direction rather than a fixed blueprint. The projects, priorities and actions that support delivery will evolve over time, but our ambition will remain constant. The transformation is the means by which we help deliver the Vision; the Vision belongs to the whole county borough, not to the Council alone.

What is the Vision?

At its heart is a simple ambition:

A county borough where people thrive, places are vibrant and prosperity grows for everyone.

Our opportunity

Bridgend County Borough is a place of opportunity, resilience and ambition. From the Garw, Llynfi and Ogmore Valleys to the Heritage Coast, and from Bridgend to Porthcawl, Maesteg and Pencoed, our county borough combines proud communities, rich heritage, natural assets and growing economic opportunity.

Our strengths include our location, communities, natural environment, businesses, schools, social care and wellbeing services, and the determination of people who care deeply about where they live. Our area has repeatedly adapted to change – from its industrial heritage to advanced manufacturing, the emerging digital economy and a growing visitor economy.

The Council's role is to help make the Vision possible: by changing how we work, focusing our resources where they can have the greatest impact, working differently with communities and partners, and creating the conditions for people, places and prosperity to flourish.

This Vision underpinned by the Transformation Model set out how we will achieve civic renewal and organisational transformation.

2. Why We Must Change

Bridgend County Borough has much to be proud of, but the opportunities and challenges experienced by communities are not the same everywhere. Our approach therefore needs to recognise the distinctive character and needs of our towns, valleys, coast and rural communities.

The forces shaping our future

- Growing and changing demand for public services, alongside continuing financial pressure.
- Changing expectations of how residents access services and engage with the Council, driven in part by technology.
- Artificial intelligence, automation and the transition to a greener economy changing the skills people will need.
- Extreme weather and climate change creating new pressures for communities and services.
- Unequal access to economic opportunity, employment, transport and services across the county borough.
- The need to prepare children and young people for a changing world of work and future opportunities.
- The importance of protecting and strengthening community identity, heritage and the Welsh language.

What residents have told us

Resident engagement has helped shape this Vision. Residents value Bridgend County Borough as a place to live, but want improvements in the things that affect daily life most. They want:

- Strong, connected communities and opportunities to participate and influence.
- Cleaner, safer and more attractive places, including well-maintained streets, parks and public spaces.
- Thriving town centres and local facilities that reflect the distinctive character of different communities.
- Reliable transport and infrastructure that keeps pace with growth.
- More opportunities for children and young people and confidence about their future.
- Good quality, affordable housing and access to services and facilities.
- A Council that listens, responds to concerns, explains decisions and acts on what matters.
- Local identities, heritage and the Welsh language being valued and celebrated.

A KEY IMPLICATION

We cannot do everything at once. We will use evidence, insight and engagement to focus resources and energy on the things that matter most and where we can have the greatest impact.

This approach reflects the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act: thinking long term, focusing on prevention, working collaboratively, involving people and seeking sustainable solutions.

3. The Future We Want

By 2040, we want Bridgend County Borough to be a place where people feel proud of where they live and confident about their future. The Vision is built around three interconnected aims.

Where People Thrive

We want more people to be healthy, independent and able to fulfil their potential throughout their lives.

- Children and young people achieve more and are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed for the future.
- People are healthier and able to live well and independently for longer.
- People who need support are protected and receive the right help at the right time.
- Communities are strong, connected and resilient, with opportunities to participate and influence decisions.
- Inequalities are reduced and life chances improve.
- People feel valued, connected and able to contribute; sporting clubs and community groups thrive.

Vibrant Places

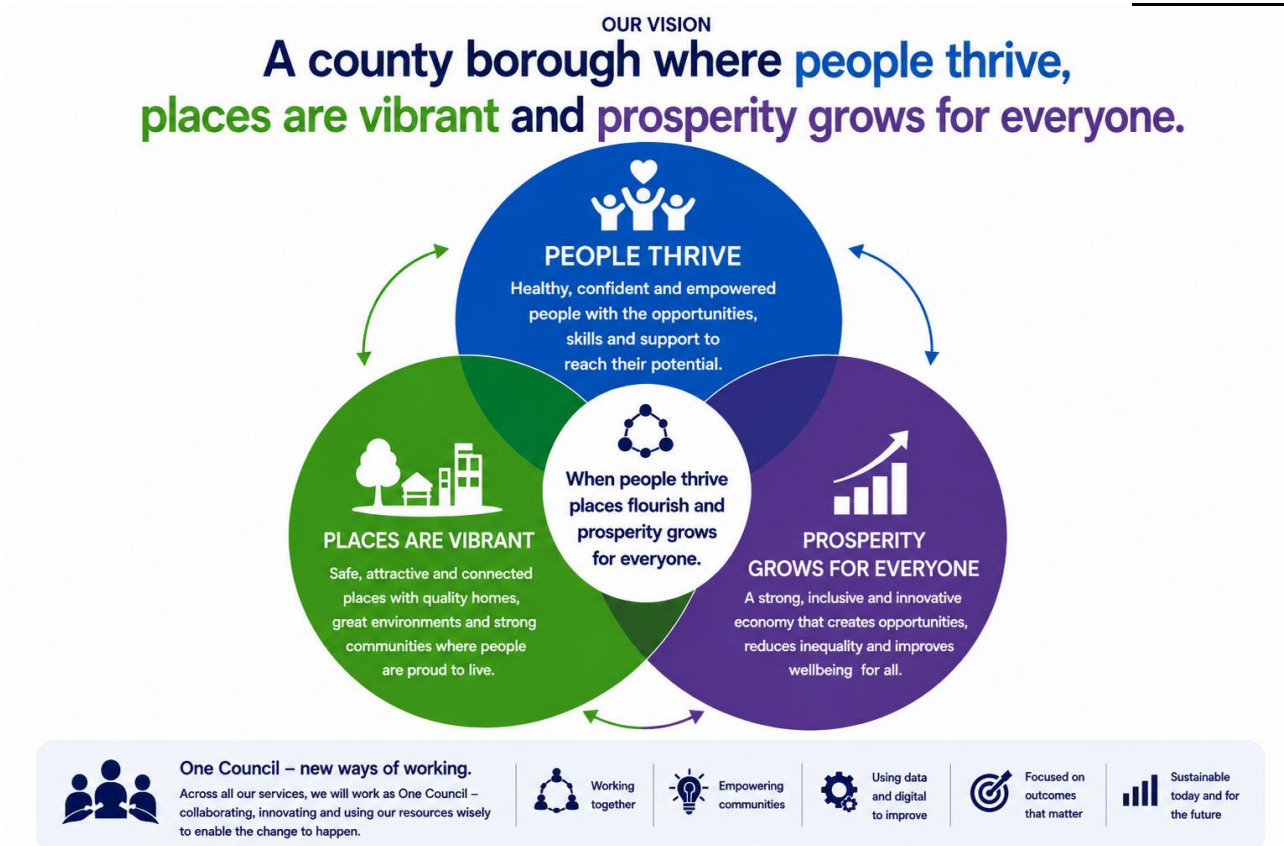
We want every community to feel proud of its distinctive character and confident about its future.

- Places are clean, safe, attractive and well maintained.
- Town centres and smaller communities are vibrant, sustainable and welcoming.
- Roads, pavements and public spaces are maintained effectively.
- People have access to good quality, safe and affordable housing that meets their needs.
- Growth and development are planned alongside the infrastructure, services, amenities and community facilities people need.
- The natural environment, local identity, heritage and Welsh language are protected, celebrated and enjoyed.
- Leisure, cultural, wellbeing and tourism opportunities are accessible and well used.

Prosperity Grows for Everyone

We want a strong and inclusive economy that creates opportunity for current and future generations.

- Businesses grow and invest, attracting more external investment into the county borough.
- More and better jobs and pathways into local employment are created.
- People have the skills, confidence and adaptability needed for a changing economy.
- People can access employment, education, services and community life through good transport and digital connectivity.
- Poverty is reduced and prosperity is shared more fairly across communities.
- Young people see a future for themselves in Bridgend County Borough.



The vision reflects what people have told us matters most: strong communities, attractive places, opportunity for future generations and a council that works with people to create positive change.

This vision is about more than delivering services. It is about creating the conditions for Bridgend County Borough to succeed in the long-term. It is about building on our strengths, unlocking our potential and creating a future where no community feels left behind and everyone has the opportunity to contribute and benefit.

THE THREE AIMS ARE CONNECTED

When people thrive, communities become stronger. When places are vibrant, people are healthier and more connected. When prosperity grows, investment and opportunity increase. Together they create a positive cycle of confidence, growth and renewal.

4. Our Transformation Model

The Vision describes the future we want for Bridgend County Borough. Transformation is how the Council will change, improve and work differently to help make that future possible.

The challenges facing the county borough are interconnected. Rising demand, financial pressures, changing expectations, climate change, technological advances and demographic change cannot be addressed by individual services acting alone. They require a coordinated, whole-council approach that focuses effort and resources on the outcomes that matter most.

The Council is therefore developing a corporate transformation model to provide a clearer and more consistent approach to improvement, transformation and investment. It will help the Council identify the changes that are most important, make informed choices about priorities and ensure that transformation activity supports the long-term Vision.

How the model will work

The model will be supported by:

- a single corporate transformation portfolio, providing a clear view of significant transformation activity across the Council;
- the Bridgend Way, providing a common and proportionate approach to assessing, developing, delivering and reviewing change;
- clear arrangements for prioritisation, governance, assurance and escalation;
- stronger use of evidence, data, insight and engagement to inform decisions;
- clear accountability for the delivery of programmes and projects;
- a focus on intended outcomes, measurable benefits and value for money; and
- regular oversight and constructive challenge of the overall transformation portfolio.

A Transformation Board will provide political oversight, strategic direction, assurance and constructive challenge. Formal decisions will continue to be taken through the Council's established constitutional and officer arrangements.

The Transformation Board will not replace the responsibilities of Cabinet, Council, the Corporate Management Team, senior responsible owners, programme boards, scrutiny, audit or the Council's statutory officers. Its purpose will be to strengthen oversight and constructive challenge, identify barriers and dependencies, and ensure that matters are referred to the appropriate decision-maker when formal action is required.

Key themes supporting delivery of the Vision

The following themes describe the areas in which change and improvement will be needed. They are connected areas of focus rather than a fixed list of projects. The specific programmes and initiatives within them will evolve as needs, opportunities and priorities change.



Place and community

- **Prevention First** – helping people remain healthy, independent and connected for longer, intervening earlier and reducing avoidable long-term demand.
- **Pride in Place** – creating clean, safe and attractive places, supporting good housing and investing in our towns, communities and public spaces.
- **Community Empowerment** – strengthening community hubs, local assets, participation, co-production and local leadership. This means involving residents earlier, listening carefully, explaining decisions and showing how people’s views have influenced outcomes.
- **Prosperity and Opportunity** – supporting sustainable economic growth, skills, employment, transport and digital connectivity, investment and the visitor economy.

Organisational capability

- **One Council** – breaking down silos, simplifying processes and designing services around people, places and outcomes.
- **Digital and Data** – using technology, data, insight and artificial intelligence responsibly to improve decisions, modernise services, improve the customer experience and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.
- **Workforce for the Future** – developing the skills, leadership, behaviours and culture needed for an adaptable, collaborative and confident workforce.
- **Financial Sustainability** – making responsible long-term decisions, delivering value for money and creating the capacity to invest in future priorities.

A single connected model

Each theme has a distinct purpose, but none can be delivered in isolation. Stronger communities can help prevent problems from escalating. Better data and insight support better decisions. A skilled and engaged workforce enables innovation and improvement. Financial sustainability creates the capacity to invest in long-term priorities.

The model will connect these themes to the Council's corporate transformation portfolio and provide a consistent route from identifying a problem or opportunity through to prioritisation, delivery, assurance, closure and benefits realisation.

It will also support difficult choices. The Council cannot pursue every possible initiative at the same time. Proposals will therefore need to demonstrate how they contribute to the Vision, respond to evidence and need, make effective use of resources and deliver clear benefits for residents, communities or the organisation.

THE KEY IDEA

The Transformation Model is not a fixed list of projects. It provides a consistent approach for identifying, prioritising, governing and assuring change across the Council. It will help ensure that transformation activity remains focused on delivering the Vision, achieving measurable benefits and making the best use of available resources.

5. A New Relationship with Our Communities

Creating the future we want will require more than transforming Council services. It will require a stronger relationship between the Council, residents, businesses, voluntary organisations, community groups, Town and Community Councils and public service partners.

From consultation towards collaboration

Communities are not simply recipients of public services. People volunteer, support neighbours, run organisations, care for others, protect local heritage, organise activities, grow businesses and help create places where people want to live. These strengths are a major asset for the future.

Consultation will continue where appropriate, but we will increasingly move towards a more continuous and collaborative relationship. Residents and communities should have greater opportunities to influence decisions, shape local priorities and help design solutions that reflect the needs and aspirations of different places.

What this means in practice

- Involving people earlier and being clear about where decisions can be influenced.
- Combining professional expertise with local knowledge and lived experience.
- Showing how residents' views have shaped decisions and outcomes.
- Being open about financial pressures, difficult choices and the reasons for decisions.
- Working differently in different places where local circumstances, assets and aspirations require it.
- Supporting volunteering, community organisations, local networks, community hubs and opportunities for civic participation.
- Building community confidence and capacity so that communities can increasingly lead change themselves.

Purposeful partnership

Many of the ambitions in the Vision cannot be achieved by the Council acting alone. We will work with residents, communities, businesses, Town and Community Councils, the voluntary and community sector, public services and regional organisations around shared priorities.

Partnership will be particularly important in areas such as transport, economic development, health, education and community wellbeing, where better outcomes depend upon organisations working together.

THE RELATIONSHIP WE WANT

Transformation will not be something the Council does to communities. It is something we will achieve together with them.

6. Changing How We Work

Delivering the Vision will require us to change how we work within the Council. We want to be a collaborative, agile, responsive and forward-looking organisation: confident enough to innovate, accountable for outcomes and equipped to respond to future challenges.

Our principles for working differently

Prevention

We will increasingly focus on preventing problems before they escalate, intervening earlier and supporting people to remain independent, resilient and well.

One Council

Residents experience one Council, not separate departments. We will break down organisational silos, share information and expertise and design services around people, places and outcomes.

With communities, not just for communities

We will involve residents earlier in shaping decisions, services and places and progressively increase the level of co-production across the organisation.

Focus on what matters most to residents

We will prioritise the things that have the greatest impact on people's daily lives and confidence in their communities, including neighbourhood cleanliness, roads, pavements, potholes and public spaces.

Digital, data-driven and modern

We will make better use of technology, data and insight to improve services, reduce bureaucracy and support better decision-making. We will be digital first, but not digital only.

Invest in our workforce and leadership

Our people are central to delivering the Vision. We will develop skills, leadership and culture, encourage innovation and continuous improvement, and create an organisation where staff feel valued, empowered and supported to succeed. We will continue to work constructively with recognised trade unions and support strong social partnership.

Make long-term decisions

We will take a longer-term view of investment, planning and resource allocation, prioritising sustainable solutions that deliver lasting benefits for residents, communities and future generations.

Be open, honest and accountable

Trust is built through transparency, integrity and meaningful engagement. We will communicate clearly, explain decisions openly and hold ourselves accountable for the outcomes we deliver.

WHAT CHANGES

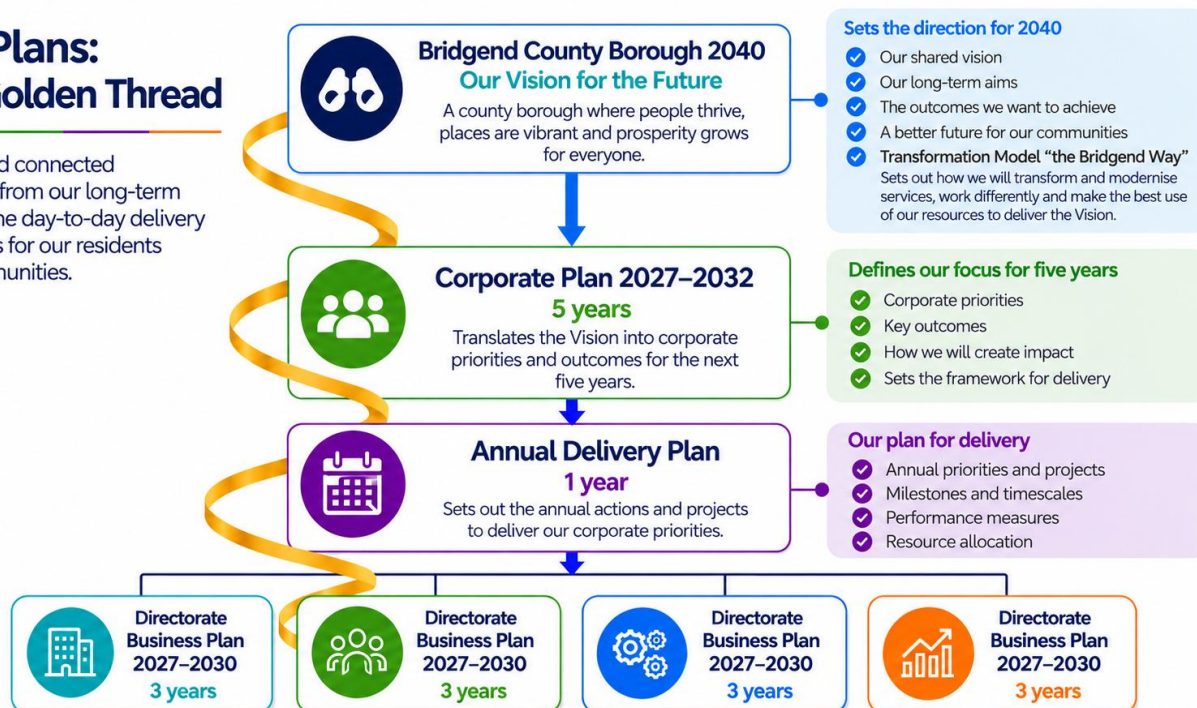
These principles are the cultural and organisational foundations needed to deliver the Transformation Model and, ultimately, the Vision for Bridgend County Borough.

7. Delivering the Vision

The Vision provides long-term direction. Delivery will require strong leadership, effective partnerships, disciplined prioritisation and a relentless focus on outcomes. We cannot do everything at once, so resources, energy and investment will be focused on the areas where they can have the greatest impact.

Our Plans: The Golden Thread

A clear and connected approach from our long-term vision to the day-to-day delivery of services for our residents and communities.



How we will know we are making a difference

Success will not be measured simply by the number of projects delivered. We will use a combination of performance measures, outcome indicators, resident feedback and organisational measures.

- People Thrive – wellbeing, education, independence, community resilience and reducing inequality.
- Vibrant Places – environment, housing, community wellbeing, pride in place and resident satisfaction.
- Prosperity Grows for Everyone – employment, skills, business growth, investment, transport and economic inclusion.
- Transformation and organisational performance – financial sustainability, workforce capability, digital maturity, customer experience, service performance, community engagement and delivery of priority projects.

A Living Vision

Circumstances will change and new opportunities will emerge. Progress will be reviewed regularly through the Council's performance framework and reporting arrangements so that delivery can be strengthened, priorities can be adjusted and the Vision remains relevant throughout its lifetime.

OUR FUTURE

We believe Bridgend County Borough's best years are still ahead of us. By working together, embracing innovation and building on our strengths, we can create lasting improvements that people will see and experience in their everyday lives.

Onwards with Confidence.